

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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

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

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

* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

Kestrel Heights School is a small, diverse, and inclusive learning community in Durham that empowers our scholars to sharpen academic knowledge, demonstrate creative expression, and expand leadership abilities to prepare for success in high school, college, and beyond. Believing that all children can succeed in a safe and challenging environment, Kestrel Heights Charter School (KHCS) nurtures a community of lifelong learners. KHCS fosters this community by setting high expectations, modeling characteristics of responsible citizens, and focusing on the development of the whole person.

The AIG program offers many opportunities for AIG students to work with students of like abilities as well as those with whom they differ. Teachers use a variety of data sources to assess learners and scaffold instruction accordingly; allowing each learner to reach their full potential. The vision of this AIG service plan is to function within the existing education plan to meet the needs of individual learners, including those identified as academically/intellectually gifted.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 107,006.00	* \$ 2,000.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification

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Standard 1: Student Identification

The LEA's student identification procedures for AIG are clear, equitable, and comprehensive and lead towards appropriate educational services.

*** Practice A**

Develops both screening and referral processes that lead to AIG identification at all grade levels. Provides opportunities, including universal screening, for every student to show their strengths and talents.

Kestrel Heights School is committed to providing every student the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and talents through a clear, equitable, and comprehensive AIG identification process. Universal screening efforts, along with a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures, ensure all students have access to services that meet their academic needs. The AIG Specialist and the school-based AIG Advisory Committee oversee these processes and communicate them effectively to stakeholders through multiple platforms, including annual information sessions, newsletters, and the school website. Materials are available in both English and Spanish, with printed copies upon request.

Universal Screening and Referral Processes (K-8)

- **Universal Screening Efforts:**
 - The I-Ready Diagnostic Tool is used across grades K-8 as a universal screener, identifying students performing at least one grade level above their current placement in reading or math.
 - Beginning-of-Grade (BOG) and End-of-Grade (EOG) tests automatically refer students in grades 3-8 who score at or above the 85th percentile.
 - Screening efforts include disaggregated data analysis to identify and target the top 10% of students from underrepresented subgroups for referral consideration.
- **Referral Process:**
 - Students in K-8 can be referred by teachers, parents/guardians, or other individuals with academic knowledge of the student, including the students themselves.
 - A referral campaign occurs annually, typically during the first quarter, encouraging stakeholders to identify potential candidates for evaluation.
 - Referred students undergo a comprehensive review process using multiple measures to ensure appropriate placement.

Grade-Specific Screening and Identification

K-2: Talent Development and Nurturing Enrichment

- Students demonstrating advanced potential are placed in a talent development pull-out group for further enrichment and acceleration.
- K-2 Talent Development students are introduced to advanced thinking skills through the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum, implemented in collaboration with the AIG Specialist.

- Universal screening with I-Ready helps identify K-2 students performing above grade level for additional evaluation. Recommendations for formal AIG testing and identification include teacher input, parent/guardian insights, and evidence of advanced academic performance.

Grades 3-8: Formal Identification and Talent Development

- Students scoring at or above the 85th percentile on standardized assessments (EOG, BOG) or demonstrating above-grade-level performance on I-Ready are referred for further evaluation/testing.
- Identified students are placed in the AIG program or talent development group, with services tailored to their needs.
- Transfer students with approved documentation are placed promptly within the first or second semester.

Screening and Identification Measures

To ensure a comprehensive evaluation, Kestrel Heights School uses a combination of traditional and non-traditional assessments, including:

- Traditional Measures:** Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and other nationally normed assessments.
- Non-Traditional Measures:** Portfolios, checklists, performance-based assessments, and observations to capture gifted behaviors and academic potential.

For students with IEPs or 504 Plans, accommodations and modifications are provided to ensure equity in testing and evaluation.

Focus on Equity and Continuous Improvement

- Screening data are analyzed annually to identify underserved populations, including ESL students and students in the Exceptional Children Program.
- Collaboration with EC and ESL teachers ensures gifted behaviors in these populations are not overlooked.
- The school continually refines processes to align with NC AIG standards and address the needs of all students.

Stakeholder Communication and Engagement

- The AIG Plan and a concise AIG Parent Handbook are available on the school website explaining all screening and referral procedures.
- Annual information sessions during Open House provide stakeholders with detailed insights into AIG screening, referral, identification, and services.

By focusing on universal screening and equitable practices, Kestrel Heights School ensures every student has the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and receive appropriate educational services to support their academic potential.

* 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.

Kestrel Heights School utilizes multiple indicators of giftedness to create a robust and equitable identification process. Quantitative and qualitative measures are employed to reveal student aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve. These measures are integral to the development of a student's comprehensive profile. KHS ensures its identification pathways align with **Article 9B [N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-8]** and adhere to the principle

that no single criterion excludes a student from referral or identification. Additionally, KHS employs **local norms**, considering the top 10% of each student group for further data collection and identification decisions.

Pathways to Identification by Grade Level

Grades K-2

KHS employs a talent development model for K-2 students, serving them through an AIG Specialist. When a student demonstrates a need for services beyond the regular classroom instruction, they may be referred to the **Nurturing Enrichment Group**—a small group designed to support advanced learners.

Referral Criteria:

- Advanced academic ability demonstrated through above-grade-level performance (e.g., I-Ready data).
- Recommendations from classroom teachers, parents, or the AIG Specialist.

Students in this group may transition to the formal AIG identification process based on documented evidence of aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve.

Grades K-8

Students in grades K-8 are evaluated using three distinct pathways:

Pathway 1: Aptitude – Intellectually Gifted (IG)

Students demonstrating exceptional intellectual ability are identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG) if they meet the following criteria:

- A **composite score at or above the 97th percentile** on a nationally normed aptitude/ability test (e.g., CogAT).
- Supporting achievement data below the 90th percentile for AIG or AG identification.

Identified IG students receive an **Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP)** to meet their specific needs.

Pathway 2: Achievement – Academically Gifted (AG)

Students demonstrating advanced academic performance in reading (AR), math (AM), or both (AG) are identified as Academically Gifted (AG) if they meet the following criteria:

Required:

- Achievement at or above the **90th percentile** on a nationally normed test (e.g., Iowa).

Additionally, one of the following:

- Achievement at or above the **85th percentile** on state tests (BOG, EOG, EOC).
- Aptitude test scores (CogAT) at or above the **90th percentile** in the identified area.
- A **portfolio** of at least three artifacts supporting advanced ability, including:

- Above-grade-level work products.
- Student writing reflections or interviews.
- Teacher recommendations.
- Outstanding extracurricular achievements.

AG students receive a **Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)** unless further individualization is needed.

Pathway 3: Aptitude and Achievement – Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG)

Students identified as both academically and intellectually gifted in math, reading, or both meet the following criteria:

Required:

- Aptitude test scores at or above the **97th percentile** on a nationally normed test.

Additionally, one of the following:

- Achievement at or above the **90th percentile** on a nationally normed test (e.g., IOWA).
- Achievement at or above the **85th percentile** on state tests.
- A portfolio of at least three artifacts, similar to those described in Pathway 2.

AIG students receive a DEP unless an IDEP is necessary.

Transfer Students

KHS ensures a smooth transition for AIG-identified transfer students by reviewing documentation from the student's previous school and aligning services with the student's needs.

Procedures:

- Parents/guardians must provide documentation of prior identification. If unavailable, the AIG Specialist will contact the previous school.
- Temporary services are provided for up to one academic year while records are reviewed and additional data, if necessary, is collected.
- AIG students from military families are placed immediately, in accordance with **Article 29B Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children § 115C-407.5**.
- The Executive Director or Principal may accept prior placement at their discretion.

Evaluation Opportunities

The AIG placement process is rigorous but designed to support student success. Evaluation windows provide opportunities for reevaluation or initial identification.

Key Guidelines:

- Students may be evaluated up to three times between grades K-8, including the universal third-grade screening.

- Additional evaluations may occur under extenuating circumstances.
- Parents/guardians may submit external testing, provided the tests are less than two years old and conducted by licensed professionals.
- Data from external testing is used alongside KHS evaluation data.

Commitment to Equity

KHS is dedicated to serving all students with potential for advanced learning, incorporating **local norms** to ensure that diverse student groups, including underrepresented populations, are equitably considered for identification and services.

One testing window per year is provided, and talent development services are available at any grade level, as determined by the AIG Specialist. Students may be served at any time and at any grade level as talent development at the discretion of the AIG specialist.

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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.

Kestrel Heights School (KHS) is committed to equitable identification and support of academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students across all demographic groups. A significant focus is placed on identifying and addressing the needs of underrepresented populations, including students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, multilingual learners (MLLs/ELs), highly gifted, and twice-exceptional (2e).

As the school's diverse population grows, the AIG program actively works to align the representation of identified AIG students with the overall school demographics. A comparison of subgroup percentages between the overall student body and the AIG program informs this effort:

KHS Racial Demographics

- Asian: 7%
- Black: 58%
- Hispanic: 21%
- White: 7%
- Multi-Racial: 7%

KHS AIG Racial Demographics

- Asian: 13%
- Black: 34%
- Hispanic: 15%
- White: 23%
- Multi-Racial: 15%

Screening for Underrepresented Populations

KHS employs multiple screening measures that are free of bias and responsive to diverse student needs. Screening tools and practices include:

- Use of Form 7 of the CogAT, which minimizes language-dependent barriers in math sections compared to Form 6.
- Spanish-language directions for CogAT testing, allowing equitable access for Spanish-speaking students.
- Annual analysis of student subgroup performance on North Carolina EOEs to identify growth trends and potential candidates for gifted services.

Referral for Underrepresented Populations

To ensure a broad and inclusive referral process, the following strategies are implemented:

- ESL and Exceptional Children's (EC) teachers are consulted to identify potential candidates, especially multilingual learners and students with disabilities.
- Specialists in art, music, dance, and other areas may refer students who demonstrate exceptional ability.
- Students can self-refer or nominate peers for evaluation.
- Outstanding growth on EOG or WIDA scores flags EL students for consideration.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to submit referrals through an annual campaign that employs multimedia and multilingual communication strategies.

Identification for Underrepresented Populations

KHS uses a multifaceted approach to identify underrepresented populations, including:

- Incorporating WIDA data for multilingual learners to supplement placement decisions.
- Analyzing scores across verbal, math, and non-verbal CogAT test areas to identify specific strengths.
- Including ESL and EC teachers in understanding evaluation results and serving on the AIG Committee to advocate for students with diverse needs.
- Considering acute circumstances that may affect student performance (e.g., homelessness, chronic illness, or poverty).
- Allowing testing accommodations consistent with IEP or 504 Plans to ensure fair access to assessments.
- Accepting non-traditional evidence of giftedness, such as:
 - Performance-based assessments.
 - Portfolios of student work.
 - Observations with anecdotal notes.
 - Gifted Behavior Scale Checklists.

Addressing Under-Identification

To address gaps in AIG identification:

- The AIG Department closely monitors students scoring in the top 10% on screenings and assessments for further evaluation.
- K-8 Talent Development programs are designed to reflect the school's diverse population, with intentional monitoring of students for potential screening and identification.
- The AIG Specialist provides ongoing professional development for staff to challenge misperceptions and biases regarding giftedness in various student groups.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- An annual review by the AIG Advisory Committee evaluates the effectiveness of screening, referral, and identification procedures.
- Adjustments are made to ensure equitable representation of all student groups.
- Data is systematically tracked to monitor progress in identifying students from underrepresented populations.
- Procedures are refined regularly to address barriers and ensure inclusive practices.

By implementing these comprehensive measures, Kestrel Heights School aims to foster equity and excellence, ensuring all gifted students, regardless of background, have access to the opportunities they need to thrive.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	8.26%	---	---	---	---	---
Male	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Total	---	6.50%	---	---	---	---	37.93%

Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

*** Practice D**

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

Kestrel Heights School (KHS), a K-8 charter school, ensures reliable and consistent screening, referral, and identification processes for academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students through the development of standardized procedures and systems. These processes are unified across all grade levels, facilitated by a single AIG specialist who serves both the elementary and middle schools. This alignment guarantees fidelity and equity in the implementation of the AIG program.

Consistent Referral Processes

KHS maintains consistent referral practices by:

- Providing professional development for teachers and staff to recognize the characteristics of both typical and atypical gifted learners.
- Accepting referrals year-round, with evaluation occurring during designated testing windows.
- Publicizing the referral process through multiple media platforms, with materials available in English and Spanish to accommodate diverse families.
- Including criteria for placement alongside referral forms to ensure transparency.
- Conducting an outreach campaign where the AIG specialist engages with teachers and specialists, such as EC (Exceptional Children) and ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers, to ensure that all student talents are identified consistently.

Consistent Screening Processes

The AIG specialist oversees and ensures consistency in screening by:

- Developing and distributing standardized training for administering AIG screening procedures.
- Setting testing schedules and ordering materials, including accommodations for students with special needs as outlined in their IEP or 504 Plans.
- Managing the distribution, administration, and collection of testing materials, including CogAT and IOWA tests, as well as tracking adherence to all procedural guidelines.
- Incorporating testing accommodations during End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments to ensure accessibility for all students.
- Reviewing and applying standardized protocols for all school-based testing sessions.

Consistent Identification Processes

KHS ensures consistent identification practices by:

- Collecting and organizing data uniformly across both the elementary and middle schools.
- Convening a school-based AIG Committee, chaired by the AIG specialist, to review and evaluate all student data. This committee includes the principal (or designee), the EC Director, and other specialists as needed, such as ESL teachers.
- Comparing student data to the criteria outlined in the AIG plan to make placement recommendations.
- Documenting and maintaining confidential records of all discussions and decisions.
- Communicating placement decisions to parents/guardians, students, and relevant school personnel. Permission forms are distributed, signed, and collected before services begin.

Systems for Monitoring Consistency

Annual Review and Professional Development

KHS conducts an annual review of its screening, referral, and identification processes to evaluate their effectiveness and ensure consistency. The AIG Advisory Committee reviews procedures, student placement data, and subgroup representation to refine practices and address any identified gaps. Professional development sessions are provided as needed to:

- Update teachers and staff on any revisions to AIG procedures.
- Expand understanding of gifted characteristics across diverse populations.
- Address implicit biases and ensure equitable referral and identification practices.

Internal Auditing of Records

The AIG Department has established plans for internal audits of school records to monitor the implementation of screening, referral, and identification processes. These audits include:

- Reviewing referral, screening, and placement documentation for accuracy and compliance.
- Analyzing subgroup participation data to ensure equity.
- Identifying trends or discrepancies that may require additional interventions or support.

Nurturing Student Talent Across Grade Levels

For students not yet identified as AIG, a K-8 talent development program provides enrichment and supports potential future identification. The program reflects the school's demographics, fostering opportunities for all students to develop their abilities. Students in this program are closely monitored, and their progress is reviewed during subsequent screening cycles.

Examples of Effective Processes and Plans for Development

Screening and Referral for Exceptional Cases

- Data for students with acute circumstances, such as migrant or homeless status, health issues, or poverty, is reviewed holistically to ensure these students are not overlooked.
- The use of portfolios, teacher checklists, performance-based assessments, and anecdotal observations provides multiple pathways for students to demonstrate giftedness.

Future Plans for Internal Auditing

- KHS will develop a standardized checklist to guide audits of AIG files, ensuring compliance with state and school policies.
- Trends identified in audits will inform revisions to processes and additional professional development topics.

Through these systems and processes, KHS maintains a high standard of consistency, equity, and reliability in identifying and serving academically gifted students across all grade levels.

* Practice E

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

Kestrel Heights School (KHS) ensures transparency and accessibility by sharing information about its K-8 AIG screening, referral, and identification processes with school personnel, parents/guardians, students, and the community through multiple formats. This approach ensures that all stakeholders understand the procedures and have access to relevant resources.

Methods of Dissemination

Digital Platforms

- **KHS Website:** The AIG Parent Handbook and AIG Plan are available on the school's website under the AIG Information section. The website includes translatable features to accommodate users in multiple languages, ensuring accessibility for diverse families.
- **ClassDojo School Story and Newsletters:** Key dates, criteria, and updates about AIG processes are shared regularly through these platforms to maintain clear and ongoing communication with families and staff.

In-Person and Virtual Meetings

- **Open House and Orientation Meetings:** Information about the AIG referral, screening, and identification processes is shared at Open House events and early-year orientation meetings. These sessions are designed to introduce stakeholders to the procedures and ensure clarity about

timelines and expectations.

- **Professional Development for Staff:** Each year, a standardized presentation is provided to teachers and staff, outlining the AIG referral, screening, and identification processes. This training includes guidance on recognizing the characteristics of gifted learners and using criteria consistently.

Direct Communication

- **Emails and Score Reports:** Parents/guardians of referred students receive personalized communications, including detailed placement decisions and score reports. These reports explain the criteria used in the decision-making process and summarize all data considered by the school team.
- **Parent/Guardian Notifications:** Families of referred students are provided with a comprehensive packet of information detailing the referral and screening processes, as well as all supporting documents.

Printed Materials

- Printed resources, including referral forms, criteria summaries, and procedural guidelines, are available upon request in both English and Spanish to ensure equitable access for all families.

Standardized Presentation for Stakeholders

To promote consistency and clarity, KHS has developed a standardized presentation that is utilized annually to educate teachers, staff, and other stakeholders about the AIG processes. This presentation includes:

- An overview of the characteristics of gifted learners, including atypical indicators.
- Step-by-step instructions for referrals, including submission timelines and supporting documentation.
- A detailed explanation of screening tools (e.g., CogAT and IOWA) and the testing window.
- A review of the identification process, including the criteria used for placement decisions and the role of the AIG Committee.
- Strategies for ensuring equity and accessibility in identifying underrepresented populations.

The presentation is delivered during professional development sessions for teachers and is also adapted for parent/guardian workshops, ensuring all stakeholders receive the same accurate information.

Ongoing Communication and Engagement

KHS actively engages the community and ensures continuous updates on AIG processes through:

- **Community Outreach:** Information is shared with the community-at-large through school-wide events, newsletters, and announcements.
- **Parent Feedback Opportunities:** Parents/guardians are invited to provide feedback on the AIG program through surveys and meetings, fostering collaboration and trust.

By employing a variety of communication modes, KHS ensures that all stakeholders have the knowledge and resources needed to support the AIG program, reinforcing the school's commitment to equity, transparency, and excellence.

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.

Kestrel Heights School (KHS) has implemented structured processes to document and analyze evidence supporting identification decisions for each student in the AIG program. These processes ensure transparency, consistency, and equitable service delivery. Documentation is maintained securely and shared with families during initial identification and throughout the student's time in the program as needed.

Documentation Process

The AIG specialist follows a consistent checklist to gather, organize, and maintain all required documentation for each student referred for AIG services. This documentation is stored in individual, confidential student folders created at the start of the referral process and includes:

- **Consent for Screening:** Signed by parents/guardians to authorize the evaluation process.
- **Individual Testing Protocols:** Detailed records of assessments conducted (e.g., CogAT, IOWA).
- **Summary Results of Evaluation:** A form summarizing assessment results, supporting evidence, and the identification decision, signed by parents/guardians.
- **Differentiated Education Plan (DEP):** Outlining the student's individualized AIG service plan.
- **Data Spreadsheets:**
 - A comprehensive spreadsheet of identified students with all supporting data.
 - A separate spreadsheet tracking referred students who did not meet identification criteria.

- **Total School AIG Headcounts:** Records of total enrollment in AIG services by grade level and service area.
- **Additional Supporting Documents** (as applicable):
 - Student portfolios showcasing work samples or performance tasks.
 - Student information forms completed during the referral process.

For transfer students, all relevant AIG documentation is shared with receiving districts to ensure continuity of services.

Initial Review with Families

1. Summary Results of Evaluation:

After the identification decision is made, the AIG specialist provides families with a detailed Summary Results of Evaluation form, which includes:

- Assessment scores (e.g., aptitude, achievement tests).
- Pathways and criteria used for identification.
- Supporting evidence, such as portfolios or teacher checklists.
- A clear explanation of the placement decision.

2. Score Reports:

Copies of individual assessment results are shared alongside the summary form to provide families with transparency about their child's performance.

3. Appeals Information:

The results letter includes a description of the appeals process, ensuring parents/guardians understand their right to request a review of the decision if needed.

4. Parent/Guardian Conferences:

Families may schedule an appointment with the AIG specialist to review the documentation in detail, ask questions, and discuss the rationale behind the identification decision.

Ongoing Maintenance and Access to Documentation

- **Secure Storage:**
 - All student AIG documentation is securely maintained in confidential folders, ensuring compliance with data privacy regulations.
- **Annual Reviews:**
 - Documentation is available for review with parents/guardians during annual meetings or upon request. This ensures families remain informed about their child's progress and services.
- **Re-Evaluations and Service Adjustments:**
 - Documentation is revisited and updated as needed for:
 - Re-evaluating a student's eligibility.
 - Considering add-on identification in additional AIG service areas.
 - Making changes to the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) based on student needs or performance.

By maintaining thorough records and engaging families throughout the process, KHS promotes transparency, collaboration, and accountability in its AIG program.

* **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.

Kestrel Heights School (KHS) establishes a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) for each identified AIG student to articulate differentiated services that address their specific academic, social, and emotional needs. The DEP/IDEP is a collaborative document developed with input from parents/guardians, the AIG specialist, classroom teachers, and other stakeholders. It is reviewed annually to ensure services remain aligned with the student's progress and changing needs.

Development of the DEP

1. Initial Placement Conference:

When a student is identified as AIG, parents/guardians are invited to an Initial Placement Conference. During this meeting:

- The student's performance data and identification criteria are reviewed.
- Appropriate service delivery models are discussed.
- A DEP or IDEP is collaboratively developed to outline differentiated curriculum and instructional strategies.

2. Data Used for Service Matching:

The following data sources guide the development of the DEP/IDEP to ensure services align with the student's needs:

- Standardized achievement test scores.
- Classroom performance and grades (e.g., progress reports, report cards).
- Behavioral indicators such as motivation, participation, and leadership skills.
- Results from informal assessments (e.g., portfolios, teacher checklists).

- Specialized considerations for twice-exceptional or underachieving students.

3. **Differentiation and Services:**

The DEP outlines program service options and specific strategies for differentiation, such as:

- Accelerated or advanced curriculum pathways.
- Enrichment activities.
- Individualized strategies for twice-exceptional students or those requiring intervention.
- Social and emotional support plans for students needing additional guidance.

4. **Documentation:**

Parents/guardians receive a copy of the finalized DEP/IIDEP during the meeting along with the AIG Parent Handbook. A copy is also provided to each teacher responsible for implementing the plan, ensuring clear understanding of their responsibilities.

Annual Review Process

1. **Spring Review:**

An annual review is conducted in the spring to assess the effectiveness of services and ensure they continue to meet the student's needs.

- Parents/guardians, classroom teachers, and the AIG specialist collaboratively review the student's progress, using data such as:

- Standardized test scores.
- Progress reports and teacher observations.

- Any necessary changes in services are documented on the DEP/IIDEP before obtaining parent/guardian signatures.

2. **Intervention Plans:**

If a student is not meeting expectations, the team collaborates to develop an Intervention Plan to address specific areas of concern and adjust services accordingly.

Specialized Plans (IDEPs)

For students requiring specialized support, IDEPs are developed to address unique needs, including:

- Twice-exceptional students (students with both learning difficulties and AIG identification).
- Students with social/emotional needs.
- Exceptionally gifted students requiring advanced differentiation.

Collaboration between AIG and other departments, such as Exceptional Children (EC), ensures twice-exceptional students receive both EC and AIG services seamlessly. In these cases, the IEP may serve as the IDEP when supplemented with AIG-specific differentiation strategies.

Record Keeping and Transition Support

- DEPs and IDEPs are securely stored in cumulative student files and transferred to receiving schools when students leave KHS to ensure continuity of services.
- Parents/guardians receive a copy of the DEP/IIDEP annually and can request additional reviews as needed.

By maintaining comprehensive documentation and fostering collaboration with families, KHS ensures that AIG students receive services tailored to their evolving needs, supporting both academic and personal growth.

<p>* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and refine the Portfolio of Demonstrated Evidence process. • Develop and refine the Handbooks for each audience. • Compile a list of Frequently Asked Questions and responses (FAQ) for parents/guardians seeking information regarding the AIG program, and disseminate to stakeholders. Ensure that the FAQ is translated into Spanish as needed. 	<p>Planned Sources of Evidence</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="404 868 486 2002">* Student AIG Documentation (Testing information, Forms, DEPs, etc.)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="486 868 567 2002">* Disaggregated data from AIG Headcount</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="567 868 649 2002">* AIG/School Websites</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="649 868 731 2002">* AIG Program Parent Handbook</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="731 868 812 2002">* Agendas for presentations</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="812 868 894 2002">* Publicity notes for referral windows</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	* Student AIG Documentation (Testing information, Forms, DEPs, etc.)	* Disaggregated data from AIG Headcount	* AIG/School Websites	* AIG Program Parent Handbook	* Agendas for presentations	* Publicity notes for referral windows	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type</th><th>Documents</th><th>Document Template</th><th>Document/Link</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1090 57 1122 2046">AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources</td><td data-bbox="1122 57 1090 2046"></td><td data-bbox="1090 57 1122 2046">N/A</td><td data-bbox="1122 57 1090 2046"> <u>K-8 Pathways to Identification</u></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link	AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources		N/A	 <u>K-8 Pathways to Identification</u>
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* Publicity notes for referral windows																
Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link													
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources		N/A	 <u>K-8 Pathways to Identification</u>													

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

The LEA provides a K-12 AIG program with an array of services by the total school community to meet the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners. These services will develop students' strengths through intentional learning experiences in various domains that are not dependent on the students' demographic background or economic means.

* Practice A

Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the academic and intellectual needs of AIG students, across all grade levels, K-12, and learning environments, through collaboration with a variety of personnel. Services are aligned to students' advanced learning needs and AIG identification.

Kestrel Heights provides a comprehensive AIG program that addresses the academic and intellectual needs of K-8 gifted learners through a flexible system of services aligned with students' identification areas (AR, AM, AG, IG, AIG). Services are delivered collaboratively with classroom teachers, counselors, and other personnel, ensuring all students receive equitable and individualized support to meet their advanced learning needs.

Service Delivery by Grade Span

Grades K-2:

- AIG Specialists collaborate with regular education, EC, and ESL teachers to deliver integrated lessons that emphasize critical thinking, creative problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills using the *Primary Education Thinking Skills* curriculum.
- Students demonstrating advanced skills in reading and math, based on i-Ready growth data and teacher recommendations, participate in pullout enrichment classes twice weekly during Intervention periods.
- Instruction focuses on developing early academic potential and fostering higher-order thinking through small-group and whole-group activities.
- These services align with Kestrel's MTSS framework and emphasize equitable access for all demographic and socioeconomic groups.

Grades 3-8:

- Identified AIG students are served in advanced English Language Arts and/or Math classes and are clustered with peers in the same identification area (AR, AM, AG, or AIG).
- Students participate in a pull-out AIG elective class twice weekly during intervention periods. These electives include exploration of STEM concepts such as finance and robotics, affective learning topics, independent studies, and enrichment projects in Language Arts and Social Studies.
- Advanced programming is delivered through the *Advanced Curriculum from the Center for Gifted Education* at William & Mary, tailored to students' academic areas and strengths.
- Students scoring Level V on the Math EOG, as required by HB986, are placed in advanced math classes (grades 4-8).
- IG students receive consultation, observation, and monitoring to address specific aptitude and performance gaps as outlined in their IDEPs.
- Subject and grade acceleration are considered for AR, AM, AG, and AIG students based on demonstrated readiness.

Talent Development Program (K-8):

Students scoring in the 80th-89th percentile on assessments (EOG, CogAT, IOWA) or partially meeting identification criteria are placed in the talent development program. These students receive the same AIG services, including pull-out enrichment and cluster grouping. Families are notified of placement and provided information about AIG programming.

Collaboration Across K-8:

A licensed AIG Specialist, allocated 50% to elementary and 50% to middle school, oversees program implementation and supports students. Collaboration with staff includes:

- Co-teaching, coaching, and consultation with classroom teachers.
- Providing professional development, resources, and access to student Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) via shared Google Drive.
- Ensuring services align with MTSS frameworks, IEP/504 accommodations for twice-exceptional students, and LIEP support for English learners.
- Facilitating communication and data-based problem-solving to align services with student needs.

Matching Services to Student Needs:

Services are matched to identification areas and individual student strengths, offering:

- Pull-out enrichment classes aligned to students' areas of identification (e.g., AR, AM, AG, AIG).
- Inclusion (push-in) services by an AIG Specialist during flexible grouping to maximize classroom impact.
- Cluster grouping in advanced Math and ELA classes.
- Consultation, observation, and monitoring, especially for IG students with specific needs.
- Acceleration opportunities for subject or grade placement when appropriate.
- A combination of these services tailored to individual needs and documented in the DEP.

This comprehensive and flexible approach ensures that all K-8 gifted learners receive services aligned with their advanced learning needs while fostering growth and equity.

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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.

The Kestrel Heights AIG program provides comprehensive services that address the social and emotional needs of gifted students across grades K-8 through collaboration with AIG specialists, counselors, teachers, administrators, and other support staff. These services are tailored to address the diverse strengths and challenges of gifted learners, ensuring their holistic development alongside academic achievement.

Service Delivery by Grade Span

Grades K-2:

- like *Primary Education Thinking Skills* and introductory robotics. Core values (Inclusion, Discovery, Teamwork, Innovation, Impact, and Fun) are emphasized to develop a supportive and collaborative environment.
- **Relationship-Building Groups:** AIG specialists lead small groups to address early social/emotional challenges such as making friends, navigating frustrations, and understanding advanced abilities.
- **Guidance Counselor Sessions:** Counselors provide age-appropriate SEL lessons on self-regulation, growth mindset, and mindfulness to support young learners adjusting to academic challenges.

Grades 3-5:

- **Enrichment Classes:** Weekly pull-out sessions integrate academic enrichment and affective learning activities that build teamwork, resilience, and leadership. Robotics and coding projects promote collaboration and critical thinking while fostering a sense of accomplishment.
- **Small Group Interventions:** AIG specialists facilitate SEL groups focused on managing perfectionism, navigating peer relationships, and coping with stress.
- **Counselor Collaboration:** Guidance counselors conduct quarterly SEL lessons on mindfulness, coping strategies, and managing expectations, aligning with classroom and AIG programming.

Grades 6-8:

- **Advanced Academic Programs:** Students participate in advanced-level classes where academic and SEL needs are integrated through group projects, reflective activities, and leadership opportunities.
- **Quarterly SEL Electives:** Counselors and AIG specialists lead sessions addressing anxiety, perfectionism, stress management, and coping with failure.
- **Small Group Support:** Targeted sessions for students address social and emotional challenges specific to adolescence, such as peer pressure, self-advocacy, and transition planning.
- **Mentorship Opportunities:** Older AIG students mentor younger peers, building leadership skills and fostering a supportive community.

Collaboration Across Personnel

AIG Specialist

- Creates Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) and Individualized Differentiated Education Plans (IDEPs) with input from staff and parents, incorporating social and emotional goals.
- Leads small group SEL interventions, pull-out classes, and schoolwide activities promoting teamwork and problem-solving.
- Facilitates the AIG Advisory Committee, recruiting members from EC, ESL, OT, guidance, and classroom teachers to monitor and support AIG programming.
- Communicates with parents about SEL needs, offering workshops and resources such as the AIG parent handbook.
- Provides professional development for staff on addressing the unique needs of gifted learners.

Guidance Counselors

- Disseminate information about gifted students, including dual exceptionalities and other SEL concerns, to staff and parents.

- Develop and implement SEL goals in DEPs to ensure holistic student development.
- Provide semi-annual SEL sessions in AIG electives covering topics like anxiety, mindfulness, stress management, and perfectionism.
- Facilitate schoolwide SEL lessons covering topics like bullying prevention, friendship skills, personal safety, and test anxiety, ensuring AIG students receive targeted support.
- Host parent sessions on AIG-related SEL needs, offering resources and tip sheets.
- Address the SEL needs of students not identified as AIG, particularly in younger grades, to support their emotional well-being and resilience.

Teachers

- Collaborate with AIG specialists to integrate SEL goals into classroom activities.
- Monitor and address gifted students' social/emotional interactions, referring concerns to the appropriate personnel.
- Participate in professional development in meeting the needs of gifted learners.

Administrators

- Support flexible scheduling for collaborative planning and interventions.
- Advocate for AIG students with unique needs and ensure resources for professional development are available.
- Monitor implementation of SEL strategies within the MTSS framework.

Roles and Responsibilities

AIG Advisory Committee

- Composed of AIG specialists, counselors, teachers, and administrators, the committee monitors program effectiveness and advises on strategies to address the evolving SEL needs of gifted learners.

MTSS Collaboration

- The AIG specialist participates in MTSS teams to advocate for strategies addressing gifted students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs, including interventions at all tiers.

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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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School's AIG program is strategically aligned with the charter's Blended Learning Model, reflecting research-based practices for advanced learners. This approach emphasizes project-based learning, meaningful student choice, self-directed learning, literature-based reading, and inquiry-based math and science, all of which align with Kestrel's **Strategic Plan** and **School Improvement Plan (SIP)**.

Blended Learning integrates physical and digital learning environments, allowing for personalized instruction tailored to individual students' needs. This model fosters flexibility, enabling both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities, and supports small-group instruction—a core

component of Kestrel's AIG services. By prioritizing enriched learning experiences, the program ensures that students' strengths are developed regardless of demographic or economic background.

Connection to Charter Priorities

Kestrel's focus on Blended Learning aligns with its commitment to educational equity and excellence. The AIG program mirrors this philosophy through:

- **Small-Group Enrichment Electives:** Providing advanced academic opportunities in both face-to-face and digital formats.
- **Student-Centered Learning:** Offering choice and flexibility in how students engage with content, fostering independence and creativity.
- **Integration with MTSS:** Ensuring AIG students are represented in multi-tiered support systems to address both strengths and skill gaps.

These elements reinforce Kestrel's dedication to personalized, inclusive education, as highlighted in the SIP and Strategic Plan.

Resource Allocation

The school demonstrates its commitment to the AIG program through intentional resource allocation:

- **Funding and Personnel:** The board and administration ensure financial and staffing support for the program.
- **Professional Development:** Teachers receive training in differentiation strategies through in-house workshops, external professional development opportunities, and Mind Brain Education (MBE) courses.
- **Collaboration:** The AIG teacher works closely with classroom teachers and the Exceptional Children program to provide tailored instruction for advanced learners, including those who are twice-exceptional or from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Policy and Practice

Kestrel Heights addresses AIG learner needs through:

1. **MTSS Integration:** The AIG specialist collaborates with department personnel to:
 - Support twice-exceptional and English Language learners.
 - Design differentiated instruction that builds on strengths while addressing areas of need.
 - Adapt curriculum pacing and resources to create enriched learning environments.
2. **Differentiated Services:** Teachers and the AIG specialist co-design instruction to challenge advanced learners, deepening their academic experiences while fostering growth in all domains.
3. **Commitment to Equity:** The program ensures equitable access to AIG services through ongoing identification processes and targeted support for students from diverse backgrounds.

By integrating the AIG program with the school's broader educational priorities and allocating resources effectively, Kestrel Heights Charter School provides comprehensive programming to meet the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners. This alignment fosters student success while reflecting the school's mission of innovation, inclusivity, and excellence.

*** Practice D**

Develops procedures for intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate the achievement and growth of AIG and other students with advanced learning needs. Kestrel Heights Charter School uses intentional and flexible grouping practices to support the achievement and growth of AIG and advanced learners through the following procedures:

Beginning-of-Year Student Grouping

Class rosters are developed with input from the AIG Specialist to implement **cluster grouping** for reading and math. Each cluster includes a minimum of four AIG-identified students within general education classrooms to support academic and social-emotional needs. This ensures a balanced, collaborative environment where advanced learners can thrive alongside their peers.

Flexible Grouping During the Year

Instructional practices for reading and math revolve around a **small-group rotational model** emphasizing flexible grouping based on students' skill levels and readiness. Groups are formed using various criteria, including:

- Readiness/skill level
- Interests
- Learning preferences
- Experiences and background

These groupings are regularly adjusted based on student performance on in-class, district, and state assessments to ensure instruction remains responsive to individual needs.

AIG Services and Enrichment

- **Pull-Out Groups:** Enrichment and accelerated learning opportunities are provided through pull-out groups.
 - **K-2:** Enrichment groups are formed at the lesson or unit level based on in-class assessments.
 - **Grades 3-8:** Accelerated groups are determined annually using district- and state-wide assessments.
- **Cluster Classes:** Outside of AIG services, students are flexibly grouped with peers to foster collaboration and higher-level learning.

Role of the AIG Specialist

The AIG Specialist plays a critical role in facilitating flexible grouping practices by:

1. Identifying students with potential who may not have enrolled in rigorous courses.
2. Encouraging course progression based on student interests and academic achievement.
3. Addressing barriers to ensure equitable access to advanced courses for students across all demographic and economic groups.
4. Assisting teachers with strategies to personalize instruction and differentiate for advanced learners.

Connection to Student Growth

Through intentional and flexible grouping, Kestrel Heights ensures that instructional practices adapt to students' evolving needs. By fostering collaboration, accelerating learning opportunities, and personalizing services, these practices align with the school's commitment to developing the

potential of AIG and advanced learners while promoting equitable access to advanced academic pathways.

*** 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School ensures all staff are informed about AIG services, instructional strategies, program regulations, and the local AIG plan through a structured communication and professional development process.

Initial Dissemination of Information

1. **Annual Presentations:** At the start of each school year, the AIG Specialist presents the AIG plan, services, and relevant legislation to all faculty and staff.
2. **AIG Services Roster:** A detailed roster outlining AIG students and their services is shared during beginning-of-year planning meetings to support effective classroom implementation.
3. **Printed and Digital Resources:**
 - o Full copies of the AIG Plan are distributed to principals, the Executive Director, EC Director, and board members.
 - o Supporting documents, summaries of identification criteria, program standards, and implementation practices are shared through the staff portal and parent handbook.

Ongoing Communication and Training

1. **Grade-Level PLC Meetings:** The AIG Specialist collaborates with teachers during PLC meetings to discuss student progress, differentiation strategies, and program updates.
2. **Administrative Updates:** The AIG Specialist meets with the administrative team during weekly PLC meetings to review program goals and ensure alignment with school-wide priorities.
3. **Class Placement Meetings:** Notes and recommendations for supporting AIG students are shared during class placement discussions for the upcoming school year.
4. **Professional Development:**
 - o Short, targeted sessions are provided during faculty meetings throughout the year, focusing on differentiation strategies, program standards, and identification processes.
 - o Additional training is offered through the Mind Brain Education (MBE) program to deepen understanding of advanced learners' needs.

Stakeholder Engagement

1. **Annual Updates for Leadership:** The AIG Coordinator presents an annual program update to the school board, with minutes made available to all staff.
2. **Leadership Briefings:** When the AIG Plan is updated, the AIG Specialist meets with administration to review changes and highlight new priorities.
3. **Accessible Documentation:** Staff can access all supporting documents via the Kestrel Heights webpage, ensuring transparency and availability of program information.

Alignment and Support

Through these procedures, Kestrel Heights fosters a shared understanding among all staff of the delivery of differentiated instruction, compliance with gifted education regulations, and the local AIG program. This collaborative approach ensures AIG students receive the support necessary for their academic, intellectual, and social-emotional growth.

*** Practice F**

Communicates among and between teachers and schools to ensure an effective continuation of K-12 services, especially at key transition points. Kestrel Heights Charter School has a clear communication plan to ensure the seamless continuation of services for AIG students across grade levels and during school transitions.

Internal Communication Within Kestrel Heights

1. **AIG Services Roster:** An annual roster shared with teachers includes AIG students, their identification areas, and previous year services to guide classroom planning.
2. **Transition Meetings:** Grade-level teams meet annually to discuss AIG students' academic and social-emotional needs, ensuring smooth progression.
3. **DEP Development:** The AIG Specialist designs and updates each student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), outlining services, qualifying assessments, and recommendations for future instruction.
4. **Infinite Campus Integration:** Identified AIG students are flagged in the Infinite Campus Student Information System to provide teachers immediate access to identification and service history.

Transitions Between Grade Levels and Schools

1. **Elementary to Middle School:**
 - o The AIG Specialist, serving both elementary and middle school levels, ensures consistent communication and alignment of services.
 - o Rising 6th graders and their families attend a middle school orientation, where the AIG Specialist is available to address specific needs and services.
2. **Middle to High School:**
 - o An 8th-grade transition team hosts sessions for students and families to discuss high school opportunities, including honors, AP courses, and advanced programs.
 - o The DEP, containing cumulative assessment data and service summaries, is included in students' files to ensure continued AIG identification and services in high school.
3. **New Students:**
 - o AIG records are requested during the enrollment process.
 - o Families complete a questionnaire to identify prior AIG, EC, and ML services, and Infinite Campus reports are reviewed to identify previously served AIG, twice-exceptional, and ML/AIG students.
 - o The AIG Specialist evaluates new student records and updates DEPs as needed in collaboration with the ML and EC departments.
4. **Students Leaving Kestrel Heights:**
 - o The AIG DEP, including service history and future recommendations, is provided in the student's records when transferring or graduating.

Collaboration and Availability

The AIG Specialist facilitates ongoing communication through regular grade-level meetings and serves as a consistent resource for staff and families, ensuring that AIG students' academic and social-emotional needs are met during key transitions. This structured communication process ensures continuity of AIG services, smooth transitions, and sustained support for advanced learners, meeting the needs of students and families at each stage of their academic journey.

* **Practice G**

Develops policies and procedures for a variety of acceleration opportunities, including compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, dual enrollment, subject and/or grade acceleration.

Kestrel Heights Charter School provides diverse acceleration opportunities for AIG students, guided by clear policies and systematic procedures. These opportunities address the needs of advanced learners, including those who are highly gifted, and ensure equitable access to services.

Acceleration Options and Policies

1. Curriculum Compacting:

- Advanced learners in regular education settings benefit from compacted curriculum, allowing them to move quickly through mastered content while focusing on advanced material.
- Students may access additional accelerated courses through the North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS), such as Spanish I or higher-level math courses (Math 2 and 3).

2. Subject and Grade Acceleration:

- Decisions are based on comprehensive data, including performance on EOG/BOG assessments (97th percentile or higher), teacher observations, I-Ready benchmarks, and classroom assessments showing performance two or more grade levels above the current placement.

- The **Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS)** is utilized to evaluate students' readiness for subject or grade acceleration across five domains: academic ability, school factors, developmental readiness, interpersonal skills, and family support.
- A school-based committee, including the AIG specialist, counselor, administrators, and classroom teacher, oversees the process. Parent involvement is integral, with qualitative insights gathered during meetings.

3. Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM):

- CDM allows students to earn course credit without completing classroom instruction by demonstrating proficiency through:
 - A score of proficient or higher on an EOC/course exam.
 - Submission of an authentic artifact reviewed by the content teacher and AIG specialist.
- CDM is available for high school courses offered in grades 7–8. Interested students and parents must contact the AIG specialist at the start of the semester preceding the course. A plan is developed collaboratively with the student, family, teacher, and testing coordinator.

4. Early Admission to Kindergarten:

- Eligibility requires:
 - Scoring at or above the 98th percentile on both a standardized test of intelligence and a test of achievement administered by a licensed psychologist.
 - A demonstration of readiness during an interview with the school director and Early Admission to Kindergarten Committee.

5. Advanced Mathematics Enrollment (House Bill 986):

- Students scoring Level 5 on EOG/EOC mathematics tests are automatically enrolled in the next advanced or high school-level mathematics course. Removal from advanced placement requires written parental consent.

1. Informing Stakeholders:

- Policies and procedures are outlined in the **AIG Parent Handbook** and on the school website.
 - During initial placement meetings, the AIG specialist collaborates with teachers to ensure clustering and appropriate course selection for AIG students, especially in middle school AP and Honors Math/ELA courses.
 - Families are included in placement decisions and annual DEP/IDEP meetings to discuss options for acceleration.
- ## **2. Transition Support:**
- Annual grade-level meetings ensure proper placement and planning for advanced learners transitioning between grades or schools.
 - For new students, AIG records are requested, and a screening process evaluates previous identification.
 - The AIG specialist works with families and teachers to review records and adjust services accordingly.

Kestrel Heights' acceleration policies ensure that all advanced learners, including highly gifted students, have access to rigorous and individualized opportunities that foster their academic growth. These procedures emphasize collaboration, fairness, and inclusivity while supporting students at key transition points and throughout their educational journey.

*** Practice H**

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

Kestrel Heights Charter School implements a robust K-3 Talent Development program to nurture the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of young students with outstanding potential or advanced achievement. The program prioritizes identifying and fostering talent in all students, including those whose strengths may not yet be evident, through early intervention and intentional programming.

Talent Development Program (K-3)

1. Student Identification and Participation:

- Students demonstrating a need for advanced content or critical thinking activities are identified through:
 - Teacher observation and professional recommendations.
 - I-Ready diagnostic growth report data.
 - Selection is flexible, with students moving in and out of the program based on ongoing assessments, growth, and available space.
- #### **2. Programming and Services:**
- Small Group Instruction: The AIG specialist provides direct instruction to selected students in small pull-out groups (maximum of 10 students), using the **Primary Education Thinking Skills (P.E.T.S.) Curriculum**. Groups meet 1-2 times per week to allow focused support.
 - Classroom Differentiation: Classroom teachers differentiate instruction for advanced learners in reading and mathematics through:
 - Leveled reading groups, including opportunities to join groups 1-2 grade levels above.
 - Flexible math groups targeting specific strands for clusters of advanced learners.
 - Enrichment activities and anchor tasks are designed to challenge students, including the use of resources like the **NCDPI Advanced Learning Labs**.

3. Collaboration and Support:

- The AIG specialist works closely with K-3 teachers to:
 - Monitor student progress and provide strategies for differentiation.
 - Assist in developing curriculum and designing anchor activities for advanced learners.

- o Grade-level teams collaborate to create intentional opportunities for grouping students with similar advanced abilities.
- 4. **Purpose of Talent Development:**
 - o The program focuses on nurturing potential and identifying students for further advanced services rather than formal AIG identification in K-3.
 - o Emphasis is placed on equity, ensuring opportunities for students whose strengths may not yet be fully realized.

Support for Social-Emotional and Intellectual Needs

Kestrel Heights recognizes the importance of addressing the whole child. The Talent Development program incorporates activities that foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving while supporting the social-emotional growth of young learners. By providing enriching experiences in a supportive environment, the school helps students build confidence and cultivate their potential.

Through purposeful programming, collaboration among educators, and continuous monitoring of student growth, Kestrel Heights effectively identifies and develops the talents of K-3 students. The school ensures that young learners with advanced abilities receive appropriate challenges while creating a foundation for long-term academic and personal success.

* 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School is committed to equity and excellence by expanding access to advanced learning opportunities and talent development across grades 4-8. The school employs intentional policies, practices, and mindset shifts to identify and nurture the potential of all students, including those from underrepresented populations.

Broadening Access to Advanced Learning

1. Multiple Identification Pathways:

- o Students are identified for advanced learning through a variety of strategies, including locally normed assessments and teacher recommendations.
- o Mechanisms are in place to facilitate communication between Exceptional Children (EC) staff and AIG specialists to support twice-exceptional students.
- o Talent development opportunities are offered to students not yet meeting formal AIG criteria, ensuring access to enrichment and acceleration opportunities.

2. Talent Development Programming:

o Opportunities Provided:

- Small pull-out groups.
- Interest-based projects.
- Subject acceleration.

- o These interventions aim to **front-load** knowledge, activate potential, and prepare students for advanced coursework.
- o Efforts have contributed to increased participation from underrepresented demographics, aligning AIG program representation more closely with overall school demographics.

1. **Demographic Analysis:**
 - o Ongoing analysis of student representation in the AIG program and Talent Development initiatives informs practices to address gaps:
 - **Black Students:** School (58%), AIG (34%), AIG with Talent Development (45%).
 - **Hispanic Students:** School (21%), AIG (15%), AIG with Talent Development (18%).
 - o Data is regularly reviewed and shared with stakeholders to inform policy and practice changes.
2. **Shifting Stakeholder Mindsets:**
 - o Stakeholder meetings and data presentations educate faculty, families, and community members to recognize and address disparities.
 - o Conversations emphasize reframing perspectives on equity and talent potential, supporting a growth mindset among all participants.
3. **Targeted Support for Underserved Populations:**
 - o Policies are designed to support culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, multilingual learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional students.
 - o **Front-loading strategies** provide foundational knowledge and skills to activate potential in all students.

Alignment with Charter Policy

Charter policies prioritize inclusivity, talent cultivation, and continuous improvement. By embedding equity into identification and programming practices, Kestrel Heights ensures that all students, regardless of background, have access to meaningful advanced learning opportunities. Policies also encourage collaboration among educators, EC and ML teams, and the AIG specialist to develop programming tailored to individual student strengths.

Through targeted talent development efforts, data-driven practices, and a focus on shifting mindsets, Kestrel Heights broadens access to advanced learning opportunities while promoting equity and excellence. These initiatives empower students, enhance stakeholder understanding, and align with the school's commitment to inclusivity and high expectations for all learners.

* Practice J

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

Kestrel Heights Charter School offers a variety of extracurricular opportunities designed to meet the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of AIG students while fostering critical thinking, creativity, perseverance, and collaboration. These programs provide a balanced approach to academic and personal growth, allowing gifted students to explore and develop their talents and interests.

Extracurricular Opportunities by Grade Span (K-8)

1. **Kindergarten-Grade 5:**
 - o **Specialized Electives:** Students participate in visual arts, dance, music, band, chorus, health, and physical education, supporting the development of artistic and creative talents.
 - o **School-Wide Competitions:** Events such as the Scripps Spelling Bee provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their academic abilities.
2. **Grades 6-8:**
 - o **Athletics:** Middle school students can join basketball, volleyball, track and field, cheerleading, soccer, cross-country, and ultimate frisbee teams, promoting teamwork and perseverance.

- **Teacher-Led Electives:** Students select semester-long electives tailored to their interests, including Journalism, Computer Science, Model UN, Psychology, Leadership, STEM, and more.
- **College Tours:** Eighth-grade students participate in guided tours of universities such as Elon, NC State, and Duke, inspiring academic ambition and future planning.

Showcasing Talents and Knowledge

Kestrel Heights hosts a **Scholar Showcase** event each semester, offering students an opportunity to present their work to parents and the community. The Scholar Showcase not only celebrates student success but also fosters a sense of pride and ownership in learning. This open house highlights:

- Student projects, artwork, and achievements.
- Growth data from diagnostic assessments.
- Class topics and learning progress.

Through diverse extracurricular programs and structured opportunities for showcasing talents, Kestrel Heights supports the holistic development of AIG students. These initiatives provide meaningful ways for students to enhance their interests, demonstrate their growth, and connect with the broader school community.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

Incorporate Student-Driven Learning

- Expand opportunities for problem-based learning, Genius Hour, and curriculum compacting with self-directed studies, fostering greater student agency and ownership of learning.

Ensure Equitable Service Delivery

- Provide equitable services aligned with students' areas of identification to address diverse needs effectively.

Strengthen Leadership and Collaboration

- Include the AIG specialist in leadership teams to integrate advanced learning needs into schoolwide decision-making.
- Increase collaboration with school counselors to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students, particularly the highly gifted.

Support Transitions

- Develop comprehensive transition plans to support students moving between elementary, middle, and high school, ensuring continuity in AIG services.

Enhance Scheduling Flexibility

- Offer more flexible and student-centered scheduling across all grade levels to accommodate advanced learners' needs.

Expand Professional Development

- Provide targeted professional development for staff to address the unique needs of AIG students, including underrepresented populations and twice-exceptional learners.

Increase Extracurricular Opportunities

- Broaden extracurricular offerings that align with the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted students, enabling talent exploration and development.

Address Staffing Needs

- Hire an additional part-time AIG teacher to support the Talent Development Program in K-3. This allows the full-time AIG specialist to focus on grades 4-8, ensuring effective service delivery to identified and potential gifted students.

Planned Sources of Evidence

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

Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

The LEA employs challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum and instruction to accommodate a range of academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of K-12 gifted learners.

*** Practice A**

Adapts the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) K-12 to address a range of advanced ability levels in language arts, mathematics, and other content areas as appropriate by differentiating curriculum and instruction, including enrichment, extension, and acceleration strategies.

Kestrel Heights School modifies the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) K-8 to meet the needs of academically gifted (AIG) students through differentiated instruction, including enrichment, extension, and acceleration strategies. These approaches ensure that advanced learners receive rigorous and relevant learning experiences tailored to their abilities.

Curriculum Differentiation Strategies

Enrichment:

Enrichment enhances the SCOS by introducing conceptually advanced and engaging content that builds upon state standards. The AIG specialist develops and implements enrichment programming designed to deepen understanding and challenge students intellectually. These activities, which may not be explicitly outlined in the SCOS, are aligned with its objectives and address both academic and affective needs. Enrichment is provided through pull-out small-group instruction as well as in-class support.

Extension:

Extension expands SCOS objectives by allowing students to explore topics of interest in greater depth. This student-driven approach incorporates project-based assignments, independent research, and problem-solving opportunities. The AIG specialist and classroom teachers collaborate to integrate extension activities into the curriculum, offering students a deeper and broader understanding of core concepts. Extensions may also address affective needs and encourage creativity and critical thinking.

Acceleration:

Students demonstrating mastery of grade-level content, as determined by assessment data, may qualify for subject or grade acceleration. Instruction, practice, and assessment take place in advanced settings to ensure appropriate challenge. Acceleration decisions are made collaboratively by the AIG specialist, classroom teachers, administrators, and parents, with final approval from the Executive Director. Master scheduling is adjusted to facilitate access to accelerated coursework, including high school credit opportunities for middle school students.

Implementation Across Grade Levels and Content Areas

The school supports differentiation through structured programming and flexible grouping. Identified AIG students, Talent Development (TD) students, and other advanced learners receive tailored instruction to meet their needs. The I-Ready program facilitates blended learning by providing personalized learning paths, accelerated pacing, and data-driven differentiation. The AIG Committee regularly reviews student progress, identifying

additional students for TD inclusion based on performance data and teacher recommendations. TD status is flexible, allowing students to move in and out of the program as they demonstrate readiness.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **AIG Specialist:** Develops and implements differentiated curriculum, co-teaches, models instructional strategies, and provides pull-out/push-in support. Facilitates grouping of students with similar needs and interests.
- **Classroom Teachers:** Utilize flexible grouping, differentiated assignments, and advanced learning strategies. Collaborate with the AIG specialist to integrate extension and enrichment opportunities.
- **Administrators:** Ensure AIG students receive appropriate services, monitor differentiation practices, support professional development, and coordinate scheduling to maximize instructional time for AIG students.

Through structured differentiation, flexible instruction, and ongoing evaluation, KHS ensures that AIG students receive challenging, relevant, and individualized learning experiences that foster academic growth and intellectual curiosity.

* Practice B

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

Kestrel Heights School uses a comprehensive approach to differentiate instruction based on students' abilities, readiness, and interests. AIG specialists, classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators collaborate to ensure advanced learners receive appropriate challenges and support.

Student Data Utilization for Differentiation

Student placement and instructional plans are informed by assessment data, classroom performance, interest inventories, and learning profiles. This data guides curriculum modifications, flexible grouping, and instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of AIG students.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **AIG Specialist:** Provides professional development, instructional resources, and on-site support to teachers. Designs curriculum based on student strengths in core subjects, incorporating independent interest-based research projects. Implements differentiation strategies through co-teaching, modeling, and pull-out/push-in services. Supports twice-exceptional (2e) students and addresses affective needs through programs such as 7 Habits for Highly Effective Students.
- **Classroom Teachers:** Implement differentiation strategies such as flexible grouping, curriculum compacting, and project-based learning. Collaborate with AIG specialists to develop and integrate enrichment activities.
- **Guidance Counselors:** Address myths about gifted education, advocate for the use of Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs), and provide social-emotional support in partnership with AIG specialists and teachers.
- **Administrators:** Allocate time for faculty training on AIG services, ensure differentiation is effectively implemented, and structure student groupings and schedules to maximize instructional efficiency.

Differentiation Strategies

Teachers employ a range of instructional methods to address academic and social-emotional needs, including:

- Curriculum compacting
- Socratic and Paideia Seminars
- Project-Based and Problem-Based Learning
- Higher-order questioning
- Flexible grouping
- Critical thinking activities
- Genius Hour
 - Independent learning contracts
 - STEM and STEAM projects
 - Choice boards incorporating diverse learning modalities
 - Technology-enhanced production tasks
 - Tiered lessons

Implementation Across Grade Levels

- **Elementary:** Cluster grouping (5-7 identified students per group) allows for peer collaboration and targeted instruction. AIG specialists provide pull-out enrichment services.
- **Middle School:** AIG specialists collaborate with advanced English/Language Arts and Math teachers to implement differentiation strategies. Students may access compacted 7th-grade math, Math I in 8th grade, Math II, and NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS) courses in Math and World Languages.

Through structured differentiation and continuous assessment, the school ensures AIG students receive challenging, engaging, and personalized learning experiences.

* Practice C

Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that address the range of academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs of AIG students. Kestrel Heights Charter School (KHS) is committed to providing a rigorous and relevant curriculum that meets the diverse academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of AIG students. The AIG program incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources to support student development holistically.

Academic and Intellectual Needs

To challenge and engage AIG students, KHS employs research-based curricular resources, including:

- **Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) Curriculum (K-3)**
- **College of William & Mary Advanced Curriculum (3-8) for Math and Language Arts**
- **Challenging Units for Gifted Learners (6-8)**
- **First Lego League Robotics Curriculum (3-8)**
- **Performance-Based Projects for Language Arts, Math, Science, and STEM (E-books)**

These resources promote conceptual understanding, advanced literary analysis, problem-solving, and creativity. Instructional strategies include Socratic seminars, service learning, authentic performance tasks, and simulations to foster higher-order thinking. Pull-out sessions complement classroom instruction by providing enrichment opportunities beyond grade-level standards.

To support teacher development, KHS maintains a professional library of gifted education research and instructional strategies. Teachers participate in ongoing professional development, including the annual NCAGT conference, as funding permits.

Social and Emotional Needs

KHS recognizes the unique social and emotional needs of AIG students and integrates evidence-based approaches to address these needs. Cluster grouping and pull-out sessions allow gifted students to engage with like-minded peers, fostering intellectual curiosity and emotional support. Additional strategies include:

- **Mindfulness practices and literary analysis of texts that explore social-emotional themes**
- **Guidance counselor support, including targeted sessions on coping strategies, perfectionism, and stress management**
- **Affective education embedded in AIG instruction**
- **Professional development for faculty on supporting gifted students' social-emotional growth**
- **Implementation of the Kimochis Social-Emotional Curriculum (K-5)**

Roles and Responsibilities

AIG Specialist:

- Develops and implements enrichment opportunities addressing academic and affective needs
- Provides professional development for faculty on gifted students' social-emotional characteristics
- Advocates for equitable treatment and differentiated instruction for AIG students

Classroom Teachers:

- Implement differentiated strategies informed by AIG best practices
- Collaborate with the AIG specialist and guidance counselors to support gifted learners
- Attend professional development on AIG students' social-emotional needs

Guidance Counselors:

- Offer semi-annual AIG SEL sessions on mindfulness, coping strategies, and identity development
- Facilitate school-wide guidance lessons on academic behaviors, goal setting, and emotional well-being
- Support scheduling to ensure appropriately challenging coursework for AIG students

Administration:

- Support flexible scheduling and intervention strategies for gifted learners
- Ensure professional development requirements for staff regarding AIG student needs

KHS has also adopted the **Mind Brain Education (MBE) professional development curriculum** from the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning. This certification ensures that all staff implement research-based strategies that address both the cognitive and affective development of gifted learners.

By utilizing evidence-based instructional materials, fostering supportive peer interactions, and prioritizing social-emotional development, KHS ensures that AIG students receive comprehensive educational experiences that nurture both their academic potential and personal growth.

*** Practice D**

Fosters the development of durable skills and mindsets which support post-secondary success. These skills include adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, empathy, learner's mindset, and personal responsibility.

Kestrel Heights Charter School is committed to fostering durable skills and mindsets that prepare AIG students for post-secondary success by integrating rigorous and relevant curriculum with real-world applications. The AIG program intentionally cultivates adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, empathy, a learner's mindset, and personal responsibility through differentiated instructional approaches.

Integration of 21st-Century Skills in the Classroom:

All teachers incorporate 21st-century skills into daily instruction, focusing on critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, curiosity, leadership, and communication. The AIG specialist collaborates with classroom teachers and instructional specialists to design and implement integrated units that align content with technology, global perspectives, and service-learning opportunities. These units challenge students to apply knowledge in meaningful ways, fostering adaptability and problem-solving skills in authentic contexts.

Problem-Based and Inquiry-Based Learning:

The AIG program emphasizes problem-based learning (PBL), where students engage in real-world problem-solving and innovation. These units require students to analyze complex issues, develop solutions, and present their findings, strengthening their ability to think critically, work collaboratively, and communicate effectively. Enrichment units incorporate global inquiry, fostering empathy and social responsibility by encouraging students to consider diverse perspectives and the ethical implications of their decisions.

Passion Projects:

As a culminating experience in enrichment units, students complete passion projects—self-directed research and presentation assignments that align with their interests and strengths. These projects encourage student choice, curiosity, and creativity while reinforcing skills in research, critical thinking, communication, and personal responsibility. Students develop resilience by navigating challenges, revising their work based on feedback, and reflecting on their learning process.

Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) Curriculum (Grades K-3):

The PETS curriculum introduces young learners to systematic critical thinking through activities in convergent and divergent thinking, visual/spatial reasoning, and evaluative skills. PETS aligns with Bloom's Taxonomy and builds foundational skills in problem-solving, adaptability, and metacognition. Additionally, PETS helps educators identify and nurture young gifted learners, ensuring a differentiated approach that supports their intellectual and social-emotional development.

Lego Robotics (Grades 3-8):

The Lego Robotics curriculum fosters innovation, teamwork, and resilience through hands-on learning experiences. Students apply STEM concepts

to design and build functional models, programming them to complete tasks and solve real-world problems. Core values embedded in the curriculum reinforce future-ready skills:

- **Discovery:** Exploring new skills and ideas
- **Innovation:** Using creativity and persistence to solve problems
- **Impact:** Applying learning to improve the world
- **Inclusion:** Embracing differences and respecting all perspectives
- **Teamwork:** Recognizing the strength of collaboration
- **Fun:** Finding joy in learning and problem-solving

Middle School Electives and Real-World Application:

Middle school students have access to a diverse selection of electives that connect academic content to practical experiences and career pathways. Courses such as Computer Science, Psychology, Journalism, and Model UN challenge students to think critically, solve complex problems, and engage in collaborative discussions that mirror real-world scenarios. These courses foster a growth mindset, helping students recognize the value of persistence and continuous learning.

Technology Integration and Digital Literacy:

Kestrel Heights' one-to-one technology initiative empowers students to extend learning beyond the classroom, providing opportunities to engage in digital research, multimedia presentations, and coding. By developing digital literacy, students enhance their ability to communicate ideas effectively, adapt to evolving technologies, and demonstrate responsible digital citizenship.

Social-Emotional Learning and Personal Responsibility:

Throughout the AIG program, students engage in reflective practices that support social-emotional growth and self-awareness. Activities that emphasize ethical decision-making, perspective-taking, and self-regulation help students develop personal responsibility and empathy. By fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment, the program ensures that students not only achieve academic success but also build the resilience and interpersonal skills necessary for lifelong learning and leadership.

By embedding these opportunities across all grade levels, Kestrel Heights Charter School ensures that AIG students develop the durable skills and mindsets essential for success in college, career, and beyond. The program's emphasis on adaptability, critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, empathy, a learner's mindset, and personal responsibility equips students to navigate an ever-changing world with confidence and competence.

* Practice E

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

Kestrel Heights Charter School employs a variety of summative and formative assessments to inform instructional decisions, ensuring that curriculum and instruction are differentiated to meet the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of K-8 AIG students. The assessment process is ongoing and embedded within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework to monitor student progress, adjust instructional strategies, and evaluate program effectiveness.

Assessment Tools and Their Role in Differentiation

To assess and support gifted and advanced learners, the school utilizes multiple measures, including:

- **Summative Assessments:** End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments, IOWA, and CogAT provide standardized data on student performance.
- **Formative Assessments:** NC Check-Ins, I-Ready diagnostics (administered in fall, winter, and spring), classroom-based assessments, and weekly formative measures (e.g., "Show What You Know" quizzes) offer ongoing insights into student learning progress.
- **Screening and Identification Tools:** IOWA and CogAT are used to identify AIG and Talent Development students, while ACCESS helps identify English Language Learners who may qualify for AIG services.

Utilization of Assessment Data to Differentiate Curriculum and Instruction

Assessment data informs instructional practices by guiding the development of differentiated learning opportunities, ensuring that gifted students are challenged appropriately. Strategies include:

- **Flexible Grouping:** I-Ready diagnostics and formative assessments inform instructional groupings, which are adjusted quarterly to reflect student progress.
- **Curriculum Compacting:** Students who demonstrate mastery of grade-level standards receive advanced content and assignments tailored to their learning needs.
- **Tiered Assignments and Enrichment Activities:** Differentiated assignments provide appropriate levels of challenge, and interest-based units allow students to explore topics in greater depth.
- **Acceleration and Extension Opportunities:** Advanced coursework, problem-based learning, and cross-curricular projects enhance engagement and intellectual rigor.

Roles and Responsibilities in Assessment-Driven Differentiation

AIG Specialist:

- Analyze data to identify and monitor AIG and Talent Development students.
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to design and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.
- Support the flexible grouping process by ensuring high-achieving students receive appropriate enrichment.
- Provide professional development on differentiation strategies, including curriculum compacting and tiered assignments.
- Evaluate student progress regularly to determine the need for additional interventions or acceleration.

Classroom Teachers:

- Utilize formative assessments to adjust instruction and small group placement weekly.
- Implement differentiation strategies, including enrichment, curriculum compacting, and project-based learning.
- Design and adapt instruction to challenge students who have mastered content while ensuring foundational skills for others.
- Work collaboratively with the AIG specialist to develop and refine instructional strategies.
- Participate in data meetings to discuss student progress and instructional adjustments.

Administration:

- Facilitate school-wide support for differentiated instruction through scheduling and resource allocation.
- Ensure the fidelity of flexible grouping structures to optimize learning outcomes for ALG students.
- Lead quarterly Kid Talk Data Meetings with teachers, instructional support staff, and the ALG specialist to analyze the growth of gifted students and adjust instructional plans accordingly.
- Monitor the effectiveness of differentiation practices and provide professional development opportunities as needed.

Analyzing Growth and Preparing for Future Instruction

Ongoing data analysis is integral to assessing the effectiveness of instruction and ensuring that differentiation strategies are meeting the needs of gifted learners. Quarterly reviews of assessment data help:

- Determine whether differentiation strategies are leading to measurable growth.
- Identify trends in student performance to refine instructional approaches.
- Adjust instructional planning for subsequent units based on demonstrated needs.
- Evaluate program effectiveness and make necessary modifications to ALG services.

By embedding a continuous cycle of assessment, differentiation, and analysis, Kestrel Heights Charter School ensures that ALG students receive rigorous, relevant, and responsive instruction that fosters their academic growth and intellectual engagement.

* Practice F

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

Kestrel Heights Charter School is committed to fostering an environment where advanced learners receive appropriately challenging and enriching educational experiences. To achieve this, instructional personnel collaborate purposefully to implement differentiated curriculum and instruction tailored to meet the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of ALG students.

Collaboration and Shared Responsibility:

1. **Instructional Collaboration:** Classroom teachers, ALG specialists, Exceptional Children (EC) specialists, and English Language Learner (ELL) specialists work in tandem to develop and implement differentiated instructional strategies. Teachers and specialists collaborate regularly to adjust content, process, product, and learning environments to ensure all advanced learners receive appropriately rigorous instruction.
2. **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):** The ALG specialist actively participates in PLCs, grade-level planning meetings, and Kid Talk meetings to provide input on differentiation strategies, share research-based best practices, and assist in designing rigorous curriculum modifications.
3. **Flexible Grouping and Instructional Strategies:** Collaboration among educators enables the implementation of flexible grouping strategies, compacting curriculum, acceleration opportunities, and enrichment activities that cater to the diverse strengths of ALG students.
4. **Targeted Professional Development:** The ALG specialist provides ongoing coaching and professional development to educators on differentiation techniques, gifted education pedagogy, and strategies to support twice-exceptional (2e) and underrepresented gifted populations.

Implementation and Support Mechanisms:

- 1. Direct Support from the AIG Specialist:** The AIG specialist works with individual teachers and teams to co-plan, co-teach, and model effective differentiation strategies. Support may include:
 - Designing curriculum materials that align with classroom objectives and AIG best practices.
 - Providing model lessons and co-teaching experiences.
 - Offering instructional coaching and feedback.
- 2. Administrative Oversight and Data Utilization:** Administration monitors student progress through subgroup test results and performance data to ensure the effectiveness of differentiation practices. The AIG specialist collaborates with administrators to address gaps in service and enhance program implementation.
- 3. Interdisciplinary Coordination:** The Executive Director, who also serves as the Director of Federal Programs, facilitates communication among the AIG, EC, and ELL programs. This structure allows specialists to share insights regarding student needs, best practices, and strategies to support differentiated instruction.
- 4. Student Identification and Progress Monitoring:** Regular review and updating of AIG and Talent Development student rosters ensure all instructional personnel are informed about identified students. This allows for intentional differentiation, particularly for twice-exceptional and ELL students who require specialized support.

By maintaining a strong culture of collaboration, professional development, and data-driven decision-making, Kestrel Heights Charter School ensures that advanced learners receive appropriately challenging instruction that fosters academic growth and social-emotional development. Differentiation is embedded into daily instructional practices, ensuring that gifted learners are continually engaged and supported in reaching their full potential.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

All Stakeholders

- **Collaborative Framework for AIG Differentiation:** Form a task force that includes all stakeholders (teachers, administrators, parents, AIG specialists, and students) to co-create a long-term vision for AIG differentiation. This could include specific workshops, professional development sessions, or monthly planning meetings to ensure the implementation of AIG strategies in each classroom.
- **Daily Differentiation and Cooperative Learning:** Foster a school-wide culture that recognizes differentiation as an ongoing process rather than a one-time effort. Consider introducing weekly “differentiation check-ins” with all involved parties to assess and discuss strategies being implemented. Encourage the idea that differentiation is a core teaching practice, woven into all lessons, not something separate from standard teaching.
- **Ongoing Communication with Stakeholders:** Develop a communication plan that includes regular updates for all stakeholders. This could include bi-weekly newsletters to parents, monthly meetings with guidance counselors, and ongoing feedback loops between teachers and AIG specialists. An emphasis on transparency and inclusivity ensures that the needs of advanced learners are continuously addressed.

Administration

- **Supporting AIG Needs in the School System:** Administration can offer more targeted support by setting aside dedicated professional development time specifically for AIG strategies. This will help teachers stay informed about the latest best practices and tools available for differentiation.
- **Strategic Grouping of Students:** Create clear guidelines for grouping students by ability and interest. This should be based not just on grades but also on strengths in specific areas, like creativity, analytical thinking, or leadership. Groupings should be flexible and dynamic, with

- opportunities for students to engage with like-minded peers, especially in interdisciplinary projects or enrichment activities.
- Monitor and Support AIG Implementation:** To ensure AIG strategies are being implemented effectively, administrative observations should focus specifically on how differentiation is occurring across various student groupings. Administrators can develop observation templates that target differentiation methods, monitoring progress, and providing feedback based on observed needs.

AIG Specialist and Classroom Teachers

- Contextual and Affective Learning:** Enrichment activities should be designed to nurture not only intellectual growth but also emotional intelligence and social skills. This can be achieved by integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) principles into the curriculum alongside the traditional academic focus, especially for AIG students who might also benefit from leadership, adaptability, and resilience training.
- Utilizing Formative Assessment Data for Differentiation:** Formative assessments should be utilized regularly to track student progress and identify when content needs to be accelerated or modified. The data should drive personalized learning pathways, such as project-based learning opportunities, independent research tasks, or challenges that push students to explore topics deeper.

- Flexible Grouping within the Classroom:** Flexible grouping strategies should be part of the everyday classroom routine, providing both challenge and support to advanced learners. Strategies could include interest-based grouping, peer mentoring, or collaboration between different grade levels to stimulate a broader range of ideas and experiences.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG Schedules A detailed AIG program schedule that highlights the specific times set aside for enrichment	* Cooperative Lesson Plans Lesson plans developed collaboratively by AIG specialists, classroom teachers, and administrators.	* Differentiated Lesson Plans Documentation of differentiated lesson plans that include varied instructional strategies (e.g.,	* Administrative Observations Observational data from administrators that focus on how AIG strategies are implemented in the	* Classroom Rosters with Grouped Students Detailed rosters indicating how students are grouped for both academic and enrichment activities,
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Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A		

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

The LEA recruits and retains highly qualified professionals and provides relevant and effective professional development concerning the diverse needs of gifted learners that is ongoing and comprehensive.

*** Practice A**

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

Kestrel Heights Charter School employs an AIG-licensed specialist as the lead coordinator to guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program and plan. The AIG license is obtained through coursework or Praxis assessment, aligning with NCDPI guidelines and state legislation to ensure the educator meets the highest standards for gifted education.

The AIG coordinator plays a crucial role in overseeing and enhancing gifted education services by fulfilling the following responsibilities:

Program Development and Implementation

- Lead the revision of the AIG Plan every three years in collaboration with stakeholders.
- Ensure the full and consistent implementation of the AIG Plan's components across all grade levels.
- Evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and appropriateness of services for gifted learners and recommend necessary adjustments.
- Develop and oversee strategies to maintain program equity and inclusivity, ensuring diverse representation in AIG identification and services.

Professional Development and Support

- Coordinate ongoing, comprehensive professional development for teachers, administrators, and staff to address the diverse needs of gifted learners.
- Provide mentorship and coaching to educators on differentiated instruction, enrichment opportunities, and social-emotional support for gifted students.
- Serve as a resource for instructional best practices and gifted education strategies.

Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy

- Interpret and communicate AIG program goals, objectives, and expectations to faculty, staff, families, and the school community.
- Develop and distribute program materials to increase awareness and understanding of AIG services and processes.
- Facilitate the AIG Advisory Board (AIG Committee) to encourage stakeholder input, program evaluation, and continuous improvement.
- Serve as the primary liaison between Kestrel Heights Charter School and the NC Department of Public Instruction to ensure compliance with state requirements.
- Coordinate parent outreach efforts, including workshops, newsletters, and informational sessions, to support family engagement in gifted education.

Data, Compliance, and Program Monitoring

- Oversee the screening, referral, and identification processes for K-8 students, ensuring equitable access to AIG services.
- Maintain accurate records of student identification evidence, program participation, and provided services.
- Analyze program data to guide decision-making and refine AIG programming based on student needs and performance outcomes.
- Monitor compliance with local, state, and federal policies regarding gifted education, including reporting procedures and headcount data.
- Collaborate with the MTSS team to advocate for the needs of gifted learners and integrate AIG services within a multi-tiered system of support.

Resource Management and Financial Oversight

- Assist in the financial management of the AIG program, ensuring appropriate allocation of funds for instructional materials, enrichment opportunities, and professional development.
- Identify and secure resources, grants, and community partnerships to enhance gifted education services.

Professional Growth and Collaboration

- Actively participate in professional learning opportunities, including NCDPI AIG Coordinator Institutes, NCAGT conferences, regional meetings, and state webinars.
- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with families, educators, and the broader community to strengthen AIG programming and advocacy.

Through these efforts, the AIG coordinator ensures that Kestrel Heights Charter School's AIG program remains responsive, effective, and aligned with the needs of gifted learners while upholding state and local guidelines.

* 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School employs a licensed AIG specialist in a K-8 role to ensure the effective implementation of the AIG program and plan. The specialist's duties are balanced between the elementary and middle school levels, with specific responsibilities tailored to meet the developmental and academic needs of students at each stage. The AIG specialist plays a critical role in fostering an environment where gifted students receive differentiated instruction, enrichment opportunities, and social-emotional support to maximize their potential.

Alignment with Vision, Mission, and Goals

The AIG program at Kestrel Heights is designed to provide a challenging, engaging, and supportive learning environment that meets the unique academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted learners. The AIG specialist ensures that the implementation of the AIG plan is aligned with this mission by:

- Delivering high-quality, research-based instructional strategies that support gifted learners.
- Promoting an inclusive and equitable approach to gifted education that identifies and serves a diverse population.
- Encouraging collaboration among educators, families, and community partners to enhance the gifted program.

- Advocating for differentiated curriculum and instruction to ensure continuous academic growth.

Role and Responsibilities of the AIG Specialist

The AIG specialist at Kestrel Heights is responsible for leading and supporting gifted education services across K-8. Their responsibilities include instructional, administrative, and advocacy roles to ensure the AIG program is effectively implemented and that students receive appropriate support.

Elementary (K-5) AIG Responsibilities:

At the elementary level, the AIG specialist focuses on identifying and nurturing potential giftedness while providing enrichment opportunities that align with students' abilities. Responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the implementation of differentiated curriculum and instruction that supports early academic growth.
- Utilizing strategies to identify and develop the potential of young learners (K-3) through observation, informal assessments, and targeted enrichment activities.
- Adapting the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) with differentiation strategies, including curriculum compacting, project-based learning, and hands-on enrichment.
- Providing direct enrichment services in small groups, whole-class settings, or through collaboration with classroom teachers.
- Developing and maintaining Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) for identified AIG students to ensure services align with their needs.
- Implementing student screening, referral, and identification processes to ensure early recognition of gifted learners.
- Supporting classroom teachers in using flexible grouping and differentiated instructional strategies to challenge gifted students.

Middle School (6-8) AIG Responsibilities:

At the middle school level, the AIG specialist ensures that gifted students continue to receive appropriate challenges while preparing for more rigorous coursework. Responsibilities include:

- Overseeing curriculum modifications to support advanced learners in core content areas, particularly in language arts and mathematics.
- Providing direct services for AIG students through pull-out programs, accelerated coursework, or advanced learning pathways.
- Implementing inquiry-based learning, critical thinking activities, and interdisciplinary projects to foster deeper learning experiences.
- Supporting social and emotional needs by facilitating discussions and activities on topics such as perfectionism, motivation, and resilience.
- Coordinating and promoting participation in extracurricular programs such as academic competitions, enrichment clubs, and summer learning opportunities.
- Collaborating with teachers to ensure that AIG students receive appropriately challenging assignments, projects, and assessments.

Support for Academic, Intellectual, and Social-Emotional Needs

The AIG specialist at Kestrel Heights takes a holistic approach to supporting gifted students by addressing their academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development in the following ways:

Academic Support:

- Differentiates classroom instruction through enrichment, acceleration, and extension activities.

- Implements research-based instructional strategies to enhance critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
- Ensures that students receive appropriately challenging coursework that aligns with their learning needs.
- Provides additional academic enrichment through specialized programming, competitions, and independent study projects.

Intellectual Support:

- Encourages interdisciplinary learning opportunities that foster higher-order thinking and complex problem-solving.
- Guides students in developing research and inquiry-based learning skills.
- Promotes leadership development and collaboration through project-based learning and mentorship opportunities.

Social-Emotional Support:

- Implements affective curriculum components to address the unique emotional needs of gifted students, including self-advocacy, stress management, and coping with high expectations.
- Facilitates discussions and activities related to social-emotional development, such as perfectionism, peer relationships, and motivation.
- Works with teachers, counselors, and parents to ensure a supportive environment that nurtures the whole child.

Additional Responsibilities:

- Develops and documents student DEPs, ensuring alignment with identified needs and continuous communication with families.
- Maintains accurate records in Infinite Campus and other documentation systems to track student progress and compliance with AIG policies.
- Coordinates and facilitates parent outreach efforts, including workshops, newsletters, and an actively maintained AIG webpage.
- Collaborates with the MTSS team to represent and advocate for gifted students in a multi-tiered support framework.
- Encourages and organizes extracurricular opportunities such as academic clubs, competitions, and field trips that align with gifted students' interests and abilities.

* 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School is committed to ensuring that all personnel involved in AIG programs are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge, and understanding to support gifted learners effectively. The AIG specialist, as the sole coordinator for grades K-8, facilitates professional development tailored to classroom teachers, instructional specialists, student services personnel, and school administrators.

Professional Development Requirements

Classroom Teachers

- **Foundational Training:** Introduction to the AIG program and characteristics of gifted learners during new faculty orientation.
- **Differentiation Strategies:** Ongoing training in curriculum modification, flexible grouping, enrichment, and acceleration.
- **Identification Process:** Training on observation tools and equitable identification practices.
- **Coaching Support:** One-on-one or small-group coaching with the AIG specialist to refine differentiation practices and instructional strategies.

Instructional Specialists (EC, ESL, etc.)

- **Twice-Exceptional (2e) Training:** Understanding the intersection of giftedness with disabilities or language acquisition needs.
- **Affective Needs Support:** Addressing the social and emotional development of gifted learners, including perfectionism and underachievement.
- **Collaboration Strategies:** Working with the AIG specialist to co-plan and implement appropriate services for gifted students.

Student Services Personnel (Counselors, Social Workers, Psychologists)

- **Gifted Student Profiles:** Recognizing “typical” and “atypical” gifted behaviors, including asynchronous development and mental health concerns.
- **Advocacy Training:** Supporting the social-emotional needs of gifted learners and fostering resilience, self-regulation, and motivation.
- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS):** Understanding the role of gifted education within the MTSS framework.

School Administrators

- **Equity & Excellence in Gifted Education:** Training in inclusive identification, talent development, and access to services.
- **Differentiation Leadership:** Ensuring all educators receive professional learning on differentiation strategies for AIG students.
- **Program Support & Compliance:** Providing time and resources for collaboration between the AIG specialist and classroom teachers.

AIG Specialist's Role in Professional Development

- Foster a culture of “AIG, All Day, Every Day” by promoting inclusive and equitable gifted education practices.
- Lead professional development workshops, leveraging resources such as NCDPI’s AIG Booster Shot series.
- Collaborate with external experts to secure specialized training opportunities.
- Use data to inform professional learning priorities and evaluate program effectiveness.

* 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School ensures that AIG students receive instruction from qualified personnel who have either earned an AIG add-on license or met the LEA requirements for providing direct services. Instruction occurs through differentiation in the general education classroom, small group enrichment, and AIG pull-out services.

Personnel Qualifications & Professional Development

- The AIG Specialist holds an AIG add-on license and provides ongoing professional development to ensure teachers effectively serve gifted learners.
- Classroom teachers are encouraged to meet LEA requirements to provide direct instruction to AIG students.

AIG Student Placement Process

- **Elementary School Placement:**

- The AIG Specialist collaborates with counselors and administrators to assign AIG students to teachers with AIG licensure or those who meet LEA requirements.
 - Cluster groups of 6-8 AIG students are placed in the fewest number of classrooms to ensure effective differentiation.
 - Students are grouped by ability level within heterogeneously mixed classes for science and social studies.
- **Middle School Placement:**
 - AIG students are placed in Advanced ELA and/or Accelerated Math based on their area of identification.
 - Cluster grouping continues in general education settings to streamline differentiation.
 - The school verifies student placement in accelerated math courses based on established criteria.
- **Annual Review & Monitoring:**
 - The AIG Specialist provides scheduling and placement guidelines to assist in classroom assignments for the upcoming year.
 - Placement is verified before the start of the school year to ensure alignment with AIG program requirements.

* **Practice E**

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

Kestrel Heights Charter School is committed to recruiting, retraining, and supporting AIG-licensed professionals, including those from diverse backgrounds, to ensure high-quality instruction for gifted learners.

Recruitment Strategies

- **Hiring Practices:**
 - The AIG Specialist collaborates with the Executive Director to prioritize candidates with AIG licensure.
 - Interview questions assess candidates' experience and strategies for meeting the needs of gifted learners.
 - Staff needs are analyzed to ensure AIG students receive instruction from qualified educators.
- **Internal Recruitment:**
 - The AIG Specialist provides local professional development to prepare teachers for AIG licensure via the Praxis exam.
 - Financial assistance for AIG coursework or Praxis fees will be considered in collaboration with administration, utilizing available federal or local funding.
 - Teachers receiving financial support will be encouraged to commit to serving KHS after obtaining licensure.

Retention Strategies

- **Recognition & Incentives:**
 - AIG-certified teachers will be publicly recognized through staff meetings, newsletters, and awards.
 - Opportunities for leadership roles within the AIG program, such as mentoring new teachers or leading professional development, will be offered.
 - Competitive stipends or bonuses for AIG-licensed teachers will be explored based on funding availability.
- **Professional Support & Growth:**
 - AIG teachers will receive priority access to specialized professional development, including state conferences, workshops, and NCDPI AIG Institutes.
 - A collaborative learning network will be established, allowing AIG teachers to share strategies and best practices.

- o Regular check-ins with the AIG Specialist and administration will provide ongoing support for AIG teachers' professional growth and instructional success.

* **Practice F**

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

The AIG Specialist leads efforts to identify school-wide professional development needs and implement a structured plan for ongoing training to ensure equitable access to gifted services.

Professional Development Plan for Equity & Excellence

- **Changing Mindsets & Addressing Bias:**

- Educators will reflect on their biases (including implicit biases) that may impact the identification and support of gifted learners.
- Resources from NCDPI, including the Call to Action brief and Guidebook, will be used to reshape perspectives on giftedness.
- Professional development sessions will dispel myths about gifted learners, particularly those from underrepresented populations.

- **Equitable Identification Practices:**

- Teachers will receive training on universal screening, multiple criteria for identification, and alternative pathways to recognize giftedness in diverse student populations.
- The AIG Specialist will guide educators in using observation tools and culturally responsive practices to ensure fair and accurate identification of AIG students.

- **Providing a Range of Services & Talent Development:**

- Staff will learn how to implement flexible grouping, enrichment, acceleration, and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all gifted learners.
- Early talent development strategies will be emphasized, particularly for students in K-3 who show potential but may not yet meet traditional identification criteria.

- **Collecting & Using Meaningful Data:**

- Educators will be trained to analyze assessment data, student performance trends, and qualitative observations to inform gifted education services.
- Professional development will emphasize using data to monitor student growth, ensure appropriate placement, and refine instructional practices for AIG students.

- **Focused & Ongoing Professional Learning:**

- The AIG Specialist will facilitate school-wide training sessions, PLC discussions, and individualized coaching to build educator capacity in gifted education.
- Teachers will engage in collaborative discussions and case studies to apply best practices in equitable gifted education.
- AIG-focused training will be embedded within existing staff meetings, MTSS discussions, and instructional planning sessions to ensure sustainability.

* **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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School is committed to aligning professional development opportunities with local AIG program goals, district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education. The AIG Specialist leads efforts to build teacher capacity, increase equitable access to gifted services, and ensure rigorous, differentiated instruction for AIG students.

Alignment of Professional Development with AIG Program Goals:

Professional development supports the following AIG program goals:

1. **Increase the number and diversity of teachers meeting the LEA requirements for working with gifted students.**
 - New teachers receive an introduction to AIG learners and differentiation strategies during faculty orientation.
 - Local professional development is offered to prepare teachers for AIG licensure through the Praxis exam, with potential financial assistance for coursework.
2. **Enhance teacher understanding of the unique attributes of gifted learners.**
 - Annual PD includes topics such as twice-exceptional learners, underrepresented gifted populations, and social-emotional needs.
 - Training sessions focus on identification best practices, equitable services, and the role of gifted education within MTSS.
3. **Build teacher capacity to provide appropriate rigor in instructional design.**
 - Professional development includes project-based learning, problem-solving strategies, and advanced curriculum differentiation.
 - Teachers may collaborate with the AIG Specialist in PLCs, coaching sessions, and co-planning meetings to refine instructional strategies.

Integration of AIG within Other Professional Development Initiatives:

AIG professional development is embedded within district-wide initiatives to ensure gifted education is not siloed but integrated into broader instructional practices.

- **School Improvement Teams & Leadership Committees** – The AIG Specialist collaborates with school leaders to ensure AIG needs align with district goals for academic achievement, equity, and culturally responsive teaching.
- **MTSS Framework** – Training highlights how AIG services fit within tiered intervention models, emphasizing the importance of high-quality differentiation.
- **PLC Meetings & Kid Talk Sessions** – Teachers receive ongoing support and coaching on using AIG instructional strategies effectively.

Structures for Collaboration & Capacity-Building:

To refine professional learning and enhance AIG instruction, the AIG Specialist:

- Participates in quarterly AIG Coordinator meetings and professional conferences (NCAGT, NAGC) to bring back best practices.
- Collaborates with regional AIG coordinators to share strategies, resources, and implementation models.
- Develops digital communication channels (email updates, resource hubs) to maintain continuous dialogue with educators.
- Provides classroom-based support, such as co-teaching, curriculum reviews, and modeling differentiation strategies as requested.

Monitoring & Evaluation of Professional Development Impact:

To ensure effectiveness, the AIG Specialist:

- Collects teacher feedback to refine PD offerings.
- Observes classroom implementation to assess differentiation strategies.
- Reviews student data to measure the impact of PD on AIG student achievement and growth.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Create a Consistent Pattern for Use of the AIG Specialist (K-8):

- Establish a structured schedule for the AIG Specialist to provide support across all grade levels.
- Define clear roles and responsibilities for the AIG Specialist in differentiation, curriculum planning, and direct student services.

Group AIG Students for Effective Use of Specialists and Teachers:

- Implement cluster grouping to maximize differentiation and peer collaboration.
- Ensure AIG students are placed with AIG-licensed teachers or those meeting LEA requirements.

Provide Teachers with AIG Groups Planning Time with the AIG Specialist:

- Schedule regular planning sessions where teachers can collaborate with the AIG Specialist to develop enriched lessons.
- Integrate AIG-focused planning into PLC meetings and faculty development days.

Develop KHS LEA Requirements for Teachers Working with Gifted Students as PD:

- Establish local AIG professional development requirements to ensure all teachers understand gifted learners' needs.
- Embed AIG-specific training within new teacher onboarding and ongoing PD initiatives.

Develop PD for Teachers to Acquire an AIG Add-On License Through the Praxis Exam:

- Offer targeted professional development to prepare teachers for the AIG Praxis exam.
- Explore financial support options for teachers pursuing AIG certification.
- Encourage a commitment from teachers to continue serving at KHS after obtaining AIG licensure.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Schedules documenting AIG Specialist assignments and support across grade levels.

* Documents outlining AIG Specialist utilization within classrooms and enrichment programs.

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

* Professional development agendas detailing AIG training sessions, planning meetings, and Praxis exam preparation.

* Faculty meeting agendas reflecting AIG discussions, instructional strategies, and collaboration efforts.

Standard 5: Partnerships

Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter 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 A/G 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School fosters intentional, two-way partnerships with parents, families, and the community to ensure the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of AIG students are met. These partnerships promote active engagement, shared responsibility, and a collaborative approach to gifted education.

Two-Way Communication and Parent Involvement:

- Kestrel Heights communicates with parents, families, and the community through multiple channels, including the school website, teacher websites (Google Classroom), Class Dojo, and bi-weekly school-wide newsletter updates.
- Parents receive regular updates about their child's academic and social development, including information on differentiated instruction, acceleration, remediation, and social-emotional support programs.
- The AIG program hosts annual parent surveys to provide families with an ongoing opportunity to ask questions, share concerns and successes, and express how they would like to be involved in supporting gifted education.

Collaborative Engagement Opportunities:

- **Scholar Showcase Events, Presentations of Learning (POL), and Curriculum Nights** allow parents and families to engage with their child's learning experiences. These events highlight project-based learning at all grade levels, showcasing differentiation and academic rigor in the classroom.
- In grades K-3, student work portfolios are shared with parents during scheduled conferences, ensuring ongoing conversations about student progress and academic needs.
- Kestrel Heights actively encourages parent volunteers to participate in various events such as open houses, athletics, band and chorus concerts, and school beautification initiatives.

- The school collaborates with the PTO and administrative staff to create volunteer opportunities, reinforcing a culture of engagement.

Supporting the Academic, Intellectual, and Social-Emotional Needs of AIG Students:

- AIG students benefit from a structured approach to differentiation, acceleration, and enrichment, which is communicated to parents through ongoing teacher interactions, conferences, and school events.
- Social-emotional development is supported through classroom differentiation strategies, counseling resources, and parent education events focused on the unique needs of gifted learners.
- The school explores additional engagement opportunities, such as guest speaker sessions for parents to address gifted education concerns and interest-based parent-led workshops for students.

By fostering strong, two-way partnerships, Kestrel Heights ensures that AIG students receive the support they need both academically and emotionally. These ongoing collaborations allow parents to contribute meaningfully to their child's educational journey while staying informed about best practices in gifted education.

* 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School actively partners with a diverse range of community stakeholders, businesses, industries, and institutions of higher education to provide enrichment, extension, and acceleration opportunities for AIG students, as well as professional development for teachers and staff. These partnerships strengthen the local AIG program by offering mentorships, outreach programs, specialized clubs, enrichment camps, and field-based experiences that extend learning beyond the classroom.

Enrichment, Extension, and Acceleration Opportunities for AIG Students:

Kestrel Heights benefits from its location within Durham's rich downtown area, where organizations such as the Arts Council, the Museum of Life and Science, and the Carolina Theater provide ongoing academic and aesthetic enrichment throughout the year. Additionally, the school has developed specific partnerships to further enhance student learning:

- **Snapology (Grades K-5)** – Robotics, programming, summer camps, after-school programs, Minecraft, and Lego-based STEM education.
- **FIRST Robotics & First Lego League** – Provides access to robotics and programming curriculum, with opportunities to compete in regional, state, national, and international competitions.
- **Scripps National Spelling Bee** – Facilitates school-wide competitions that challenge AIG students in language and vocabulary development.
- **Career Day (K-8)** – In collaboration with guidance counselors, guest speakers from various professions introduce AIG students to career exploration and mentorship opportunities.

Professional Development and Resource Support for Teachers and Staff:

To enhance instructional strategies for gifted learners, Kestrel Heights partners with leading state and national organizations that provide professional development, research-based instructional strategies, and curriculum resources for educators:

- **NCDPI (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction)** – AIG Coordinator Institutes, Regional AIG Meetings, Office Hours, and Professional Development Webinars.
- **North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented (NCAGT)** – Annual conference and professional development for AIG educators.
- **National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)** – Annual conference offering best practices, research, and instructional strategies for gifted education.
- **College of William & Mary – Center for Gifted Education** – Provides advanced curriculum materials and challenging instructional units in Mathematics and Language Arts.
- **Prufrock Press / Routledge** – Supplies advanced curriculum resources such as Primary Education Thinking Skills (P.E.T.S.) to foster higher-order thinking.
- **Riverside Insights** – Supports the scoring and administration of AIG testing, including the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and the IOWA Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).

Strengthening Community Engagement and Resource Development:

To ensure continued support for AIG programming, Kestrel Heights seeks volunteers, sponsorships, and funding opportunities from local businesses and organizations. These collaborations enhance student programming by:

- Partnering with local industry leaders and higher education institutions to explore internship, mentorship, and field experience opportunities for AIG students.
- Encouraging community partners to attend student showcases and competitions to build awareness and financial support for gifted education future programs such as Destination Imagination, Science Olympiad, Math Counts, and Quiz Bowl.
- Collaborating with business advisory groups, Kestrel's Board of Directors, and district leadership to advocate for increased resources and additional programming options for AIG students.

Through strong partnerships with community stakeholders, Kestrel Heights ensures that AIG students receive the academic, intellectual, and career-focused support necessary for their continued growth and success. These partnerships also provide ongoing professional development opportunities to equip educators with the best instructional strategies for serving gifted learners.

* **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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School's AIG Advisory Committee serves as a collaborative body that develops, implements, monitors, and revises the local AIG program and plan. The committee ensures that programming decisions reflect the needs of gifted students from diverse populations across all grade levels, while also incorporating feedback from key stakeholders.

Membership and Structure of the AIG Advisory Committee:

The AIG Advisory Committee is intentionally structured to represent a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring diverse perspectives and expertise inform AIG program decisions. The current committee includes:

- **AIG Specialist** (Committee Chair)
- **Executive Director**
- **Director of the Middle School**
- **Exceptional Children (EC) Staff**
- **English as a Second Language (ESL) Staff**
- **Middle School Teacher Representative**
- **Elementary School Teacher Representative**
- **Middle School Parent Representative**
- **Elementary Parent Representative**
- **Elective Specialist Representative**
- **School Counselor Representative**

Ensuring Diverse and Representative Stakeholder Engagement:

Kestrel Heights prioritizes equitable representation within the AIG Advisory Committee by actively recruiting stakeholders from various ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Strategies to achieve balanced representation include:

- Recruiting AIG parents/guardians from different grade spans to ensure all age groups are represented.
- Encouraging participation from underrepresented communities, including multilingual families and those with diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

- Involving key instructional and support staff from both the elementary and middle school levels to provide well-rounded insight.
- Engaging community representatives when possible, such as business leaders, higher education partners, and arts organizations that support enrichment opportunities.

Roles and Responsibilities of the AIG Advisory Committee:

The AIG Advisory Committee meets monthly (virtual, asynchronous) to engage in the following activities:

1. Program Development & Implementation:

- Provide input on the development and implementation of the Local AIG Plan.
- Assist in identifying new strategies, resources, and best practices for supporting gifted students.

2. Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Review AIG program data and stakeholder feedback to assess program effectiveness.
- Discuss ongoing challenges and recommend solutions for improving service delivery.

3. Revisions & Future Planning:

- Offer recommendations for modifications to the AIG Plan to ensure alignment with evolving student needs.
- Identify long-term goals and actionable steps to strengthen AIG programming.

Strategies to Support and Encourage Participation:

To ensure meaningful engagement, Kestrel Heights provides:

- Multiple meeting formats (both in-person and virtual) to accommodate stakeholders' schedules.
- Interpretation services for multilingual families to foster inclusivity.
- Opportunities for AIG parents/guardians to serve as community liaisons, sharing feedback and concerns from a broad range of families.

Impact of the AIG Advisory Committee:

By maintaining a structured, diverse, and collaborative approach, the AIG Advisory Committee ensures that Kestrel Heights' gifted education program remains responsive, effective, and aligned with student needs. Through continuous monitoring and stakeholder involvement, the committee plays a

crucial role in shaping a high-quality, equitable, and sustainable AIG program.

* **Practice D**

Informs all students, parents/guardians, and the community of the following:

- Local AIG Plan
- Local AIG program services
- Policies and procedures relating to advanced learning and gifted education
- Ways to access advanced learning opportunities

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

Kestrel Heights Charter School is committed to informing all students, parents/guardians, and the community about its AIG program, services, policies, and opportunities for advanced learning. To ensure accessible, ongoing, and responsive communication, Kestrel Heights employs a multi-faceted approach that reaches diverse stakeholders through a variety of platforms.

Communication Plan & Methods for Sharing AIG Information:

Kestrel Heights disseminates information regarding the Local AIG Plan, program services, district and state policies, and opportunities for advanced learners through the following channels:

- **School Website & AIG Webpage:**
 - The KHS AIG Plan and NC Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Program Standards are publicly available on the AIG webpage, embedded within the Kestrel Heights School website.
 - The AIG Parent Handbook, brochures, forms, and resources are also posted online.
 - All resources are translatable into multiple languages using built-in website translation tools.
- **Multilingual Written Materials:**
 - Forms, letters, and parent materials are available in both English and Spanish, with additional translations provided as needed.
- **Parent Information Sessions & Open House Events:**
 - The AIG Specialist hosts an annual parent information session at Open House, introducing families to the AIG program, identification process, and available services.
 - Additional virtual and in-person information sessions (Curriculum Nights, Scholar Showcases) are scheduled throughout the year to accommodate diverse family needs.
- **School Newsletter & Digital Communication:**
 - The bi-weekly school newsletter includes AIG updates, upcoming events, and student opportunities.

- The AIG Specialist contributes regularly, ensuring families stay informed about contests, enrichment programs, and policy updates.

- **Stakeholder Engagement & Advisory Committee:**

- The AIG Advisory Committee, which includes parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community representatives, helps disseminate AIG-related information to their respective networks.
- The committee also provides feedback on how to improve communication and engagement with families.

- **Social Media & Public Relations:**

- Student achievements, activities, contests, and awards involving AIG students are highlighted through press releases on the KHS website, school newsletter, and social media platforms.
- Publicizing student successes helps to raise awareness and engagement with the AIG program.

Ensuring Ongoing and Inclusive Communication:

To meet the diverse language and accessibility needs of the Kestrel Heights community, the following strategies are implemented:

Intentional Efforts for Language Accessibility

- Written materials are provided in multiple languages, with a focus on the primary languages spoken within the district.
- Oral interpretation services are offered at key meetings, ensuring families of multilingual learners have equal access to information.

Multiple Communication Formats

- Printed materials (brochures, handbooks, newsletters) and digital content (emails, website updates, social media) allow for widespread access.
- Virtual meetings and recorded presentations provide flexible options for families to engage with AIG information at their convenience.

Year-Round Communication

- Updates on AIG programs, events, and policies are not limited to a single annual meeting but are consistently integrated into school communications throughout the year.
- Families receive timely notifications about new opportunities, policy changes, and student success stories.

Expanding Community Awareness & Access to Advanced Learning Opportunities:

Kestrel Heights also makes intentional efforts to connect students and families with additional resources, including:

- Information about local, regional, and state extracurricular programs, internships, and mentorship opportunities.
 - Partnerships with civic and local organizations to promote community-based learning experiences.
 - Details on upcoming speakers, enrichment camps, academic competitions, and field experiences.
- By utilizing multiple platforms, ensuring language accessibility, and maintaining ongoing communication, Kestrel Heights Charter School ensures that all students, families, and community members are well-informed, engaged, and empowered to support advanced learning opportunities for gifted students.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

1. Continue to develop annual surveys to ask stakeholders, especially parents/guardians and students, for input regarding special opportunities for gifted learners.
2. Develop a database of partners who have particular expertise and are willing to share with students. Expand distribution of AIG information to businesses to establish partnerships.
3. Establish an AIG Partnership Committee to lead and guide the process of developing community partnerships and opportunities.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Database of partners.
*	Schedule of presentations.
*	Events planned for students.
*	Results of annual surveys.

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

Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School maintains a local AIG plan in accordance with state legislation and policy, which is reviewed and revised every three years. During this planning cycle, feedback from multiple stakeholders, including both internal and external groups (i.e., students, parents, staff, community members, and district leadership) is incorporated to intentionally design support for AIG program improvement and innovation.

- The AIG Advisory Committee develops and refines the AIG plan. The committee consists of the AIG specialist, administration, teachers, parents, EC and ML specialists, and guidance counselors. The intention of the committee is to develop a comprehensive local AIG program based on self-assessment and overall program goals in consideration of the local context of Kestrel Heights Charter School.
- ESL and EC personnel are also included in various meetings and stages of developing the AIG plan to ensure a variety of perspectives.
- Local concerns such as student membership data, geography, grade level configurations, and personnel allotments are considered in developing the plan.

The AIG Plan addresses the six standards and the practices of the 2024 NC AIG Program Standards as required by the NC SBE.
DPI documents and resources are utilized in developing this plan (LEA Self Assessment Tool, NCDPI feedback from previous AIG plan review, Standards Unpacking Documents).

- The plan will be submitted to the Kestrel Heights School Board of Education for review and approval in May of 2025 and sent to the NC State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction (SBE/DPI), no later than July 2025. Revisions and modifications will be submitted no later than June 2026.

All Community Stakeholders

- May contact the AIG specialist or Executive Director to offer feedback.
- Have the opportunity to participate in the AIG Advisory Committee.
- Have representation on the AIG Advisory Committee.
- Have been engaged in focus surveys.

The AIG Specialist

- Creates surveys for parents, students, and teachers addressing the standards and practices of the AIG program and plan.
- Creates review documents for the annual meeting with the KHS Board of Directors.
- Reviews the current plan and implementation of the plan.
- Reviews survey data and use of instructional time.
- Reflects on needed changes based on survey feedback, multiple data points, and instructional experiences.

To meet the needs of students, data is used for:

<p>a. Short-term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of personnel. • Allocation of instructional materials. • Purchase of instructional materials. • Driving instruction for AIG/Talent Development students. <p>b. Long-term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine areas to intensify communications. • Evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to incorporate under-represented populations. • Determine the best educational approaches for our school configuration. 	<p>The KHS AIG specialist will use the feedback and data to inform a review in anticipation of significant program changes in the next plan cycle. As KHS attempts to ensure all programs and services are effective in meeting the needs of gifted learners, evaluations of programming and service delivery will take place through a variety of venues (PLCs, Board Meetings, AIG Advisory Committee Meetings, etc.). It is an opportunity to reflect on the policies and practices of the gifted program and make informed, data-driven changes over the next three years.</p> <p>* 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.</p> <p>Kestrel Heights School, a K–8 charter school, ensures the effective implementation and monitoring of its AIG program in alignment with current legislation and state policies. The AIG specialist plays a central role in both the development and execution of all program components, policies, and practices. The AIG specialist conducts lesson observations, gathers teacher and student feedback, and collects evidence of services to ensure that the program is implemented with fidelity. The Executive Director provides leadership support, ensures compliance with policy, and monitors the allocation of resources to meet program goals.</p> <p>The AIG plan undergoes a formal review and revision every three years. Additionally, the AIG Advisory Committee, organized by the Executive Director or AIG specialist, convenes monthly to assess the plan's implementation and evaluate program outcomes. Meeting minutes, student achievement data, teacher input, and evidence of curriculum implementation are collected and reviewed regularly to track progress toward goals. AIG implementation checklists and survey tools are used to monitor classroom practices and stakeholder satisfaction.</p> <p>Each spring, the AIG specialist and Executive Director conduct a comprehensive review of the year's program, assessing fidelity to the plan and identifying opportunities for improvement. This includes examining personnel utilization, curriculum development, and other enhancements to strengthen program effectiveness and meet the diverse needs of gifted learners. If changes in policy or school configuration occur mid-cycle, the AIG Advisory Committee will recommend necessary plan modifications.</p> <p>Progress is shared annually through a written report to the Board of Directors, presentations at faculty meetings, and updates on the school's website. These updates summarize progress, highlight success stories, and address areas of needed improvement. In addition, leadership capacity is built through AIG PD offerings and collaborative planning meetings where teachers discuss best practices for gifted learners.</p> <p>* 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.</p>
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At Kestrel Heights Charter School, the entirety of allocated state funds is used for the salary of the AIG specialist. A local budget is also prepared to provide essential services to students served by the AIG program, aligned with the goals of the Local AIG Plan, and approved by the local Board of Education. The Executive Director monitors and approves or denies all budget expenditures related to the AIG program, which include costs for advanced curriculum resources, AIG testing materials and scoring services, and professional development opportunities for staff.

The Executive Director and AIG specialist review the most current State Allotment Policy Manual annually to ensure all expenditures align with allowable use of funds according to state policy. Additionally, the AIG specialist and Executive Director review the budget report quarterly to monitor expenditures, ensuring they support comprehensive Local AIG Plan implementation and remain consistent with program goals.

Alternate funding sources, including grant funds, are actively sought to establish new programs, support personnel needs, and enhance services for gifted learners. Strategic budgeting decisions prioritize staffing, resources, and professional development to directly impact and benefit AIG students, with clear connections made between all budgetary actions and the goals outlined in the Local AIG Plan.

*** 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School conducts an annual, comprehensive analysis of student performance data to ensure that all AIG students continue to receive rigorous, challenging, and differentiated curriculum experiences. Achievement and growth data—such as End-of-Grade (EOG), End-of-Course (EOC), and I-Ready diagnostic assessments—are collected, disaggregated by student subgroups, and systematically reviewed to identify patterns over time. This data-driven process informs instructional practices, fosters equity, and supports policy adjustments aligned with the goals of the Local AIG Plan.

The AIG specialist, who also serves as the primary instructor for K-8 AIG and Talent Development students, works closely with classroom teachers to interpret student scores and refine instructional strategies. During regularly scheduled Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings, teachers are trained in data interpretation and differentiation practices. Teachers also share formative, summative, and EVAAAS growth data with the AIG specialist to support real-time instructional adjustments and enrichments.

To ensure data informs mindsets and decision-making at all levels, trends from disaggregated data are compiled in a digital tracking system and discussed in team meetings, annual program evaluations, and advisory committee reviews. These discussions help shape a collective understanding of gifted learners' needs, particularly among underserved populations, and influence ongoing refinement of AIG services, instructional approaches, and program goals.

Although dropout data does not directly apply to our K-8 setting, Kestrel Heights has developed a proactive early warning and monitoring system led by the AIG specialist and school guidance counselor. This includes monitoring attendance, academic performance, and behavioral or social-emotional indicators to flag students who may be at risk for disengagement. When concerns arise, intervention plans and family conferences are initiated to ensure student support and retention.

This comprehensive, multi-source data approach—including both academic and holistic student indicators—supports programmatic evaluation and informs continuous improvement. Annual findings, including disaggregated data and trend analyses, are shared with school leadership, the Board of Directors, and the AIG Advisory Committee to ensure transparency, alignment, and responsive planning.

* 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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School (KHS) is committed to ensuring equitable access to the AIG program by maintaining a structured system to track and analyze data related to the referral, identification, services, and retention of students. The AIG department monitors this data to ensure that the program reflects the demographic diversity of the school and identifies any disparities in AIG representation. This data-driven approach allows the school to address and support the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted students from all backgrounds.

System for Maintaining and Analyzing Data

- **Referral Data:** Referrals are encouraged from a wide range of sources, including ESL, EC, and general education teachers, as well as parents, students, and specialists in areas such as art and music. Each year, a referral campaign is launched using multimedia communications in multiple languages to ensure broad awareness.
- **Identification Data:** KHS uses the CogAT Form 7, with accommodations as needed (e.g., Spanish directions), and considers multiple data points, including WIDA/ACCESS scores for English learners. Exceptionalities are also taken into account, and 2e (twice-exceptional) students are supported through tailored evaluation methods.
- **Services Data:** Identified students are enrolled in the Infinite Campus system by the AIG specialist, allowing continuous monitoring of progress and service adjustments as needed. The AIG specialist tracks growth and proficiency, focusing on early identification and support.
- **Retention Data:** Annual reviews are conducted to ensure retention rates align with student needs and program goals. These reviews monitor students' performance and the proportionality of underrepresented groups within the AIG population.

Proportionality and Trend Analysis

Data on demographics, performance, and program participation is analyzed biannually to ensure proportionality among identified students across demographic subgroups, including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), language proficiency, and twice-exceptional status. When disproportionalities are observed, the AIG Advisory Committee reviews root causes and explores strategies to increase referrals and support for underrepresented subgroups.

Strategies for Addressing Under-Identification

- **Focused Screening:** If less than 10% of the school population is identified as AIG, the AIG department will closely review students scoring in the top 10% within each demographic group, applying appropriate screenings.
- **Talent Development Programs:** KHS's Talent Development initiatives support students from underrepresented backgrounds to prepare them for AIG identification.
- **Staff Training:** Teachers receive ongoing training to recognize and nurture gifted potential across all student groups, emphasizing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Ongoing Data Audits and Program Evaluation

Data audits are conducted in the fall and spring, and the findings are shared with the AIG Advisory Committee to assess proportionality and track trends. When necessary, the school initiates targeted interventions, such as rigorous course enrollment and counseling support, to assist students in

achieving academic success. These audits guide the AIG department and school leadership in adapting curriculum and policies to ensure equitable, high-quality education for all gifted learners at KHS.

* **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.

Kestrel Heights Charter School (KHS) maintains a systematic process to ensure that personnel serving K-8 AIG students possess the necessary licensure and certifications, aligning with the goals and strategies outlined in the local AIG plan. The following outlines the maintenance, utilization, and application of licensing and certification data, as well as collaborative measures with school leadership to support program goals.

Maintenance of Licensing and Certification Data

- Centralized Data Collection: The Executive Director is responsible for maintaining all teacher licensure data, including the credentials of those serving AIG students. This centralization enables streamlined tracking and easy access to licensing information for program management and review.
- AIG Specialist Licensure Requirements: The AIG specialist is required to hold AIG licensure. If the AIG specialist is not yet licensed, they must be enrolled in approved coursework leading to AIG certification. AIG certification can be obtained through university-based coursework or by achieving a qualifying score on the Gifted Praxis exam.
- Ongoing Professional Development: Teachers responsible for AIG clusters are encouraged to pursue AIG-related coursework or to participate in professional development activities that support their understanding and effective instruction of gifted students (such as NCCAT).

Process for Using Licensure Data to Support AIG Program Goals

- Aligning with the Local AIG Plan: The Executive Director and AIG specialist regularly review personnel qualifications and licensure status to ensure alignment with AIG program goals. This review informs decisions on appropriate student placement, staff assignments, and instructional support.
- Collaborative Needs Assessment and Staffing Decisions: Partnering with the Executive Director, the AIG specialist assesses the specific needs of the AIG program. This collaborative approach ensures that staffing decisions are based on the program's goals, the school's needs, and personnel qualifications.
- Strategic Hiring and Placement: Licensing information is used to make informed hiring decisions for roles involving gifted instruction, ensuring that AIG students are placed with qualified personnel who can meet program requirements and maintain high standards in gifted education.
 - Professional Growth and Development: KHS encourages teachers working with AIG students to enhance their skills and knowledge through professional learning opportunities (NCCAT, Byrdseed.net), supporting continuous improvement aligned with the AIG plan.

This structured approach to monitoring and utilizing certification and licensure data ensures that all personnel working with AIG students are appropriately qualified, fostering an environment that supports and advances the goals of the KHS AIG program.

* **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.

Kestrel Heights School (KHS) is committed to eliciting regular, meaningful feedback from a variety of stakeholders—including students, parents/guardians, teachers, and other community members—to assess the effectiveness of the AIG program and to guide continuous program improvement. The district has established a comprehensive, multi-channel approach to gathering insights, which includes the following strategies:

End-of-Year Surveys:

- Surveys are administered to students, parents, and teachers, designed to gather perspectives directly related to the standards and practices outlined in the NC AIG Plan.
- Survey questions target specific areas of the program's implementation, effectiveness, and areas for potential growth, ensuring feedback is relevant and actionable.

Multiple Communication Channels:

- Parents/guardians are informed of survey opportunities through email, as well as whole-school communication tools such as ClassDojo.
- The KHS website provides contact information for the AIG specialist, allowing stakeholders to reach out directly with questions or feedback.
- The Executive Director and AIG specialist are accessible by phone, email, and in-person meetings to discuss the program and receive feedback.

Student Feedback:

- Students are surveyed regarding their experiences within the AIG program, focusing on their perceptions of program rigor, engagement, and support for their academic needs. This feedback helps ensure that the program meets students' expectations and addresses their academic and social-emotional needs.

AIG Advisory Committee:

- The AIG Advisory Committee meets 2-3 times per school year to review and analyze formal and informal data from stakeholders, identifying trends and areas for program improvement. This committee includes representatives from various stakeholder groups, providing a comprehensive view of the program's impact.

School Improvement Plan (SIP) Integration:

- Feedback regarding the implementation of the AIG program is incorporated into the School Improvement Plan, highlighting the program as a priority within the overall school strategy.
- Parent and guardian representatives on the school leadership team, as well as the AIG Advisory Committee, are invited to respond to AIG Plan implementation strategies outlined in the SIP, providing an additional opportunity for community input.

Ongoing Informal Feedback from Collaborative Teams:

- Feedback is regularly gathered from collaborative teams, including Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team. These teams provide insights from those both directly and indirectly involved in AIG programming, contributing to ongoing reflection and adaptation of the program.

Data Analysis and Continuous Improvement:

- All feedback data is systematically reviewed and analyzed to assess the effectiveness of the AIG program, including its integration with the MTSS framework. Insights from feedback inform program adjustments, enhancing alignment with student needs and district goals.

Through this multi-faceted approach, KHS ensures that the perspectives of all stakeholders are intentionally and consistently gathered, analyzed, and applied to maintain a responsive and effective AIG program. This commitment to stakeholder engagement and feedback underscores KHS's dedication to continuous improvement and equitable support for all gifted learners.

* Practice H

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

Kestrel Heights School (KHS) is committed to sharing local AIG program evaluation data with various stakeholders, including school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and community members. To ensure transparency, relevance, and respect for confidentiality, KHS has developed the following structured approach to disseminating evaluation data while adhering to FERPA guidelines:

Data Sharing with School and District Personnel:

- Executive Director and School Administration: The AIG specialist presents detailed program evaluation data to the Executive Director and school administration. This data includes insights on student growth, program effectiveness, and areas for development, supporting school leaders in strategic planning for advanced learning.
- Staff Training and Professional Learning Teams (PLTs): Teachers and staff receive relevant, summarized data on student growth and program efficacy during PLT meetings and professional development sessions. This information helps educators tailor instruction and create rigorous learning environments to better meet the needs of gifted students.
- School Board: Upon request, the AIG specialist will provide program evaluation reports to the local board, presenting data in summary form to inform board members about program achievements, challenges, and future goals.

Communicating with Parents/Guardians, Families, and the Community:

- AIG Program Summary on the KHS Website: Program evaluation summaries and the AIG Plan are accessible on the KHS website, providing families with clear insights into the program's performance, updates, and areas for growth. This data is presented in a user-friendly format, focusing on broad program trends and goals to give families a comprehensive overview.
- Parent Handbook: The Parent Handbook, available on the website and in print by request, includes information about the AIG program's goals, evaluation data, and ways that families can support their child's advanced learning experience. The handbook emphasizes support resources, program improvements, and collaboration opportunities.
- AIG Advisory Committee: The AIG Advisory Committee, which includes family and community representatives, meets 2-3 times per year to review and discuss evaluation data, ensuring that community members have a direct role in interpreting data and shaping program direction. The committee will also explore other avenues for sharing evaluation results more widely, such as community forums or newsletters.

Student Data and Privacy Protection:

- FERPA Compliance and Confidentiality: When sharing program evaluation data with the public, all data is presented in aggregate form, without any personally identifiable information. KHS strictly follows FERPA regulations, ensuring that individual student data remains confidential.
- Privacy in Survey Responses: When reporting survey results from students, parents/guardians, and staff, individual responses are anonymized. Summarized trends and themes are shared rather than specific feedback, maintaining respondent confidentiality while providing actionable insights for program improvement.

Student-Focused Communication:

- Student Access to Program Updates: Students in the AIG program are informed of relevant evaluation data that may affect their learning experience, such as the addition of new resources, curriculum changes, or enrichment opportunities. This helps students understand how the program evolves based on feedback and assessment.
- Student Surveys and Feedback Sessions: Students are encouraged to participate in surveys and feedback sessions, and summarized results are shared with them, allowing them to see how their input shapes program improvements while upholding confidentiality.

Additional Community Engagement:

- Public Meetings and Announcements: When applicable, KHS may host informational sessions or public meetings to review program evaluation data with the broader community. These forums allow community stakeholders to ask questions and gain insight into the AIG program's role in the school and district's commitment to advanced learning.
- Newsletters and School Bulletins: Key highlights from program evaluations, such as significant program milestones or initiatives, will be included in school newsletters or bulletins to keep the community informed and engaged.

Through these targeted, FERPA-compliant strategies, KHS ensures that all stakeholder audiences receive meaningful and relevant AIG program evaluation data while maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of student information. This approach supports transparency, encourages feedback, and strengthens community involvement in the continuous improvement of the AIG program.

*** Practice I**

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents/guardians through established written policies, procedures, and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements. **Kestrel Heights School (KHS)** is committed to safeguarding the rights of Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students and their families through clear, documented policies, procedures, and practices. The following outlines our approach to informed consent, reassessment, transfer protocols, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

Informed Consent for Assessment and Placement

Referral, Screening, and Identification:

- Families are informed of the referral, screening, and identification processes through the AIG Parent Handbook, FAQ resources, the KHS website, and informational meetings.

- The AIG Specialist follows a detailed checklist to ensure all required documentation is completed, filed, and shared with parents/guardians in a timely manner.

Informed Consent for Services:

- Once a student is identified, parents/guardians are invited to an initial placement meeting. During this meeting, the AIG Specialist reviews all assessment data with the family and explains service delivery options.
- Parents/guardians sign the **Summary of Evaluation** form, providing formal consent for AIG services.
- In cases where the student has participated in talent development programs previously, this placement meeting also serves to notify parents of the transition to official AIG services, with parental consent reaffirmed.
- Parents may also opt for their child to decline AIG services. In such cases, a written opt-out form is signed, though the student retains their AIG identification.

Reassessment Procedures

- KHS allows for the reassessment of AIG students up to **three times** in grades K-8.
- **Additional Assessments:** Requests for additional assessments require documentation of significant circumstances impacting previous evaluation outcomes.
- **Outside Testing:** Families may submit external testing results from licensed school-related psychologists or psychiatrists. These assessments must be no more than two years old and include data on reading comprehension, math achievement, or aptitude. This external data, if submitted, is used alongside current KHS data in one of the three allowable evaluations.
- **Documentation:** All testing protocols, consent forms, and evaluation summaries are securely stored in individual student files, maintained by the AIG Specialist.

Procedures for Transfer Students

Transfer from Other LEAs:

- The KHS AIG Parent Handbook outlines the process for transferring AIG students from other Local Education Agencies (LEAs).
- Parents/guardians are requested to provide documentation of previous AIG identification and services. If unavailable, the AIG Specialist contacts the prior school to obtain records.
- The KHS AIG Advisory Committee reviews all provided records and determines an initial service delivery plan for the student, with services provided on a temporary basis if necessary.
- AIG students from military families are immediately placed in alignment with the **Article 29B Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children**.
- The Executive Director has discretion in accepting prior placements.
- If the previous AIG identification is not accepted from another LEA, the student will have the opportunity to participate in the previously outlined screening and testing process to determine AIG placement or services.

Procedures for Resolving Disagreements

Parents or guardians may request a review of Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) services if they feel that:

- Kestrel Heights Charter School improperly failed to identify their child as an AIG, AG, or IG student, or
- The plan for the AIG Program has not been implemented appropriately in regard to their child.

Step 1: School Director Conference

- If there is a disagreement concerning AIG services, the parent/guardian may file a written appeal with the School Director within five (5) school days of the parental notification.
- The Director will review the appeal with the AIG committee and respond in writing within five (5) school days after a scheduled conference.

Step 2: Appeal to the Executive Director

- Should the matter remain unresolved, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Executive Director within five (5) school days.
- The Executive Director convenes an AIG Appeals Committee to meet with the parent/guardian and provides a written decision within five (5) school days following the conference.

Step 3: Appeal to KHS School Board

- If disagreement persists, the parent/guardian may submit a written appeal to the School Board within five (5) school days of receiving the previous response.
- The School Board provides a final decision within thirty (30) calendar days.

Step 4: State-Level Grievance Procedure

- If the local process fails to resolve the dispute, the parent/guardian may file for a hearing under Chapter 150B, Article 3 of the General Statutes.
- This review is limited to whether the school improperly failed to identify the child as AIG or did not implement the local AIG plan appropriately.
- Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains findings of fact and conclusions of law.
- Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, the decisions of the administrative law judge becomes final, is binding on the parties, and is not subject to further review under Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

Confidentiality and FERPA Compliance

All personal information is protected under FERPA guidelines. Documentation, including consent forms, assessment protocols, and evaluation summaries, is stored in secured files, accessible only to authorized personnel. In all stages of communication, student data is handled with the utmost confidentiality, ensuring that only aggregate or anonymized data is shared publicly.

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*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. In the spring semester, the AIG specialist will schedule a meeting with the Executive Director to discuss the current year's AIG program, fidelity with the plan, and next year's plans.
2. Assist school directors with planning to reach student growth goals.
3. The AIG specialist will be included in use of EVAAS data training as needed.
4. The school will address the standards of the AIG Plan implementation yearly in the School Improvement Plan.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Notes from PLC meetings, Advisory Committee meetings, Board meetings, etc.
* EVAAS training.
* School Improvement Plan.
* Parent/Student/Teacher survey form and feedback results.

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

Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:

06/10/2025 

AIG Related Documents		
Kestrel Heights School (32D) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0		
Type	Required Documents Document Template	Document/Link
Local Board of Education Approval Signatures [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	 <u>Local Board of Education Approval Template</u>	 <u>Kestrel Heights AIG Plan Board Approval</u>
Optional Documents		
Type	Optional Documents Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>K-8 Pathways to Identification</u>
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	

Phrase	Definition