Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Gaston County Schools (360) 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)

Gaston County Schools Vision for local AIG program

It is the belief of Gaston County Schools that outstanding academic abilities are present in students including those from culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These students have an exceptional academic or intellectual potential, which must be recognized, challenged, and nurtured through differentiated services beyond those which are ordinarily provided by the regular education program.

We believe that services for students must be a part of the overall educational program that supports excellence for all students. This can best be accomplished through collaborative efforts with general education and through the provision of differentiated services that match each student's needs.

The Gaston County Schools' Academically & Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Department values gifted and potentially gifted students as diverse learners and is committed to their academic success. Our students are provided with a high level of intellectual stimulation through meaningful, rigorous, and technologically-advanced instruction and opportunities. As educators we strive to empower AIG students to become successful lifelong learners prepared to meet future global challenges.

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department answers the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Call to Action to provide equity and excellence in gifted education. The AIG Department strives for the following: to ensure equitable practices are utilized for identifying gifted students within the district, to offer a range of gifted services, to foster talent development opportunities, and to employ other inclusive actions. The goal is to increase access and opportunity that will improve achievement and growth for all.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* $ 1,818,905.00	* $ 370,954.99	* $ 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.

Gaston County Schools' Academically & Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Department answers the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Call to Action to provide equity and excellence in gifted education. The AIG Department strives for the following: to ensure equitable practices are utilized for identifying gifted students within the district, to offer a range of gifted services, to foster talent development opportunities, and to employ other inclusive actions. The goal is to increase access and opportunity that will improve achievement and growth for all.

Gaston County Schools Screening and Referral K - 12

All Gaston County Schools' students are given an opportunity to be screened and/or referred for AIG services each school year. Screening criteria varies for each of the different grade levels.

Kindergarten - Second Grade: Talent Development Program

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department offers a Talent Development program in the district. The AIG Department develops a student's strengths through intentional learning experiences in various domains within the K-2 Talent Development Program. The program provides early intervention and developmental opportunities to maximize potential for possible AIG identification in subsequent elementary-age years.

- Pull-out/Push-In services are provided for individual or small groups of students as needed. The AIG specialist meets with teachers of these high-ability students to determine the best extensions for small group time and lessons are tailored to the specific needs of students. Students are included in these groups based on classroom observations and district data since students are not formally identified until the end of second grade.

Second Grade Screening/Referral: Second grade screening occurs in the spring for every second grade student. Second grade students participate in a universal screening CogAT test conducted by the Gaston County Schools' Accountability Department.

- Students are placed on the AIG Screening Roster.
- Once screening criteria is met an AIG ISRF (Individual Student Referral) form is started on the student.
- Students who meet the screening criteria on the aptitude test are given the Iowa Assessments in reading and math.
- Second grade students who test for AIG but do not meet criteria for AIG placement are considered for late entrance into the Composer nurturing program at the Title 1 elementary schools.

Third Grade Screening/Referral: Third grade screening occurs during the first six weeks of school only for students who did not participate in the district universal screening CogAT testing conducted by the Gaston County Schools' Accountability Department. Any student new to the district will be screened.

- Third grade students who test for AIG as a second grader but do not meet criteria for AIG placement are automatically considered for late entrance into the Composer nurturing program at the Title 1 elementary schools.

Fourth and Fifth Grade Screening/Referral: Fourth and fifth grade screening occurs during the first six weeks of school based on district approved data.

- Students are placed on the AIG SR (AIG Screening Review) roster.
- Once screening criteria is met an AIG ISRF (Individual Student Referral) form is started on the student.
- Fourth and fifth grade students are given a district approved assessment.
- Fourth grade students who test for AIG but do not meet criteria for AIG placement are automatically considered for late entrance into the Composer nurturing program at the Title 1 elementary schools.

Sixth - Eighth Grade Screening/Referral: Middle school screening occurs in the summer prior to the beginning of school due to the advanced curriculum placement. Screening is based on district approved data.

- Screening pools are sent to the AIG office by the Middle School Liaison/Contact.
- Students who meet screening are given a district approved assessment.

Ninth - Twelfth Grade Screening/Referral:

- Multiple opportunities for placement are given throughout the school years; therefore, most students are identified during kindergarten - eighth grade. High school screening for AIG identification is referred as needed, and is similar to middle school screening/referral outlined above.
- AIG identified high school students are encouraged to enroll for the most rigorous courses they are prepared for in their strength and interest areas. This typically includes Honors, AP, and/or dual enrollment courses, but each student's needs and interests differ.
- Honors courses use the College Board's Pre-AP Curriculum to provide rigor and challenge for advanced students. Honors courses are available through student self-selection and are not dependent on AIG eligibility.
- High schools use the College Board's AP Potential report and EVAAS AP projections, particularly those from underrepresented populations, for enrollment in Advanced Placement courses. Advanced courses are available through student self-selection and are not dependent upon AIG eligibility.

General Screening/Referral Information:

- Gaston County School students in grades 2- 12 can be screened annually if they do not place the prior year.
- Students entering the district who do not have an AIG identification during the school year when the testing windows have already occurred are screened on an as needed basis.
- Students entering the district with an AIG identification will automatically be screened and/or placed into the AIG program appropriately. Assessments are administered if needed to determine placement.
- Parents/guardians and/or teachers of any current Gaston County Schools' student who is not identified may ask for screening on a student. The screening may or may not lead to testing and/or AIG placement.

*** 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.

Gaston County Schools AIG Pathways

Kindergarten - Second Grade: Talent Development Program

The Talent Development Program provides early intervention and developmental opportunities to maximize potential for possible AIG identification in subsequent elementary-age years.

- Students in K-1 may be considered for gifted identification if assessment results are available as a result of the grade acceleration process, or if the student is identified as gifted in a district or school outside of GCS.
- Pull-out/Push-In services are provided for individual or small groups of students as needed, but this is not necessarily dependent on identification. The AIG teacher meets with teachers of high-ability students to determine the best extensions for small group time, and lessons are tailored to the specific needs of these students. Students are included in these groups based on classroom observations and district data since students are not formally identified until the end of second grade.

Second - Twelfth Grade Identification Pathways:

- Pathway 1: Intellectually Gifted (IG)
  - 97% or higher total score on a nationally-normed aptitude test
- Pathway 2: Academically Gifted (AR, AM, AG)
  - 97% or higher on nationally-normed achievement tests
- Pathway 3: Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI/AR, AI/AM, AI/AIG)
  - 80% or higher total score on a nationally-normed aptitude test OR 93% on a subscore of a nationally-normed test
  - 80% or higher on nationally-normed achievement tests or 90% on EOG Reading or Math Assessment
  - Teacher checklist

Each test percentile, performance score, and teacher checklist score is given a corresponding point value. A composite score of 80 points is necessary for identification in reading and/or 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.

Gaston County Schools is committed to addressing the academic needs of all students regardless of their social, economic or cultural background. This is ensured in the following ways:

- Work collaboratively with the Department of Exceptional Children (DEC) and English as a Second Language Department (ESL) to discuss possible AIG referrals
- Offer program information on the referral, screening, identification, and service delivery procedures to all stakeholders at all schools
- Work with the regular classroom teachers to share with the AIG Department information about students who demonstrate exceptional skills in any area for possible AIG referral or screening
- Use multiple screening criteria for testing
- Use multiple criteria for placement. (Refer to Standard 1, Practice B)
- Identify and serve underrepresented students through our nurturing program(s) and/or through AIG teacher/classroom teacher collaboration of model and mini lessons
- Students who are tested for AIG are automatically considered for possible placement into the Composer Program at the Title 1 elementary schools or for the Talent Development Program at the non-Title 1 elementary schools
- Provide services for K-12 students who meet the criteria for gifted placement
- Improve parent communication by making program information easily accessible via the Gaston County Schools' AIG website and AIG staff

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	20.94%	<5%	<5%	---	8.42%	---	16.88%
Male	17.35%	<5%	<5%	---	8.50%	---	18.09%
Total	18.96%	<5%	<5%	---	8.46%	---	17.51%

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.

AIG teachers follow consistent guidelines for screening, referral, and identification processes in Gaston County Schools. The AIG teachers meet frequently to discuss the identification process and to ensure that all procedures are clearly communicated and adhered to for all students regardless of grade level or school. The following measures are employed to ensure consistency:

- Gaston County Schools employs an AIG Compliance Specialist to make sure that teachers are following protocols for screening, referral and identification processes.
- Monthly AIG compliance meetings are conducted with teachers to review identification processes and completed paperwork.
- Checks are conducted at the beginning and middle of the school year on paperwork and student AIG folders.
- AIG teachers fill out an online testing reflection form after each screening period that provides feedback regarding test practices.
- Gaston County Schools' AIG Department partners with the Accountability Department to run reports from the Riverside online testing system. This provides accuracy and consistency regarding scores needed for placement.
- A checklist of procedures is in place to ensure accuracy and consistency.
- New AIG teachers are assigned mentors.
- Minutes are kept of AIG teachers' meetings.
- End of the year paperwork and AIG folder reviews are conducted annually.
- Review of AIG school-based teams' notebooks and screening pools are conducted annually.
- The AIG Department shares AIG identification information at district principal meetings and district leadership meetings.
- The AIG Compliance Specialist holds both beginning and end of year meetings with Middle School AIG Liaison/Contacts to discuss screening practices and placements for secondary students.

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

Gaston County Schools uses a variety of ways to articulate and disseminate the AIG plan and procedures to all stakeholders. We:

- Offer professional development at school sites
- Administer surveys to assess the effectiveness of the screening, referral and identification processes
- Schedule AIG committee meetings and parent/guardian meetings at school sites
- Post plan on Gaston County Schools' website, which is linked to individual schools
- Place copies of the AIG plan in the AIG room and the principal's office at each school site
- Translate documents into students' native languages when possible.
- Review and revise AIG plan as necessary and/or required

- Regularly meets with a district AIG Parent Advisory Board for information sharing and stakeholder input

* **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.

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department maintains documentation to ensure students are properly placed and served in their area(s) of identification. This is maintained through the following practices:

- An AIG committee, composed of the AIG teacher, an administrator and at least two classroom teachers meet as often as needed to review each student's profile on the AIG ISRF (AIG Individual Student Referral Form) and determine which students warrant further testing.
- Once testing is completed, the committee reconvenes to review the results of the tests along with all other criteria data.
- If criteria has been met, then the committee signs for the student to be placed in the gifted program.
- The AIG ISRF (AIG Individual Student Referral Form) is copied and the original is placed in the student's AIG folder.
- Student scores are placed on the AIG Testing Placement/Non Placement google spreadsheet. Teachers are able to access these scores all year long and previous years scores as well.
- A copy of the AIG ISRF (AIG Individual Student Referral Form) and the student's individual service delivery options are listed in the team minutes of the AIG notebook. This notebook houses all committee decisions and provides documentation of the testing and placement of AIG students. This notebook is kept in a secured file cabinet at the school site.
- Parents/guardians are then invited to attend a conference. Assessment scores are shared and the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is signed for students who qualify for AIG services. The DEP is placed in the student's AIG folder.
- Parents/guardians are invited annually to review and sign their child's DEP for the upcoming school year.
- The AIG Compliance Specialist oversees the paperwork process for newly identified students in the program to ensure accuracy to detail.
- Each student's AIG folder contains all necessary testing and placement data as well as service delivery options. Student AIG folders are housed in a secured file cabinet at the school site. This information includes the following:
    - Consent for Evaluation (CE)
    - Teacher Checklist (TC)
    - AIG Individual Student Referral Form (AIG ISRF)
    - Request to Conference Form (RC)
    - Conference Placement Form (CP)
    - Conference Non Placement Form (CNP)
    - Differentiated Education Plan and/or Individualized Differentiated Education Plan Form (DEP/IDEP)

* **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.

- After a student has been formally identified through assessments, Parents/guardians are then invited to attend a conference. Assessment scores are shared and the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is signed for students who qualify for AIG services. The DEP is placed in the student's AIG folder.
- Parents/guardians are invited annually to review and sign their child's DEP for the upcoming school year.
- Gaston County Schools Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) addresses the students area of identification and how the child will receive services for that year.
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  - Elementary Schools: AIG Itinerant teachers are assigned to each elementary school and are responsible for managing the DEP documentation and annual review. K - 5 AIG DEP paperwork must be filled out and signed by the parent at the beginning of the new school year along with the request to conference form.
  - Each middle and high school has an AIG lead teacher who works with the AIG Dept. to ensure all AIG students have a DEP in place and that these plans are reviewed annually.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Continue to increase communication efforts, especially with school level staff who may change throughout the year.
2. Work with our English Language Learners (ELL) and Exceptional Children (DEC) Departments to determine additional tools for screening our underrepresented populations.
3. Continue to provide staff development for teachers to review not only the screening/referral process, but also to continuously improve all of our documentation including the teacher checklist, DEPs, IDEPs, and other related documents.
4. Continue to increase our number of underrepresented populations identified through nurturing potential in our Talent Development Program and by using multiple pathways and subscores for AIG placement.
5. Further refine and strengthen our Talent Development Program to ultimately lead to more underserved students being identified.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Gaston County Schools' website, AIG teacher website Gaston County Schools' AIG Plan
*	AIG Testing Placement/Non Placement Google Spreadsheet AIG student folders

* DEPs
IDEPs

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	GCS AIG Staff Handbook Middle School DEP Talent Development Program Overview Example of Placement Guidance for Staff Elementary AIG IDEP GCS AIG Placement Criteria

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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.

Gaston County Schools has programs and services that address the academic and affective needs of gifted learners in grades K - 12. There are AIG-licensed teachers in every elementary and middle school, and AP trained/certified teachers in every high school. These teachers deliver direct and consultative services to AIG-identified students. Programs and services may include:

- **Elementary Schools**
  - Talent Development Program in K-2 to develop students' strengths through intentional learning experiences in various domains. The program provides early intervention and developmental opportunities to maximize potential for possible AIG identification in subsequent elementary-age years.
  - Pull-out/ push-in services in grades K-5 include:
    - Providing direct and indirect support to regular education teachers and other staff to better meet the needs of gifted learners through consultation, resource support, and professional development.
    - Need-based differentiated instruction, inclusion, and flexible grouping as dictated by individual student needs. This may include enrichment and cluster groups as needed in the regular education classrooms.

The district is intentional in providing services and opportunities that focus on development of academics, interests, talents, and strengths of students. This range of services provides opportunities for enrichment, extension, and acceleration.

- Extra-curricular school and district-wide initiatives and competitions including but not limited to: Math Masters, Battle of the Books, Poetry and Prose Celebration, Chess Clubs, Math Olympiad, Robotics, Math Fair at the Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge, Marching Band at the Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge Junior Beta Club at the Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge.

Extended services provided at at the Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge

- Enrichment Clusters
- Paideia program
- Book Clubs

- AIG clustered classrooms deliver AIG services all day with small group instruction to differentiate
- **Middle Schools:**
  - Daily reading and math instruction taught by AIG-licensed teachers
  - Resources/coaching provided by the AIG Middle School Academic Facilitator
  - Differentiated and compacted lessons; AIG extensions for ELA curriculum and compacted math curriculum developed by the AIG Curriculum Specialist and curriculum development team
  - AIG middle school curriculum developed by the AIG Curriculum Specialist and curriculum development team
  - High School World History and Earth/Environmental Science classes are available to AIG and other qualifying students in 7th grade.

The district is intentional in providing services and opportunities that focus on development of academics, interests, talents, and strengths of students. This range of services provides opportunities for enrichment, extension, and acceleration.

- Extra-curricular school and district-wide initiatives and competitions including but not limited to: Math Elite, Battle of the Books, Robotics, Coffeehouse 678.

Extended services provided at at the the Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Cramerton

- Schoolwide Enrichment Clusters and Schoolwide Paideia program. Cramerton Middle School is one of only two nationally recognized Paideia Seminar Certified Middle Schools in NC.
- English 1 in the 8th grade for AIG and qualifying students
- **High Schools:**
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  - At grades 9-12, students identified for academically gifted services may be served through enrollment in advanced coursework. AIG students in high school are encouraged to enroll in honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and college courses.
  - Honors/Pre-AP courses and AP courses are available at all district high schools with the exception of our Middle Colleges that offer dual enrollment opportunities. Advanced coursework is available to non-AIG students as well as AIG students.
  - The AP Capstone program is offered at the Collegiate Prep Academy at Forestview High School. Students participating in the Capstone program can earn an AP Capstone Certificate or Diploma.
  - iAccelerate Academy at Ashbrook High School offers students the chance to take Dual Enrollment college courses at Gaston College.
  - Extra-curricular school activities and district-wide initiatives and competitions including but not limited to: High Q, QuizBowl, Governor's School, Commissioners' School of Excellence, district-wide AP Review Sessions, High School Battle of the Books.

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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 order for gifted students to fully realize their academic potential, it is imperative to address their social and emotional needs. The AIG Department works collaboratively with other school and district personnel to ensure the affective domain of these students is appropriately addressed. The AIG Department's staff collaborates with counselors, regular education teachers, EC teachers, ESL teachers, and families to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students in the following ways:

- Addressing social and emotional issues by working collaboratively with the district's guidance department
  - Refer students to school counselors who have been trained to address the unique social and emotional needs of gifted students.
  - Encourage regular classroom teachers to be cognizant of social and emotional issues that may be present in their students and to refer these students to school counselors when appropriate.
- Provide school and community mentors to students directly.
- Begin each academic year with activities that promote discussions about the challenges of being gifted.
- Embed social-emotional learning lessons within the AIG curriculum.
- Offer individual and/or group parent meetings, as needed, to discuss strategies to address the social and emotional issues facing gifted students.
- Provide resources for teachers, parents and students to help them better understand the social and emotional issues facing gifted learners. Resources include a library of social and emotional books housed in the AIG classrooms.
- Intentionally selected texts are utilized in schools through Socratic seminars to address the social-emotional needs of our students.
- Utilize the AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators as coaches to teachers of gifted learners and as advocates for gifted learners' needs.

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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 Gaston County Schools' AIG Department:

- Works collaboratively with other departments within Gaston County Schools, such as Academic Services, to connect AIG services with our district's priorities and resources. One example is the district's current focus on math and science achievement. Our MS Math Facilitator meets regularly with the Academic Services instructional coaches to align our resources and pacing.
- Provides professional development opportunities for educators through the district's local endorsement for gifted education; Gaston AIG Local Endorsement or G.A.L.E.
- Regularly communicates with district leaders about AIG programs and services at school board meetings, departmental meetings and administrator meetings.
- Provides data to administrators for placement of gifted students in a regular classroom setting.
- Provides the classroom teachers materials and instructional strategies that will most effectively address the academic needs of advanced learners.

- Collaborates and plans with classroom teachers, instructional support staff and administrators during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Academic MS facilitators meet regularly with classroom teachers to differentiate instruction.
- Provides inclusion opportunities to model lessons for gifted learners.
- Groups students flexibly based on a variety of factors, such as readiness and interest.
- The AIG Department has established websites for communicating and sharing extension and enrichment resources with teachers across the district at all schools K-12. These websites are organized by grade level and password protected so the department can monitor use and revisions.

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

The AIG Department provides data and resources to classroom teachers to help them effectively address the academic needs of advanced learners. This includes strategies for flexible grouping based on a variety of factors, such as readiness and interest.

- Collaboration with content teachers and MTSS team to group students during district FLEX times.
- Differentiate course placement according to student readiness, for example offering high school classes to students in middle school who show readiness.
- Regularly review state and board policies to determine where support of grouping already exists, where changes can be made to further develop mindsets that support grouping practices which facilitate student achievement and growth, and how to further align policy, research, and local practices.
    - For example, we analyze current AIG student achievement and growth data to inform grouping practices and procedures at the school and district level.

* **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.

A consistent delivery of services for AIG students can only occur when there are procedures in place for communication and cooperation among teachers. The AIG Department works diligently to ensure an effective continuation of AIG services from elementary to middle and from middle to high school in the following ways:

- The AIG Department maintains a public facing website linked to the district website which outlines differentiated services and instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan.
- The AIG Department staff meets monthly with department and school leaders to share and articulate services related to the needs of gifted students.
- The AIG Department regularly communicates service plans and gifted student resources with district leadership, school principals, and regular education teachers.
- Elementary AIG teachers, middle school Paideia Advisory Teams and high school AP Coordinators attend monthly and/or quarterly meetings hosted by the AIG Department.

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

Correlation of the AIG program within Gaston County Schools' total instructional program creates a vertical, seamless path of learning for gifted students. Gaston County Schools' AIG Department consistently delivers services throughout the district that are integrally connected to classroom instruction. The AIG Department delivers a continuum of programs and services throughout Gaston County Schools.

- **Elementary**
  - Elementary AIG-licensed teachers are assigned to schools based on the number of identified students at each school. The program offerings and service delivery models are consistent across the district.
  - Implementation of an AIG immersion program for enrichment at a selected school.
- **Middle**
  - Students are served daily in their area(s) of identification.
  - Teachers of the advanced classes are AIG-licensed and have been trained to use the advanced reading and advanced math curricula and pacing guides for instruction.
  - Middle School Facilitators communicate with Elementary AIG teachers regarding services offered in Middle School.
  - The AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators meet regularly with each PLC to provide coaching and collaboration.
  - When students transfer from one school to another, there is no disruption in the advanced learning opportunities of these students. This is accomplished through consistent service delivery and pacing of differentiated advanced units of study in both math and ELA classes.
  - Use of Composer data and EOG data is used to offer pathways for non-identified students to be clustered into advanced classes in middle schools
- **High**
  - Promote communication between the eighth grade English Language Arts and Math 1 teachers and the high school ninth grade Honors/Pre AP teachers
  - Students have the opportunity to self select advanced courses.
  - Teachers of the advanced classes attend AP workshops to ensure quality instruction and consistency across the district.

At every level, the district

- Completes the identification process before students transition to the next level
- Provides tours for students entering elementary, middle or high school
- Works with administrators and guidance counselors to schedule AIG students in the most appropriate classes
- Offers counseling services for students and their parents as they transition from elementary to middle and middle to high school

- Utilizes head count data and auditing by the district's compliance specialists to ensure correct placement of gifted students. Auditing is completed at a minimum twice per academic school year.

* **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.

Gaston County Schools' AIG department has specific procedures in place to address the needs of highly gifted students who warrant accelerative instructional placement. The AIG Department has instructional and placement procedures that are implemented when an appropriate body of evidence indicates acceleration is needed. These opportunities are articulated and explained regularly to school leaders, AIG itinerant staff, and various stakeholders through our websites, regular meetings, and our published AIG plan.

Specific criteria must be met in order for students to be considered for the following placement options:

- Early Admission to Kindergarten
  - This option is for students who are working two to three years beyond peers their age. Gaston County Schools follow the NC State guidelines for Early Admission to Kindergarten as stated in the NC General Statute 115C-364.
  - This application and process is available on the Gaston County Schools public website, and all elementary schools are made aware of where to access it.
  - The Student Assignment Office is also aware of the application and process.
- Content Acceleration
  - This option is for students who are working significantly above grade level in a particular content area and meet specific site-based guidelines. Content-based acceleration includes a variety of strategies that provide students with advanced content, skills, or understanding before the expected age or grade level. In content-based acceleration, students typically remain with peers of the same age and grade for most of the school day but receive higher grade-level instruction via advanced content. The following types of content-based acceleration are available:
    - Advanced Placement (AP) Courses: College level courses taught by high school instructors in the high school setting. These courses are open enrollment and thus accessible to any high school student who wishes to enroll. High schools actively publicize and recruit for these options to ensure that all students and families are familiar with the opportunities and benefits.
    - Dual Enrollment College Courses: College level courses taught by college instructors at Gaston College
- Grade Acceleration
  - This option requires observation, testing, AIG team recommendation and site-based administrative decision for a student to be eligible for grade acceleration.
  - Criteria for Grade Acceleration for grades K - 12:
    - 99% on an Aptitude test
    - 99% on Achievement tests (reading and math)

- Performance of 95% or above
- Teacher Checklist
- Composite score of 115 points

- Early Graduation
  - This option is available for students who have received enough credits to graduate early.

Detailed information about this option can be obtained from each high school's counseling office.

- Dual Enrollment
  - This option is for high school students who wish to take college level courses while still in high school.
  - Detailed information about this option can be obtained from each high school's counseling office.
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)
  - This option is for students in grades 6 - 12 who demonstrate deep mastery of course content through testing and artifacts without actual course seat time. In 2013, the NC Department of Public Instruction instituted State Board Policy GCS-M-1001-13: Transitioning away from seat time in favor of a structure that created flexibility, allowing students to progress as they demonstrate mastery of academic content, regardless of time, place, or pace of learning. CDM allows students to demonstrate mastery of a course's content and receive a pass/fail grade for the course.
  - Detailed information about this option can be obtained from each high school's counseling office.
- Level 5 Math
  - This option allows students who score a Level 5 on an End of Grade/End of Course test to be given advanced math learning opportunities.
  - All students are given this opportunity if they meet the criteria, and the AIG office audits schedules to ensure correct course placement.

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

Gaston County Schools' works to develop effective programming to intentionally cultivate the potential of all K-3 students using differentiated curriculum and instructional strategies, such as our Talent Development Program and Composer lessons.
The Talent Development program is in all elementary schools for grades K - 2, and strives to develop a student's strengths through intentional learning experiences in various domains. This program provides early intervention and development opportunities to maximize potential for possible later AIG Identification.

The Composer Program is an interdisciplinary program designed to promote both the affective and cognitive growth of these students in the Title 1 elementary schools for grades 2 - 5. The program provides instructional services for traditionally underrepresented AIG populations, especially culturally/ethnically diverse, English as a Second Language (ESL), and economically disadvantaged. Some measures that are in place include:

- Provide enrichment classes for non-identified students

- Use multiple criteria for placement consideration
- Collaboration with Exceptional Children and English as a Second Language teachers when appropriate.
- Use of multicultural literature to promote awareness.

The Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) is used at some of the county's largest elementary schools to address the needs of students by fostering creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking through access to extended and enriched curriculum. This model involves regular educators, AIG personnel, special educators, and other instructional staff in talent development opportunities and the opportunity to cultivate potential in young learners.

* **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.

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department provides programs, services, and classroom support to discover and develop potential in all students. Gaston County Schools have intentional programming in place for traditionally underrepresented populations. The AIG Department works collaboratively with Gaston County Schools' Accountability Department and instructional support personnel to utilize data to meet the needs of all students, including underrepresented populations. The AIG Department provides programs, services and classroom support to discover and develop potential in students, even those who may not overtly demonstrate academic or intellectual abilities.

The Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge screens and tests students who would qualify for AIG and/or benefit from differentiation in the AIG classrooms. Students who qualify are either identified as AIG or are in the top 10% of their grade level.

The Composer nurturing program in the Title 1 elementary schools for grades 2 - 5 provides instructional services for traditionally underrepresented AIG populations, especially culturally/ethnically diverse, English as a Second Language (ESL), and economically disadvantaged. Some measures that are in place include:

- Provide enrichment classes for non-identified students at the Title 1 schools.
- Use multiple criteria for placement consideration
- Collaboration with Exceptional Children and English as a Second Language teachers when appropriate.
- Use of multicultural literature to promote awareness.

At the secondary level, the district implements the following practices to change mindsets, frontload, and broaden access to advanced opportunities:

- Students are cluster grouped into advanced courses according to data. District initiated diagnostic/prescriptive software is used to determine changes in instruction delivery based on the growth/needs of identified students using data collected from:
    - EVAAS
    - EOG results
    - Standardized Achievement test results
    - Standardized Aptitude test results

- AIG students who do not place in Math 1 in 8th grade are given an advanced curriculum which frontloads Math 1 standards to better prepare them for Math 1 honors classes in 9th grade.
- AIG students who take English 1 in 8th grade are offered an AP Seminar course in grade 9 at selected schools. This course develops readiness skills for future AP courses.
- The Pre-AP framework is currently implemented in our honors Math 1, English 1, English 2, and World History courses. This framework was developed by the College Board to give all students the opportunity to learn the foundational knowledge and critical thinking skills they need to achieve their full potential. The course frameworks are aligned to College and Career Readiness and Advanced Placement standards.
- The Collegiate Prep Academy is designed to offer a challenging curriculum so students gain the academic confidence and foundational skills necessary for success at the college/university level. Through the Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Pathway, students develop, practice, and sharpen their critical and creative thinking skills by completing the AP Seminar and AP Research courses as well as other AP courses in various subject areas. Students who pass the AP courses and score high enough on the AP exams can earn the AP Seminar and Research Certificate or the AP Capstone Diploma.
- The iAccelerate Academy offers students a rigorous academic framework which culminates in a high school diploma and an Associate Degree in four years while having a full high school experience.

* **Practice J**

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

AIG students have interests and needs that may be addressed outside the classroom setting. It is important to seek ways to offer students opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. The AIG Department of Gaston County Schools sponsors, supports and encourages participation in all local, state or national extracurricular programs and events that support the interests and academic pursuits of gifted students. Information concerning extracurricular activities is made available to all stakeholders through the Gaston County Schools website and individual school communication. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Mathematical Reasoning and Collaboration:
  - Math Masters (Elementary)
  - Math Elite (Middle School)
  - Math Olympiad (Pleasant Ridge GTA)
  - Robotics (Elementary and Middle Schools)
  - Chess Clubs
- Literature and Public Expression
  - Poetry and Prose published literary magazine and celebration
    - Fourth Grade AIG students
  - Coffeehouse 678 Middle school Poetry Out Loud oratorical event

- Battle of the Books (Elementary, and Middle, High)

- Academic Opportunities and Competitions for High School
  - Governor's School
  - Gaston County Commissioners' School of Excellence
  - High Q
  - Quiz Bowl
- Beta Club
  - Junior Beta Club at the Gifted and Talented Academy at Pleasant Ridge
  - Beta Club Participation in State Convention at Cramerton Middle School

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Work closely with school level administration to encourage the best possible placement for the gifted population in the regular ed classroom; whether that be cluster grouping or scheduling students in a classroom with an AIG certified teacher.
2. Provide more professional development on social and emotional needs of gifted learners to all stakeholders, including parents.
3. More intentional focus on creating lessons and special programs to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Gaston County Schools' website AIG informational brochure AIG curriculum
*	AIG Advisory Board meetings Student AIG folders School based Review Team meeting minutes
*	Documented testing accommodations Documentation of student and parent/guardian communications and meetings Documentation of consistent AIG services among all Gaston County Schools
*	Documentation of student participation in extracurricular activities Evidence of opportunities shared with students, teachers, and parents/guardians

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link

AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	Talent Development Program: Overview & Service Guidelines AIG Sponsored Academic Competitions

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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.

An AIG differentiated curriculum is designed to enrich and extend the NCSCOS. The curriculum is developed by the AIG Department to meet the diverse needs of gifted learners. The Gaston County Schools' AIG Department utilizes various service delivery options to adapt the NCSCOS to each student's academic ability and to provide appropriate differentiated instruction.

- Elementary: Students may receive services through the following methods:
  - Weekly pull-outs in both reading and/or math
  - Differentiated and interdisciplinary curriculum, aligned with NCSCOS and Gaston County Schools' pacing guide, for students identified K - 5 in reading and math
  - Extension activities and assignments are provided within the regular classroom
  - Level 5 EOG math students are given advanced learning opportunities
  - Differentiated instruction at the Gifted and Talented Academy at Pleasant Ridge (GTA) utilizes flexible grouping and schoolwide enrichment opportunities
  - Problem based and project-based learning are used to extend and enrich the NCSCOS. These projects are extended over several class periods and students are encouraged and expected to go beyond the standard curriculum in depth and complexity.
- Middle: Students may receive services through the following methods:
  - Daily advanced language arts and advanced math classes where curriculum compacting allows for extension and enrichment beyond the NCSCOS.
  - All Level 5 EOG math students are given advanced math opportunities
  - Differentiated instruction in the Gifted and Talented Academy at Cramerton Middle (GTA) utilizes flexible grouping, Paideia classrooms, and schoolwide enrichment opportunities
  - Problem based and project-based learning are used to extend and enrich the NCSCOS. These projects are extended over several class periods and students are encouraged and expected to go beyond the standard curriculum in depth and complexity.

- High: Students may receive services through the following methods:
  - Self-selected Honors courses where students are exposed to the Pre-AP Curriculum to build readiness for advanced coursework
  - Self-selected Advanced Placement (AP) courses and dual enrollment courses where students are taking college level courses. This requires students to advance beyond the NCSCOS and exposes them to advanced ideas and theories.
  - College Board AP Capstone Program at Forestview High School
  - iAccelerate program at Ashbrook High School

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

All AIG students do not learn at the same rate or in the same way; therefore, the curriculum must be enriched, extended, and/or accelerated to accommodate a wide range of ability levels. Gaston County Schools utilizes research-based, diverse instructional practices according to students' readiness and interests.

- Elementary
  - An AIG-licensed teacher is assigned to each elementary school to provide rigorous, differentiated instruction and to assist classroom teachers in the implementation of strategies and resources that would enhance the learning environment for all gifted students.
  - AIG teachers work collaboratively with the AIG Curriculum Specialist to design curricular units that are aligned with, but also extend and enrich, the NCSCOS. These units are vertically aligned and are inclusive of research-based best practices. Careful consideration is given to the modification of content, process, products, and learning environment as they relate to differentiated gifted instruction. Methods include collaborative learning, choice of product, hands-on activities, technology and flexible seating. Fidelity in the implementation of these units exists through AIG teachers following a semester-long Gaston County Schools' AIG pacing guide.
  - Flexible grouping of AIG-identified students is encouraged. Cluster grouping is used when the regular classroom teacher is AIG certified.
  - The Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge Elementary School offers daily instruction in all core subject areas by an AIG-licensed teacher.
- Middle
  - Gifted middle school students are assigned to AIG-licensed teachers for advanced reading and/or advanced math classes.
  - The AIG Curriculum Specialist, along with the AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators develop and implement extensions and an advanced compacted curriculum and pacing guides aligned with the NCSCOS including enrichment activities and/or independent projects.
  - Teachers use evidence-based strategies such as inquiry based learning, higher order questioning, Shared Inquiry, Socratic seminars, and Critical Media Literacy investigations. These strategies are used based on the needs of the students.
  - The Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Cramerton Middle School offers daily instruction in all core subject areas by an AIG-licensed teacher. These teachers use curriculum compacting to allow time for extension and enrichment of the NCSCOS. Teachers incorporate Paideia seminar texts to build on critical thinking skills, as well as investigations and higher order questioning.
- High

- Differentiation options are available to gifted learners through self-selected honors courses, Advanced Placement Preparatory courses, Advanced Placement courses, North Carolina Virtual Public School, Gaston Early College High School, Dual Enrollment at our local community college, Gaston County Schools' Online courses, and Community College Preparatory (CCP) courses.
- Many high school teachers have obtained gifted licensure as well as Advanced Placement training. Socratic seminars and project and problem-based learning are two examples of instructional strategies used in advanced high school courses.
- The Gaston County Schools' AIG Department makes a commitment to provide funding for teachers to attend AP summer institutes in their content areas as well as subsequent one day updates.

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

Elementary AIG teachers have grade level curriculum notebooks, as well as access to a Google site, Schoology and Canvas Courses with shared lesson plans and resources. The AIG Curriculum includes some of the following either through pull-out classes or regular classroom enrichment:

- Jacob's Ladder, Junior Great Books, Advanced extensions for gifted learners in middle grades ELA
- Marcy Cook Manipulatives, Hands on Equations , Math Quest, and Illustrative Math, ThinkLaw curriculum
- Inventory of differentiation materials (Independent Investigation Model {IIM}, Greek and Latin Roots, Math Rules)
- Technology based instruction through digital learning tools, including iPads and apps, Chromebooks, online quizzes, interactive lessons, Annotate, Google apps, and Green Screen
- Primary Education Thinking Skills by Nichols, Wolfe & Merritt (uses Bloom's Taxonomy & Renzulli's Triad Model), 3D printing created through Tinkercad
- Reading and math mysteries (Detective Club, Loose Caboose, One Hour Mysteries, More One Hour Mysteries
- Paideia Seminar and the School-wide Enrichment Model (SEM) in the two Gifted and Talented Academies
- Annual Science Fair at the Gifted and Talented Academy at Pleasant Ridge

AIG students often have social and emotional needs not understood by others. The AIG Department strives to ensure instructional practices support the social and emotional needs of gifted learners at all grade levels in the following ways:

- Elementary
  - Provide a lending library with resources for student check-out that address topics for the social and emotional challenges of gifted learners
  - Provide a lending library for parents with materials that highlight best practice and characteristics of gifted students including twice exceptional, highly gifted, perfectionism and underachieving gifted students
  - Share quarterly articles with parents pertaining to meeting the social-emotional needs of gifted students
  - Begin each academic year with activities that promote discussions about the challenges of being gifted.

- Collaborate, as needed, with the counseling department to meet the social and emotional needs of gifted learners
- Implement Morning Meeting routine
- Implement curriculum units and student projects that encourage social and emotional self-awareness

- Middle/High
  - Middle School AIG ELA teachers utilize targeted texts within Socratic seminars to enhance and support the social-emotional needs of our gifted learners
  - Collaborate with the counseling department to meet the social/emotional needs of gifted learners
  - Employ (2) AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators to coach teachers of gifted learners, as well as a K-12 Curriculum Specialist who works with teachers K-12

* **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.

In Gaston County Schools, the AIG program includes a deliberate focus on providing real world opportunities and materials with our students to develop critical thinking and collaboration, creativity, curiosity and leadership skills. This focus includes utilizing a variety of the following:

- Digital learning tools (LED displays, iPads, Chromebooks) encourage collaboration and creativity through process and product
- Development of integrated curriculum units incorporating these skills across all grade levels and content areas
- Teachers utilize lessons involving research, shared documents with projects, digital breakout rooms, and use digital design tools to create visual and multimedia content
- Critical Media Literacy in AIG middle School ELA classrooms are utilized for accessing, analyzing, evaluating, creating, and engaging with messages in various formats, including print, video, and the internet. Media literacy fosters an understanding of the media's role in society and develops the critical thinking and self-expression skills essential for active participation in a democracy
- Assignments and project rubrics provide opportunities for self-assessment and reflection
- Middle and high school alternative learning opportunities such as NC Virtual School
- School Choice Academy Programs in elementary, middle and high school which focus on Career, Collegiate Prep, Health Sciences, Leadership, Performing Arts, Technology and STEAM
- Math competitions provide elementary and middle school students the opportunity to compete on a local, state and national level while learning rigorous, math problem-solving strategies.
- Gaston County Schools' online courses
- Commissioner's School of Excellence

- Community service projects
- Mentoring, job shadowing, or apprenticeships with local businesses
- Opportunities for students to explore the Career Center through the Career and Technical Education Department
- Exploration of multiple intelligences through School-wide Enrichment Model Enrichment Clusters at Gifted and Talented Academies
- The Collegiate Prep Academy at Forestview High School: The AP Capstone program is a rigorous course of study with a writing intensive curriculum during freshman and sophomore year. During junior and senior year, students will take AP courses aligned with their interests, including AP Seminar and AP Research offered only at the AP Academy.
- The AIG Dept. uses the NCDPI resources for Portrait of a Graduate to inform curriculum additions and changes in order to embed the durable skills and mindsets in instruction supported by this work. All AIG teachers receive training from the AIG Dept. on incorporating Portrait of a Graduate durable skills into their lessons.

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

Ongoing assessments foster understanding. They inform teachers about what students currently understand and how to proceed with subsequent teaching and learning. Gaston County Schools recognizes how important this feedback is for students' success and supports the use of the following tools to differentiate curriculum and instruction.

- Development and implementation of flexible groups and differentiation for students is based on assessment data including district assessments, pretests and post-tests, standardized tests, data notebooks, AIG progress reports, and AIG identification assessments
- AIG teachers have access to data reports in order to collaborate and plan with classroom teachers to encourage growth of all students
- AIG teachers work collaboratively with classroom teachers to provide resources and materials to enrich and extend the implemented curriculum
- The Gifted and Talented Academies (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge Elementary and Cramerton Middle use the assessment data to formulate flexible grouping, small group math and strategy groups
- The AIG Curriculum Specialist, along with a designated team of AIG-licensed teachers, annually revises AIG curriculum pacing guides using student achievement data and teacher feedback
- AP teachers use AP Classroom and its formative assessments (Topic Questions, Personal Progress Checks) to differentiate and scaffold student learning in their AP classes. They also use the summative questions in the tool to review with AP students before the AP exams.

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

AIG personnel collaborate with other professional personnel to provide AIG students appropriate differentiated instruction. By sharing knowledge and expertise, our gifted students receive challenging educational experiences. Personnel work together in the following ways:

- AIG teachers and classroom teachers discuss individual student needs and strengths to better provide differentiated curriculum and appropriate instruction to promote individual student growth.
- Elementary AIG teachers meet monthly for AIG PLC meetings where they plan advanced content, participate in problem solving, refine the implementation of differentiated instructional units, and evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum and instructional units.
- Communication among the Department for Exceptional Children, the Guidance Department, the ESL Department, classroom teachers and the AIG Department exists to provide appropriate instruction for twice-exceptional students and multi-language learners.
- Relevant units and lessons are created for the district by using existing differentiated curriculum and instruction examples (Junior Great Books, Paideia Seminars, Primary Education Thinking Skills) for planning teams.
- The AIG Department collaborates with the curriculum department for ongoing implementation of Standards Based Grading for gifted learners.
- The AIG Director meets bi-weekly with other department heads to focus on curriculum integration and implementation across the district, K-12. These meetings guide the use of differentiated units and/or lessons and the integration of basic differentiation strategies across the district to support the advanced learning needs of gifted students.
- Middle School Academic Facilitators collaborate with Instructional Coaches from the Academic Services Department to differentiate curriculum based on student needs.
- The AIG Department collaborates with the Academic Services Department (Curriculum and Instruction) to create lessons for students scoring a level 4 on the Proficiency Scales.
- The AIG Department collaborates with the Academic Services Department (Curriculum and Instruction) for implementation of Personalized Learning Plans for gifted learners.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Opportunities for professional development pertaining to advanced technology are increasingly needed.
2. Cluster group identified students together in the same classroom when possible.
3. Provide more training for parents and families to support the social and emotional needs of advanced learners.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Specific curricular units by grade levels, lessons and activities designed for gifted students Student work samples PEPs/IPEPs
*	Assessment examples (iReady data, common formative assessments, unit assessments) AIG Plan Survey results from students, teachers and parents/guardians
*	AP Training registration and reports on use of AP Classroom Teacher resource library check out Nurturing Compassion and S.E.M.S. Program curriculum and data

* Samples of differentiated lessons and units of study
Digital learning tools
Sample newsletters

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	GALE Local Endorsement Description Example of AIG Meeting Agendas

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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.

Gaston County Schools employs a full time AIG- licensed educator (AIG Director) to oversee the K - 12 AIG program. This person works under the leadership of the Associate Superintendent of Academic Services. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide guidance to the AIG Specialists, AIG Academic Facilitators and AIG teachers through monthly meetings and frequent contacts by email or phone
- Oversee the development and/or implementation of accelerated curriculum for the AIG, Composer, and Talent Development Programs
- Oversee the Pre-AP/Honors, and Advanced Placement (AP) Programs in all high schools
- Oversee the educational delivery of AIG program goals at each individual school, K-12
- Work with the Gaston County Schools' Accountability Department to analyze and disseminate growth data for the AIG, Composer, and Advanced Placement (AP) Programs
- Monitor, oversee, and evaluate the local AIG plan annually and make necessary revisions
- Conduct surveys to elicit feedback from stakeholders.
- Oversee the plan revision process every three years as required by DPI.
- Oversee the collection and compilation of headcount data for the AIG and nurturing programs and forward the appropriate reports to DPI
- Work with the Associate Superintendent for Academic Services to oversee AIG budget, using state and local allocated funds according to state and local policies
- Communicate with other Central Office personnel and with the administrators at all school sites to ensure consistent and equitable identification procedures and service delivery models in all grade levels
- Work with all other departments within the district to ensure consistency in aligning AIG goals with other district initiatives
- Oversee Pre-AP, AP, and Paideia teacher training, as well as the local AIG licensure endorsement program GALE
- Work collaboratively with high school Honors/Pre-AP, and AP teachers to provide necessary support and materials
- Assist high school counselors with the AP exam process and offer district wide AP review sessions for students prior to exams

- Coordinate and submit applications for the North Carolina Governor's School application process
- Organize and support the following district wide competitions and programs: Math Masters, Math Elite, Elementary, Middle, and High School Battle of the Books, Poetry and Prose Celebration, Robotics, and Coffeehouse 678.
- Provide current professional articles and books to engage the AIG Specialists, AIG Academic Facilitators and AIG teachers in continued adult learning regarding high achieving students
- Attend and actively participate in regional and area meetings, professional development opportunities, and other statewide initiatives to support gifted programs

* **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.

The Gaston County Schools' AIG Director works collaboratively with the AIG Curriculum Specialist, AIG Compliance Specialist, AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators and AIG teachers to address the needs of our AIG population. Together we work to merge all programs, strategies and resources to ensure the total child is challenged and enriched. The AIG teachers assigned to Gaston County Schools are AIG-licensed educators whose duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Oversee the referral, testing, and placement process
- Conduct parent meetings to discuss the results of student testing
- Complete all paperwork as it relates to AIG student placement
- Serve the AIG students in one or more of the following ways: pull-out services, push-in whole group services, inclusion, flexible groups, daily advanced reading and/or math instruction in middle and high school
- Provide consultative services
- Work collaboratively with the other AIG teachers and/or classroom teachers to plan, develop, and implement an accelerated curriculum
- Utilize research-based resources and materials to enrich and extend the NCSCOS
- Provide the classroom teachers with resources/materials for differentiation
- Support the Social-Emotional development of students by using Socratic seminars in the middle school ELA classrooms and Paideia seminars in the two Gifted and Talented Academies

* **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.

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department recognizes that the total educational team must be involved in ongoing professional development. The AIG Director establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services in the following ways:

- Work with Gaston County Schools' Curriculum and Academic Facilitators to ensure all AIG teachers are up to date on all district initiatives and to provide additional or specialized training as needed
- Promote growth of the district's gifted population by providing professional development and resources to classroom teachers to help them better understand gifted students, to assist them in the development of differentiated math and reading lessons, and to work with them to strategize ways to best meet the needs of gifted learners
- Correspond with classroom teachers, special education teachers and guidance counselors on an ongoing basis
- Encourage elementary AIG teachers and the AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators to model differentiated lessons for classroom teachers as an extension to the NCSCOS
- Provide opportunities to attend local, state, and national gifted conferences and workshops to promote rigorous and relevant instruction for the gifted learner (this includes NCAGT Conferences and national gifted conferences when budget allows).
- Schedule and facilitate beginning of the year and monthly meetings to discuss and plan the implementation of program updates
- Oversee monthly and/or Elementary AIG meetings, Gifted and Talented Academies and Central Office staff meetings
- Provide support for AIG teachers through local endorsement professional development modules in gifted education (G.A.L.E.)
- Require ongoing training and support in the Socratic method for middle school AIG ELA teachers
- Require ongoing training and support at the Gifted and Talented Academies in Paideia seminar, Paideia classroom, and Paideia Coach projects
- Require ongoing training and support in mathematical differentiation, curriculum compacting, and acceleration for middle school AIG Math teachers.
- Communicate with school administrators about benefits of various options of instructional delivery such as flexible grouping, inclusion and cluster grouping for specific academic areas
- Provide monthly professional development for elementary AIG itinerant teachers in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

* **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.

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department believes it is advantageous for all gifted students to be taught by regular classroom teachers who are either AIG-licensed or have met local professional development requirements. Gaston County Schools' AIG Department has a local endorsement program for teachers entitled G.A.L.E (Gaston County Schools AIG Local Endorsement) to help teachers obtain their AIG licensure.

- **Elementary**
  - All AIG teachers are required to have or be actively pursuing state AIG licensure
  - AIG students' placement into regular education classrooms is an administrative site-based decision but cluster grouping is encouraged by the district.
  - Regular education teachers with gifted learners in their classrooms are encouraged to hold AIG licensure or to pursue AIG professional development courses; the regular education teachers are supported by the AIG teacher in the following ways:

- Provide differentiated services
- Meet to discuss and plan differentiated learning opportunities
- Provide resources and materials for acceleration
- Meet jointly with parents/guardians and teachers to discuss learning alternatives and extra-curricular opportunities
- The Gifted and Talented Academy at Pleasant Ridge (GTA) general classroom teachers are required to have or be actively pursuing state AIG licensure
- All Belmont Central Elementary general classroom teachers are G.A.L.E certified and encouraged to pursue state licensure due to the high proportion of AIG identified learners at the school

- **Middle**
  - All AIG ELA and Math teachers are required to have or be actively pursuing AIG state licensure
  - Professional development, including face-to-face and asynchronous coursework opportunities, is offered to assist teachers wishing to obtain AIG licensure
  - AIG students are served daily in their area(s) of identification by AIG-licensed teachers
  - The Gifted and Talented Academy at Cramerton Middle (GTA) teachers are required to have or be actively pursuing state AIG licensure
  - The AIG Curriculum Specialist provides resources and materials and works collaboratively with the AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators and the AIG middle school teachers to ensure advanced English language arts and advanced math curricula and extensions are taught
  - Auditing of middle school ELA and math classroom rosters to ensure students are receiving appropriate services
- **High**
  - All Honors English 1 and 2, Math 1, and World History teachers are trained for the Pre-AP curriculum to be used in Honors courses
  - The AIG Department verifies that teachers assigned to teach Advanced Placement courses have received the appropriate training and works with high school AP Coordinators to secure training when necessary and/or as required by the College Board. The district funds initial and renewal training for all teachers of these courses. All Advanced Placement teachers are strongly encouraged to attend a week-long summer institute in their respective discipline(s) every five years.

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

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department is committed to recruiting and retaining AIG-licensed professionals who reflect the vast diversity of the student populations they serve.

- To ensure that gifted students have the most qualified teachers, the AIG Department requires that teachers obtain gifted education licensure through the state. Alternatively, prospective teachers of gifted students may obtain local district endorsement through the G.A.L.E. Program (Gaston County Schools'

AIG Local Endorsement) With this program, the AIG Department is able to recruit teachers to participate in professional development through online course modules designed to address the academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted students.

- Additionally, the AIG Department works with the Human Resource Department to include talented prospective teachers from diverse backgrounds who have an interest in working with students who are gifted or show gifted potential
- Retaining gifted education teachers requires strategies that acknowledge their specialized skills, provide meaningful support, and foster a sense of purpose and belonging: specialized training, conferences and networking, career growth.
- The AIG Department supports this professional growth and development by sponsoring teacher attendance and participation at state and national AP, Paideia, and gifted conferences and workshops.

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

Professional learning opportunities regarding gifted education are ongoing and valued in Gaston County Schools. The AIG Director, the AIG Curriculum Specialist, the AIG Compliance Specialist and the AIG Middle School Academic Facilitators provide these opportunities in the following ways: Develop, share, and implement differentiated AIG/G.E.M.S./Composer curriculum

- Attend AP, Paideia, NCAGT and other workshops/conferences on both county, state and national levels
- AIG licensed teachers will, as funding allows, attend NC Association for the Gifted and Talented Conferences
- Purchase resources/materials to ensure implementation of new strategies as they relate to equity and excellence
- Create and continually update the AIG curriculum website to provide professional development for AIG classroom teachers and other school personnel.
- Offer ongoing Paideia training for teachers at the two Gifted and Talented Academies
- Support monthly meetings of the AIG lead teacher and the staff of the Gifted and Talented Academies to align program standards

* **Practice G**
Aligns professional development opportunities with local AIG program goals, other district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education with opportunities to refine applications of professional learning.

AIG teachers benefit from collaboration with one another as well as with classroom teachers. Opportunities to meet together on a consistent basis strengthen and refine the gifted program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Facilitate regularly scheduled planning meetings
- Share materials, resources, ideas and/or accelerated lessons through school-based and district provided resources, such as departmental website and LMS platforms
- Attend NCAGT and other workshops/conferences on both district, state and national levels
- Provide curriculum planning days to ensure continued alignment of the AIG curriculum with the district pacing and unit guides

- During monthly AIG department meetings, a designated peer coaching session will be conducted to foster the sharing and application of best practices in gifted education. These sessions will focus on collaborative learning, skill enhancement, and the implementation of innovative strategies tailored to the needs of gifted learners.
- Create and continually update the AIG district sites to provide professional development for AIG classroom teachers and other school personnel
- Create a district supported LMS to provide teaching resources and extensions for AIG middle school classroom teachers
- Utilize best practices for the coaching and support to teachers of gifted students models
- Modify the district professional development initiatives for AIG teachers to meet the needs of gifted learners
- Elementary AIG Itinerant teachers will present at the district annual Teaching and Learning Conference
- AIG Curriculum Specialists and Academic Facilitators will present at the district annual Teaching and Learning Conference
- AP Coordinators are expected to take new learnings from trainings back to their instructional staff and organize PLCs specific to teachers of advanced coursework as a collaborative forum to address best practices in support of advanced learners. These professional learning opportunities align with district priorities of increasing enrollment in advanced secondary coursework as well as closing the opportunity gap which exists between racial demographic groups in the district.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Extend professional development opportunities through the AIG Learning Management System for various stakeholders including parents, classroom teachers, school counselors, special education teachers, ESL personnel, and administrators.
2. Survey certified staff and principals on a regular basis to determine areas/topics of interest for AIG/gifted learners for in-service training opportunities. This is done, but only sporadically.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Gaston County Schools' AIG Director's job description AIG teachers' qualifications/certifications
*	Schedules, agendas and attendance rosters of professional learning opportunities Documented meeting notes and agendas
*	Examples of resources produced through collaboration

Documents

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

Gaston County Schools (360) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

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

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

The AIG Department is committed to establishing strong partnerships with stakeholders to foster support of our gifted students. Partnerships are utilized to provide support in all areas in the following ways:

- Collaboration with Gaston County Schools Communications Department
- Conferences with parents/guardians for initial placement and annual reviews
- Phone and/or email contact with parents/guardians at the school and district levels as needed
- Gaston County Schools' AIG web page provides information on the components of the gifted program, showcases student enrichment opportunities and highlights student accomplishments
- Gifted Education Program informational brochure provide parents written, accurate information about the AIG program options with copies available to interested parents at each school site and at the Gaston County Schools' Central Office building
- Quarterly newsletters and semester progress reports to elementary student families, detailing the curriculum and standards taught, and addressing topics important to AIG students' social and emotional learning needs
- Maintain an elementary resource library on the social and emotional needs of gifted children available for parents and students
- Parent and student surveys conducted annually to identify areas of strength and need in the AIG program design and implementation procedures
- The AIG Parent Advisory Board meeting at least twice yearly to address issues as they relate to gifted education. This board will review the AIG plan and make recommendations for program improvement. This intentional parent involvement will provide an outlet for two-way communication and feedback
    - The group may be comprised of the following: AIG Director and Specialists, central office staff, school administrators, AIG teachers, community members, and AIG parents/ family members

The AIG department implements initiatives for student benefit and intentionally attempts to involve parents/guardians, families, and the community in supporting gifted education through activities such as:

- Teacher and/or student-led conferences
- Academic Competitions and Special Events:
  - Battle of the Books (Elementary, Middle, High)
  - Math Masters
  - Poetry and Prose Celebration
  - Math Elite
  - Coffeehouse 678
  - Robotics
- Parent/community curriculum events (providing social and emotional resources)
- Annual Math and/or Science & Engineering Fair for the Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge for students and parents
- Enrichment Showcase (SEM) for the Gifted and Talented Academies, allowing students the opportunity to showcase and share products and/or performances created during enrichment clusters with their parents/guardians, families, and the community at large
- Annual Paideia Parent Night at Cramerton Middle School GTA
- Junior Beta Club for the Gifted and Talented Academy (GTA) at Pleasant Ridge for students

* **Practice B**
Partners with community stakeholders, such as institutions of higher education, local business and industry partners, and others to enhance and support the local AIG program and services.

Extensive expertise abounds within our institutions of higher learning, local businesses and industry, and other community stakeholders. Encouraging partnerships with these groups provide opportunities for the AIG Department to utilize the knowledge they possess and to seek their academic support. Working together as a unified group helps to foster the development of marketable skills and to provide alternative ways to enhance the educational pursuits of our gifted learners. Partnerships are formed within the community to enhance and gain support for AIG programs and services. Partnerships with agencies and/or groups may include:

- AIG Parent Advisory Board
- Faith based community - collaborations such as partnerships with several area churches to host academic competitions and special events
- Local industries and businesses
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte Special Education and Child Development Department Faculty - consultant for Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM)

- National Paideia Center in Asheville (Gifted and Talented Academies at Pleasant Ridge Elementary and Cramerton Middle School)
- Gaston College partnership for the iAccelerate Academy program

Gaston County Schools' AIG Director/Specialists/Facilitators/Teachers communicate with stakeholders both formally and informally to share information regarding the AIG program and to review policies as related to gifted education. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be active participants in their child's educational pursuits, and their input is welcomed.

The AIG Department shares information about program services, local plan components, and gifted education policies with all stakeholders through websites, community events, and various public meetings. The AIG Department communicates to stakeholders in following ways:

- AIG teacher newsletters, AIG Program brochure and AIG web page
- Annual parent and student surveys
- Parent conferences
- AIG Parent Advisory Board
- Schoology Learning Management System (LMS)
- The Gifted and Talented Academies (GTA) classroom newsletters sharing curriculum updates and research for gifted learners
- Cramerton Middle School GTA and Pleasant Ridge Elementary GTA will utilize Paideia Coached projects to extend the classroom experience to community members and businesses. For example: 6th grade science classes researched the anatomy of the eye, did cow eye dissections, created multimedia displays, and then partnered with community Optometry clinics to display the information to the public.
- During Enrichment Clusters, students connect with community members in various ways, for example students visit nursing homes, pre-schools, and have guest speakers visit to explore topics for student enrichment and talent development.
-

* **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 order to effectively involve stakeholders in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the local AIG program and plan, Gaston County Schools' AIG Department will continue to:

- Conduct surveys and shares results of all stakeholders
- Promote diversity among members of the AIG Parent Advisory Board
- Establish a leadership group that provides feedback about the GCS AIG Program

- Plan ways to promote the gifted program and to seek more parental involvement to allow parents opportunities to make suggestions for improvement and assist in determining ways to address issues

The AIG Parent Advisory Board meets at least twice yearly to address issues as they relate to gifted education. The AIG Parent Advisory Board reviews the AIG plan and makes recommendations for program improvement.

- Parent Advisory Group Sources of Evidence include but are not limited to: Invitations and membership rosters for various AIG related committees, documentation of agendas, notes, suggestions and decisions made by various committees, evidence of a diverse representation of stakeholders, including members of the community, and survey results

* **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.

Gaston County Schools' AIG personnel strive to inform parents of educational opportunities that will expand the horizons of gifted students. It is important to be mindful of the diverse population and make every effort to notify parents/guardians in their native language. The AIG Department works collaboratively with the Gaston County Schools' English as a Second Language (ESL) Department to ensure non-English speaking parents/guardians and students are informed of available educational opportunities. The AIG Department shares information about program services, local plan components, and gifted education policies with all stakeholders through websites, community events, and various public meetings.

The Gaston County Schools website hosts an AIG page where the AIG Plan is linked, as well as additional information sheets on various opportunities and services, including our Procedures to Resolve Disagreements. Our plan, as well as student opportunities in AIG, are shared with school leaders K-12 and our events are included in Board of Education highlights every spring.

These events include the following:

- District competitions, celebrations and learning opportunities such as Battle of the Books, Math Masters, Math Elite, Poetry and Prose Celebration, Chess Clubs, Coffeehouse 678, Gaston County Schools' Math and/or Science & Engineering Fair, Robotics competition, Governor's School, and Gaston County Commissioners' School of Excellence

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Encourage participation on the AIG Parent Advisory Board.
2. Encourage parent attendance at the district competitions and celebrations.
3. Publicize existing partnerships and establish new ones.
4. Work with Gaston County Schools' Business Partnerships Director to establish new partnerships with area businesses.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Gaston County Schools' website
AIG website

* Translated documents
Survey results

* Award and recognition presentations at district competitions and initiatives
Copies of staff meetings' notes and presentations

* Documentation of feedback from various committees
Evidence of a diverse representation of stakeholders, including members of the community

Documents

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

Gaston County Schools (360) 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.

Gaston 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 evaluated annually and any changes that are deemed necessary are made at the time of review.

Every three years, as mandated by the state, the AIG plan is revised by multiple committees of stakeholders including elementary AIG teachers, Parent Advisory Board members, school principals and leaders. At that time, each component of the plan is discussed and necessary revisions are made to ensure the continuation of programs and services which address the unique academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted learners. The AIG Director presents and submits the changes to the local board of education for final approval. The revisions are then forwarded to the Department of Public Instruction.

* **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.

Gaston County Schools is committed to ensuring conformity in the implementation of the AIG plan. The identification processes and service delivery models are consistent across the district. Additionally, the same identification process is utilized throughout the district. K - 12 teachers responsible for the referral, testing, and placement processes are properly trained to ensure consistency in the service delivery models offered district wide to AIG-identified students. All procedures are shared with regular classroom teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, and all other stakeholders annually. This information is posted on the AIG page of the Gaston County Schools' website.

- The Elementary AIG teachers meet frequently to plan, develop and strategize ways to maximize the teaching/learning opportunities for AIG-identified students. As referred to in other parts of this plan, a number of researched-based programs, resources and units of study are utilized consistently in each school and at each grade level. Middle School Academic Facilitators meet frequently with AIG ELA and Math teachers to plan and support the differentiated curriculum pacing for gifted learners.
- The AIG Director serves as a member of the district level instructional team allowing for direct sharing of program information and monitoring of program implementation.
- The AIG Director monitors the implementation of AP programming in the district's high schools. Quarterly AP Coordinator meetings ensure consistency and equity in availability, access, recruitment practices, and quality control for advanced coursework.

- The AIG Dept. monitors district data and provides that data to schools leaders, AIG teachers, and regular classroom teachers as needed according to individual student needs. This data is used to inform student scheduling, interventions, and in some cases acceleration.

* **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 AIG Director oversees the expenditures of the state funds and works collaboratively with the district's finance department to ensure that all allocated funds are appropriately dispersed. The state funds allocated for the local AIG program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- AIG-licensed teachers' salaries and benefits
- Curriculum resources and materials as well as funds to staff curriculum development and revision committees (for example during the summer)
- AIG/Advanced Placement teacher training
- Advanced Placement course resources, Digital Learning Tools
- Workshop expenses
- Field trips (as related to gifted education)
- AIG sponsored district competitions, celebrations and learning opportunities.
- Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) Training for Gifted and Talented Academies (GTA)
- Paideia Training for Gifted and Talented Academies (GTA)
- Gifted and Talented Academies (GTA) expenses
- AIG teacher licensure

Practice D: Maintains and analyzes multiple

* **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.

Annually, Gaston County Schools maintains, analyzes, and shares student performance growth data in grades 3 - 12 with all stakeholders including the local School Board, Central Office personnel, school administrators, teachers and parents/guardians.

Annual growth is assessed, as well as growth over time, in both elementary and middle schools. AIG teachers and regular classroom teachers use this data to plan and implement appropriate educational opportunities for gifted learners. The growth data analyzed and shared includes:

- EOG tests - reading, math and science results

- District data assessments
- Quarterly classroom performance data (report cards)
- AIG progress reports
- Student project rubrics
- Informal/Formal assessments
- Teacher-led conferences with students identifying areas of strength and weakness
- Annual report of the number of AIG identified students who successfully completed an AP or dual enrollment course

The data used to determine growth consists of ongoing assessments and periodic formal assessments at the end of units of study.

The number of students in high school taking Honors and AP Courses is evaluated. High school AP exam data is reported annually to various stakeholders. During the semi-annual headcount processes, the number of students who have dropped out during that school year is calculated. High school counselors work with both students and parents/guardians and are often able to intervene and suggest alternatives when students seek to withdraw from school. Information is shared with the High School Executive Director and the Director of High School Instruction.

District data is disaggregated for the K- 12 AIG subgroup.

* **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.

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department works diligently to be inclusive of underrepresented populations. The Talent Development program at all elementary schools, and the Composer nurturing program in the Title 1 elementary schools, gives an opportunity to identify students who demonstrate gifted potential. The expansion of the program has allowed the AIG Department to reach untapped potential by offering students enriched learning that is not dependent on their background or economic status; therefore, no student is overlooked for gifted education. Many of these students eventually meet the criteria for placement in the gifted program. As a result, the district’s percentage of identified minority and disadvantaged students and twice-exceptional students has increased.

The AIG Department supports the representation and retention of underrepresented populations through the following ways:

- Development of the Talent Development program to serve K-2 students at all elementary schools
- Expansion of the Composer nurturing program in grades 2 - 5, for minority and disadvantaged students who demonstrate gifted tendencies to every Title 1 elementary school
- Tracking data of students tested for the AIG and Composer programs
- Annual review of student data for those who did not qualify the previous year for the nurturing program to determine if additional testing should be considered
- Collaboration with the ESL Department of our local school system to identify English Language Learners who are very strong mathematically

- Work with EC teachers to identify students who have dual exceptionalities and offer accommodations to ensure successful learning experiences
- Utilize alternative assessments and nonverbal tests to assist in the identification of students
- Offer accelerated services such as grade and/or content acceleration, early college, AP coursework, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, etc. for our highly gifted students
- Encourage students to participate in AIG supported extracurricular opportunities. These include Robotics, Chess Club, Governor's School, Commissioners' School of Excellence, Battle of the Books, Math Masters, Math Elite, Poetry and Prose, Coffeehouse 678

* **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 teachers who currently serve students in grades K - 5 must have AIG licensure. Teachers serving students in grades 6 - 8 either have AIG licensure, are taking the AIG Praxis or are actively pursuing licensure from an accredited university. Teachers work with the AIG Department and the Human Resources Department in regards to AIG licensure and other professional development requirements. AIG credentials are checked annually for teachers assigned to teach the AIG classes in the middle schools and the gifted academies. Gaston County Schools has a local endorsement entitled G.A.L.E. designed for teachers in low-performing schools where teacher turnover is higher and there is a lower percentage of AIG-identified students.

Teachers in grades 9 - 12 who are teaching AP classes have already attended or will be attending College Board Summer Institutes for their respective disciplines. At least once every five years, AP teachers are required to attend a College Board sponsored one-day update training session. The AP teachers also are encouraged to network with other AP teachers from across the district who teach the same AP courses.

* **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.

Each year, students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators are given an opportunity to complete a survey to share positive aspects and feedback for growth. During the AIG Plan revisions cycle, an extensive online survey is completed by all stakeholder groups. The results of this survey are used to evaluate and revise the plan and shared with all stakeholders annually. This information is made available to stakeholders through scheduled parent meetings, staff meetings, Principal/Assistant Principal meetings, district leadership meetings, and the AIG webpage and newsletters.

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

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department recognizes the need to disseminate program evaluation data to stakeholders. Since this data is used to evaluate and revise the local plan and programs, it is imperative to make this data readily accessible to stakeholders. Data is disaggregated and shared with each of the following groups:

- Staff members at individual school sites (example: student MTSS data)

- AIG Parent Advisory Board (ex: program results focused on successes and challenges)
- Instructional Committee of the Gaston County Board of Education (ex: changes to program delivery and program evaluation data)
- District leadership, Principals and Assistant Principals (ex: program evaluation data or service delivery data)
- AIG students and parents/guardians from elementary, middle school, and high school levels (ex: progress reports and report cards)

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

The Gaston County Schools' AIG Department protects the rights of AIG students by requiring parent/guardian consent for student identification and placement during parent teacher conference time, providing parents/guardians a copy of the Gaston County Schools' Procedures to Resolve Disagreements, housing AIG student folders and personal information in locked file cabinets and securing all student information that is transmitted electronically.

Gaston County Schools' AIG Program goals, objectives and service delivery options are clearly communicated to parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians who have questions or concerns should first talk with the regular education teacher, the AIG teacher and/or the school principal. In the event the parents/guardians disagree with a decision, it is hoped that the concerns may be resolved at the local level. If the parents/guardians disagree with a decision, Gaston County Schools' AIG Program has leveled procedures for resolving disagreements. This begins with a school level meeting with the AIG team, and progresses to an administrative review at the district level, including the AIG Director. If disagreement is not resolved, the grievance can be taken to the local school board for review, mediation, and/or Administrative Law Hearing.

Written policies and procedures are also in place for students who transfer from school to school within the county, from other LEAs within the state, or from other states.

Transfers from schools outside our system (AIG and non AIG):

- **Elementary**
  - Students are placed in appropriate grade-level classrooms
  - If a student transfers during the school year, school personnel notify the AIG teacher assigned to that school and appropriate placement is determined after reviewing the student's most current testing data and classroom performance. If the student is AIG from another district with an AIG label, documentation is requested from previous school to also help with determining placement. Parents are then contacted regarding the appropriate class placement.
  - Additional testing is administered if warranted
  - The AIG team takes appropriate action
- **Middle**
  - Summer testing is offered if student records show a need for AIG identification

- If a student transfers during the school year, school personnel notify the AIG Department and the appropriate placement is determined after reviewing the student's most current testing data and classroom performance. If the student is AIG from another district with an AIG label, documentation is requested from previous school to also help with determining placement. Parents are then contacted regarding the appropriate class placement.
- Additional testing is administered if warranted
- The AIG Compliance Specialist notifies the student's school to ensure appropriate class placement

- **High**
  - Students self-select classes using criteria for Honors and Advanced Placement course offerings
  - Each high school ensures the student is scheduled into appropriate classes

AIG transfers from schools within the system:

- **Elementary School**
  - AIG teachers use the AIG transfer exit form to notify the AIG Compliance Specialist and the receiving school of any transfers
  - Changes are made to the local AIG headcount
  - AIG folders are hand delivered to the receiving school
- **Middle School**
  - AIG Liaison/Contact person and/or counselor notifies the AIG Compliance Specialist and the receiving school of any transfers
  - Monthly AIG reports are run regarding transfer of AIG students.
  - Changes are made to the local AIG headcount
  - AIG folders are hand delivered to the receiving school
- **High School**
  - Monthly AIG reports are run regarding transfer of AIG students.
  - Changes are made to the local AIG headcount by the AIG Compliance Specialist.
  - AIG folders are kept in the AIG office

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*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Continue to utilize AIG Professional Learning Communities (PLC), staff input and surveys to monitor the successes and challenges of the AIG program. Based on the challenges and successes noted, make adjustments to the AIG program as necessary.

2. Work with the Gaston County Schools' Accountability Department to monitor growth of AIG students K - 12.

3. Continue to offer professional development on gifted education topics for current AIG teachers and for prospective AIG teachers via G.A.L.E (Gaston County Schools AIG Local Endorsement) through the online learning modules.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Gaston County Schools' AIG Plan Annual AIG review Service delivery options at each school site
*	Disaggregation of EOG, EOC and AP results Data regarding referral and identification of subgroups Student data from Compass and C.E.M.S. Programs of those who meet AIG placement criteria
*	Enrollment data for upper level high school courses as well as AP Classroom use data, AP Score Reports and AP Instructional Planning Reports Presentations and records of stakeholders' meetings
*	Documentation of teachers' AIG licensure Documentation of AP training Use of PRC 024 funds
*	AIG students' class placement Agendas, minutes and survey results of AIG Parent Advisory Board Documentation of suggestions/recommendations/concerns shared by parents/guardians during

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	AIG Plan Glossary of Terms - 2025 Elementary AIG End of Year Compliance

Local Board of Education Approval

Gaston County Schools (360) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:
03/17/2025

AIG Related Documents

Gaston County Schools (360) 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	GCS Plan BOE Approval

Optional Documents		
Type	**Document Template**	**Document/Link**
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	GCS AIG Staff Handbook Middle School DEP Talent Development Program Overview Example of Placement Guidance for Staff Elementary AIG IDEP GCS AIG Placement Criteria
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	Talent Development Program: Overview & Service Guidelines AIG Sponsored Academic Competitions
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	GALE Local Endorsement Description Example of AIG Meeting Agendas
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	AIG Plan Glossary of Terms - 2025 Elementary AIG End of Year Compliance

Phrase	Definition
Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG)	Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experiences or environment.
Acceleration	Faster presentation of content to more closely match the speed at which gifted students learn.
Accountability	Holding students, faculty, administrators and district personnel responsible for instructional outcomes.
Achievement	Accomplishment or performance; the realization of potential. Compare with aptitude.
Advanced Placement (AP)	A program developed by the College Board where high schools offer courses that meet criteria set by institutions of higher education. In most cases college credit can be earned after completing an AP exam and earning a score of 3, 4, or 5. Credit awarded is determined by the college or university the student attends.
Aptitude	Undeveloped potential or ability; the inclination to excel in a particular area
Aptitude test	Aptitude tests evaluate intelligence in more specific areas like mental fitness, verbal ability, and mathematical skills. While both aptitude testing and IQ testing aim to measure brain power, they do so in different ways. Generally speaking, IQ tests assess general intelligence.
Asynchronous development	Different rates for physical, cognitive, and emotional development. For example, a gifted child may be chronologically 8 years old, intellectually 15 and emotionally 5. Extremes displayed by gifted children have led some experts to define giftedness itself as asynchronous development.
Clustering	Placing students of the next highest ability level based on year-end standardized test performance in the same class or group for purposes of instruction. Research shows higher academic achievement gains for all students when grouped by ability and taught at a pace that matches their learning rates.
CogAT	The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is a multiple-choice assessment that measures reasoning skills with different types of verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal questions. The CogAT is an aptitude test commonly given as an entrance exam into schools' gifted programs.
Compacting	Eliminating repetition, minimizing drill, and accelerating instruction in basic skills so that gifted students can move to more challenging material.
Composer Program	This nurturing and talent development program is grounded in the belief that giftedness can be found among a very diverse group of students. The Composer identification process incorporates linguistic and logical/mathematical activities; therefore, the selected students include members of low socioeconomic or culturally diverse populations who are not typically identified through standardized testing. The Composer Program is an interdisciplinary program.
Content	The academic subject matter studied in an educational program or class.

Convergent thinking	Thinking which results in conventional solutions and answers or conformity. Contrast with divergent thinking.
Cooperative learning	Students working in small groups within a classroom on the same assignment. There is often a division of tasks. Cooperative learning groups with students of similar ability with complementary skills tend to work most smoothly.
Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)	A written document which states the AIG student's unique characteristics and needs, educational goals and objectives to meet those needs, and instructional materials and services to be provided.
Differentiation	Adapting the curriculum to meet the differing needs and abilities of students within a class. One strategy for differentiating the core, grade level curriculum is to modify the content or subject according to the depth and complexity of the material presented.
Depth	Students go further, deeper and more elaborately within a subject area (research, experiential learning, data gathering, etc.).
Complexity	Students make relationships and associations across and between subject areas. They may also study relationships over time and from different points of view.
Discovery method	A variety of student-centered approaches to teaching, including the Socratic method, in which the teacher acts as a guide and/or resource. Unlike programmed instruction, the emphasis is not on efficiency in mastering a predetermined body of knowledge, but in developing students' abilities to learn how to learn.
Divergent thinking	Thinking which results in novel, unique, or creative solutions or answers. Contrast with convergent thinking.
Enrichment	Deeper coverage of content often provided for gifted students. Contrast with acceleration
Exceptional learners	Students with an IQ in the bottom or in the top percent of the population, or those with other physical or mental differences which affect learning.
G.A.L.E.	The GCS AIG department offers a local endorsement called G.A.L.E. (GCS AIG Local Endorsement). After completion of this course teachers can teach AIG classes in Gaston County Schools. This cohort consists of but is not limited to online modules that are self paced. After completion of the G.A.L.E course teachers are awarded a local endorsement and 3.0 CEUs. Once teachers have completed the course they can then pursue the add-on state certification and take the Gifted Education Praxis.
Grade acceleration	Promotion to a higher grade.
Heterogeneous Grouping	grouping students by mixed ability or readiness levels. In this environment, a teacher is expected to meet a broad range of students' needs.
Higher order thinking skills	Abstract reasoning, critical thinking, and problem solving abilities
Homogeneous Grouping	Grouping students according to similar readiness and ability. The purpose of this grouping is to allow students to spend more time with their peers and restrict the range of needs that a teacher must address.
Identification	The selecting and labeling process for inclusion in the gifted program.
Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP	An Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) will be developed for special circumstances where the gifted student has unique needs, educational goals and objectives for a given time period.
Individualized instruction	Content and pacing of instruction geared toward the individual's unique learning styles, abilities, needs, and goals.

Integrated curriculum	The combination of content from two or more subjects to enhance meaning through interconnectedness of knowledge.
Intelligence	A general concept of mental ability, often summed up as the ability to learn from experience. The concept was put into a measurable form as intelligence quotient, but theorists such as Howard Gardner believe there are multiple intelligences for which traditional IQ tests do not sample.
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	This is an achievement test which measures a student's knowledge in specific subject areas that students have learned in school - reading, language arts, and mathematics.
Multiple intelligences	Constructs of intelligence that include more aspects of mental ability than the conventional concept of intelligence. Howard Gardner proposed seven intelligences: musical, bodily-kinesthetic, logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. He recently added an eighth: naturalist.
Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)	This is a nonverbal test used for qualifying students for gifted and talented programs. It is an aptitude test commonly given as an entrance exam into schools' gifted programs. The NNAT utilizes shapes and figures to evaluate the problem-solving and reasoning abilities of a student without relying on their language skills. In other words, the NNAT assesses how a student thinks instead of what a student knows.
Pacing	The speed at which content is presented and instruction delivered. Pacing which matches the student's rate of learning is optimal. Because gifted students are usually able to learn faster, they often need accelerated pacing.
Pacing guide	A pacing guide is a written schedule or chart displaying the topics/skills and outcomes related to the curriculum to be addressed during a school year. A pacing guide may also be known as a curriculum map, program timeline, instructional guide, or year-at-a-glance.
Peer group	People with which one feels equal. Due to gifted students' asynchronous development, they may have very different intellectual, social, and emotional peer groups.
Perfectionism	The desire to execute tasks flawlessly. Gifted children may develop perfectionism after entering school, as they perform better than their classmates. Later, such perfectionism may lead to avoiding challenges so as not to appear imperfect.
Portfolio	A collection of student work that demonstrates achievement for purposes of assessment.
Pull-out	A gifted educational program that takes exceptional learners in the elementary grades out of the regular classroom for a limited time for enrichment and acceleration. Contrast with push-in programs where a whole group is taught an enrichment lesson.
Referral	A process where teachers, administrators, or parents (by written request) seek screening for possible gifted testing.
Screening	A process of looking at historical testing data and academic performance to determine if further testing is needed for gifted consideration.
Standards Based Grading	Standards-based grading (SBG) is an intentional way for teachers to track their students' progress and achievements while focusing on helping students learn and reach their highest potential. It is based on students showing signs of mastery or understanding various lessons and skills.
Standardized test	A test taken by many students under identical conditions which allows results to be compared statistically to a standard such as a norm or criteria.

Talent Development	a framework that focuses on nurturing and cultivating students' specific strengths and abilities, rather than solely identifying and labeling them as "gifted," emphasizing a more holistic approach to education. Talent development models prioritize not only academic or artistic talent, but also the development of social and emotional skills. Strong psychosocial skills (e.g., motivation, concentration, self-confidence) are critical to the development of talent and can be cultivated by teachers.
Tiered Assignments	A strategy to differentiate instruction in which all students work toward the same goal but activities are geared toward each student's level of knowledge and understanding.
Twice exceptional	A term used to describe a student who is both gifted and has exceptional needs.
Underachievement	A significant difference between ability and performance. A gifted underachiever is often defined as having superior intelligence, yet working below grade level.