Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Macon County Schools (560) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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This Local AIG Plan has been developed based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2024). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide Public School Units (PSUs) to develop, implement, and monitor thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs. The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs and related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C150.5).

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

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

* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

Provide an education that leads to productive citizenship and lifelong learning.

Macon County Schools Vision for Local AIG program

Macon County Schools will provide support and opportunities that assist gifted students in exploring and reaching their potential to become successful within the 21st century. We believe that all children have the right to an education proportionate with their learning abilities. Gifted children perform or show potential for performing at substantially higher levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. We believe that gifted characteristics are present in children from all cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and require services that support their social, emotional, and cognitive needs. These students require differentiated services beyond those that are provided in the regular education program in order to achieve their highest potential. It is the responsibility of the entire Macon County School System staff to meet the needs of gifted learners through individualized differentiated instruction.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* $ 268,961.00	* $ 0.00	* $ 0.00	* $ 0.00

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

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

Macon County Schools has a clearly articulated and implemented system for screening, referral and identification of AIG students. This system spans all grade levels and is designed to include children from underrepresented populations and underachieving gifted students. Building level administrators each have a written copy of the screening, referral and identification process. In addition, AIG specialists will communicate with teachers and counselors in grades K-12 regarding the process and timeline(s) for making referrals. The information can be found in the AIG Handbook that is posted on the Macon County Schools AIG website so that parents and teachers can access it at any time. Parents are notified of screening efforts by written and verbal communication (Thrillshare communication texts, email and phone calls). Information about the screening, referral and identification process will be discussed at the beginning of the year faculty meetings and parent orientation/open house events. All training for referrals, screening methods and the identification matrix are used to ensure that under-represented populations are evaluated without bias.

Throughout each year (October, March & May), AIG Specialists and the AIG Coordinator and/or Director will screen K-12 students using testing data to determine if students may be eligible. More information regarding this testing data is sited in section 1.b. All students in the county are screened during the spring semester of their third grade year. A referral period will be held twice a year in October and in March for any K-12th grade student. Teachers will be given referral information by the AIG Specialists.

K-2 Referral and Screening
Students in Kindergarten through second grade may be referred by their classroom teacher(s) for evaluation if there is a clear need for instruction that is consistently two or more grade levels above their current grade. Data from Kindergarten Entrance Exam, iReady, Dibels8, other assessments, and classroom performance will be utilized to determine need.

Students who are referred in K-2 for the AIG program will be given the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) for their current grade level. Based on these scores, additional grade level assessments and teacher rating scales (Renzulli), students will be either placed into the AIG program or placed as a “nurtured” student. A Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) will be developed for their “nurturing period” or if they are placed as AIG and the Elementary AIG Specialist will work collaboratively with classroom teachers and parents to determine how to best meet social, emotional, and academic needs. Students who are identified as “nurtured”, along with all other 3rd grade students, will be assessed at the end of their third grade year for placement into the program. Students who are being “nurtured” must meet identification requirements at the end of the 3rd grade in order to be placed/identified in the AIG program.

Students who are being “nurtured” will be given priority placement in classes where the teacher has their AIG Endorsement. “Nurtured” students will be placed in classes where teachers are currently pursuing endorsement if possible.

Third Grade Screening and Referral

MCS conducts a universal screening for all third grade students primarily educated within a general education setting using multiple criteria. A score matrix has been created listing assessments and rating scales that all third grade students will complete by the end of the school year. All listed assessments provide a percentile rank and are nationally normed. All rating scales give a range in which the student score must fall in order to receive points. The matrix also includes

a combination of Aptitude, Achievement, Teacher Rating, and Product/Performance (pilot for the 2022-2025 plan) Student aptitude is measured using the Cognitive Abilities Test or CogAT. This assessment creates a comprehensive student profile made up of verbal, quantitative, non-verbal and composite scores. Achievement is measured using the Beginning of Grade (BOG) Reading Assessment, End of Grade (EOG) Reading Assessment, iReady Math, and Grades. The Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale is given to those students who have not placed solely on their Aptitude and/or Achievement data. During the 2022-2025 plan, Macon County Schools piloted a product/performance assessment for all third grade students. Other formal and informal assessment opportunities are available if student data is missing, extenuating circumstances where testing was not available (Covid-19), or additional data is needed/requested (see Section 1B).

Students who are identified as AIG, AG, or IG, will be placed at the beginning of their 4th Grade year. Parents are notified by a letter mailed during the summer. This letter notifies parents of scheduled meetings with AIG Specialist to sign DEP and to disseminate information about upcoming services and opportunities.

Fourth-Twelfth Grade Screening and Referral

Parents, guardians, students, counselors, teachers, and other stakeholders may refer students for testing for gifted identification in grades K-12 during the referral period. Referrals will be accepted in October and March of each year. Referrals will be given to the AIG Specialist. The Specialist will use the CogAT for grades K-4 for the Aptitude score and will collect the additional data listed above for Achievement, Teacher Rating, and Grades to determine placement. Students in 5th - 12th grade may be asked to take an alternative Aptitude test (see listed below in 1b.). A combination of Achievement data may be used from the two prior years. For example, a student in 5th grade may be reassessed using achievement data from 4th grade and 5th grade and CogAT data from 3rd grade. Students may be considered for rescreening by the district after a period of at least 12 months has passed. The MCS Gifted Identification Matrix is used to determine gifted eligibility.

* **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.

If a K-12 student is identified as gifted in any capacity in another school or district, gifted identification will remain the same in MCS. No further testing is required.

Multiple eligibility criteria lead to service options in enrichment/nurturing, academic acceleration/curriculum compaction, and intellectual development. MCS publishes the MCS Gifted Identification Matrix that defines AIG eligibility criteria based on aptitude (CogAT Verbal, Non-Verbal, Quantitative), achievement (EOG, BOG, EOC, Grades, iReady, Dibels8), teacher rating (Renzulli Scales: Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students - Online) and product/performance (in development). The matrix includes quantitative data such as test scores but also includes qualitative data such as teacher rating scales, grades, and product/performance scales thus giving students multiple pathways to identification.

Following the collection of data, an AIG Committee made up of the AIG Specialists, AIG District Coordinator/Director, and teachers will review the student data and begin to determine the level of services and differentiation needed for each individual student. Information may be considered inadequate for some students, and the committee may recommend either further assessment or that the student does not require differentiated services. Students may be placed on a “watch” list so that the student may be nurtured and considered for identification at a later time. If additional assessments are desired, parental permission will be obtained in writing.

The AIG Committee may also recommend individualized assessments which are sensitive to economic conditions, gender, developmental differences, learning differences, and diversity of students so that equal opportunity for consideration is provided. The AIG Committee decision shall be documented, and parents notified of the recommended services. Documentation of parental involvement is required for placement in any service delivery options.

Please note the AIG Identification Matrix attachment. Students may place on the AIG headcount for AM (Academically Gifted in Math), AR (Academically Gifted in Reading), AG (Academically Gifted), AIG (Academically and Intellectually Gifted) or IG (Intellectually Gifted).

Kindergarten-Second Grade Nurturing and Identification

Students who score 84th percentile- 95th percentile in any area (Aptitude or Achievement) using CogAT, iReady (Math), Dibels8 (Reading), or other assessments which provide a percentile rank, will be served by the AIG Specialist and the classroom teacher in a “nurturing” capacity. This "nurturing" will be documented through the DEP. These students, along with all 3rd grade peers, will take the CogAT, BOG (Reading), and EOG (Reading & Math) during their third grade year to determine AIG eligibility. Students in Kindergarten through second grade who score 96%ile or above in any of the three areas (verbal, quantitative, non-verbal) on the CogAT or 96%ile or above on their iReady Math, Dibels8 Reading, or other assessment program, will be placed into the AIG program and served by the AIG Specialist and their classroom teacher according to their DEP.

Third Grade Screening Process

The MCS Gifted Identification Matrix will determine eligibility beginning with students who score 84 percentile or above on any of the above-mentioned measures (see Identification Matrix). Students will be eligible for service based on the following combination of scores:

· One criteria: 96th percentile or above on any subtest of the CogAT

· Two criteria: at or above the 93rd percentile on the CogAT verbal, quantitative or on-verbal and/or EOG Reading or Math and/or BOG Reading, or other percentile ranked assessment.

· Multiple criteria: a total of 14 or more points on the matrix utilizing multiple criteria for identification including teacher recommendations, grades, and other assessments.

· Reciprocity from another school district

Fourth-Twelfth Grades

Opportunities for rescreening are available in subsequent grades including those based on referrals (October & March) and end of grade results. Traditional measures for identification include the CogAT with rescreen options including the OLSAT or the TCS-2. We also accept a variety of independent evaluations provided by licensed school psychologists. For an independent evaluation to be accepted in aptitude or achievement, a student must have scored in the 75th percentile or above on the corresponding group test.

MCS accepts the following Aptitude and Achievement Evaluations and these may be used if additional screening is deemed necessary due to economic conditions, gender, developmental differences, learning differences, and diversity of students so that equal opportunity for consideration is provided or if a student has transferred into the district:

Individually Administered Assessments of Aptitude/Intelligence:

· CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)

· DAS (Differential Abilities Scales-2nded.)

· K-ABC-II (Kaufman Aptitude Battery for Children-2nd ed.)

· Stanford-Binet V (minimum of six subtests)

· WISC-V (Wechsler Intelligence Scales for Children-5th ed.)

· WAIS-IV (Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scales – 4th ed.) (16 years of age or older)

MCS 2025-2028 Local AIG Plan Group Administered Assessments of Aptitude/Intelligence:

· CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)

· OLSAT (Otis Lennon Scholastic Ability Test)

· TCS-2(Test of Cognitive Skills)

MCS accepts the following Achievement Evaluations:

· SAT (Stanford Achievement Test)

· CAT-V (California Achievement Test, 5th ed.)

· ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills)

· KTEA –II

· Terra Nova-3

· WJ-IV (Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery- 4th ed.)

· KTEA-III

Note: Achievement Evaluations must include administration of reading, math and language mechanics components to be used in AIG eligibility assessment.

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS NOT ACCEPTED:

· PPVT (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test)

· PIAT (Peabody Individual Achievement Test)

· WRAT (Wide-Range Achievement Test)

· K-BIT (Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test)

· Slossen Aptitude Test

· ERB/CTP tests of achievement

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

K-2	* Students scoring 84%ile - 95%ile on Cogat Verbal, Dibels8, or other percentile ranked assessment in reading will be nurtured. 96%ile or above on Cogat Verbal will be identified 96%ile or above on Dibels8 or other percentile ranked assessment in reading will be identified using Identification Matrix (must include teacher recommendation).	* Students scoring 84%ile - 95%ile on Cogat Quantitative, iReady, or other percentile ranked assessments in reading will be nurtured. 96%ile or above on Cogat Quantitative will be identified 96%ile or above on iReady or other percentile ranked assessment in reading will be identified using Identification Matrix (must include teacher recommendation).	* Students scoring 84%ile - 95%ile on Cogat Verbal and/or Quantitative, Dibels8, iReady or other percentile ranked assessment in reading will be nurtured. 96%ile or above on Cogat Verbal and/or Quantitative will be identified 96%ile or above on Dibels8, iReady or other percentile ranked assessment in reading will be identified using Identification Matrix (must include teacher recommendation).	* Students who score 84%ile - 95%ile on Cogat Non-verbal will be nurtured and supported by their classroom teachers and the AIG Specialists. Students who score 96%ile or above on Cogat Non-verbal will be identified IG.	* Students scoring 84%ile - 95%ile on Cogat Verbal and/or Quantitative and/or Non-Verbal, Dibels8, iReady or other percentile ranked assessment in reading will be nurtured. 96%ile or above on Cogat Verbal and/or Quantitative and/or Non-Verbal will be identified 96%ile or above on Dibels8, iReady or other percentile ranked assessment in reading will be identified using Identification Matrix (must include teacher recommendation).
3-5	* The K-2 identification practices will be in place for the beginning of 3rd-grade students. Referrals will be accepted in October for students to be nurtured but the CogAT will only be administered in February of the student's 3rd-grade year for identification (it will not be administered if a referral is received prior to the February testing window). In 3rd grade, the MCS Gifted Identification Matrix will determine eligibility beginning with students who score 84th percentile or above on any of the above-mentioned measures (see Identification Matrix). Students will be eligible for service based on the following combination of scores: - One criterion: 96th percentile or above on any subtest of the CogAT (Verbal for Reading) - Two criteria: at or above the 93rd percentile on the CogAT	* The K-2 identification practices will be in place for the beginning of 3rd-grade students. Referrals will be accepted in October for students to be nurtured but the Cogat will only be administered in February of the student's 3rd-grade year for identification (it will not be administered if a referral is received prior to the February testing window). In 3rd grade, the MCS Gifted Identification Matrix will determine eligibility beginning with students who score 84 percentile or above on any of the above-mentioned measures (see Identification Matrix). Students will be eligible for service based on the following combination of scores: - One criterion: 96th percentile or above on any subtest of the CogAT (Verbal for Reading) - Two criteria: at or above the 93rd percentile on the CogAT	* The K-2 identification practices will be in place for the beginning of 3rd-grade students. Referrals will be accepted in October for students to be nurtured but the Cogat will only be administered in February of the student's 3rd-grade year for identification (it will not be administered if a referral is received prior to the February testing window). In 3rd grade, the MCS Gifted Identification Matrix will determine eligibility beginning with students who score 84 percentile or above on any of the above-mentioned measures (see Identification Matrix). Students will be eligible for service based on the following combination of scores: - One criterion: 96th percentile or above on any subtest of the CogAT (Verbal for Reading) - Two criteria: at or above the 93rd percentile on the CogAT	* The K-2 identification practices will be in place for the beginning of 3rd-grade students. Referrals will be accepted in October for students to be nurtured. The CogAT will only be administered during February of the student's 3rd-grade year for identification (it will not be administered if a referral is received prior to the February testing window). In	* The K-2 identification practices will be in place for the beginning of 3rd-grade students. Referrals will be accepted in October for students to be nurtured but the Cogat will only be administered in February of the student's 3rd-grade year for identification (it will not be administered if a referral is received prior to the February testing window). In 3rd grade, the MCS Gifted Identification Matrix will determine eligibility beginning with students who score 84 percentile or above on any of the above-mentioned measures (see Identification Matrix). Students will be eligible for service based on the following combination of scores: - One criterion: 96th percentile or above on any subtest of the CogAT (Verbal for Reading) - Two criteria: at or above the 93rd percentile on the CogAT

	verbal and/or EOG Reading and/or BOG Reading, or other percentile ranked assessment. - Multiple criteria: a total of 14 or more points on the matrix utilizing multiple criteria for identification including teacher recommendations, grades, and other assessments. - Reciprocity from another school district 4th - 5th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 4th - 5th utilizing EOG Reading scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading to determine eligibility. Verbal CogAT scores from 3rd grade may be used up to two years after administration. Additional CogAT assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed.	verbal and/or EOG Reading and/or BOG Reading, or other percentile ranked assessment. - Multiple criteria: a total of 14 or more points on the matrix utilizing multiple criteria for identification including teacher recommendations, grades, and other assessments. - Reciprocity from another school district 4th - 5th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 4th - 5th utilizing EOG Math scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in math to determine eligibility. Quantitative Cogat scores from 3rd grade may be used up to two years after administration. Additional Cogat assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed.	verbal and/or EOG Reading and/or BOG Reading, or other percentile ranked assessment. - Multiple criteria: a total of 14 or more points on the matrix utilizing multiple criteria for identification including teacher recommendations, grades, and other assessments. - Reciprocity from another school district 4th - 5th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 4th - 5th utilizing EOG Math/Reading scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in Math/Reading to determine eligibility. Quantitative/Verbal Cogat scores from 3rd grade may be used up to two years after administration. Additional Cogat assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed.	3rd-5th grade, a 96 percentile or above on the non-verbal CogAT will be required for placement (IG). 4th - 5th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists may retest using the Cogat Non-Verbal assessment and it will be made available to students who have moved into the area. A 96 percentile or above on the non-verbal CogAT will be required for placement (IG).	verbal and/or EOG Reading and/or BOG Reading, or other percentile ranked assessment. - Multiple criteria: a total of 14 or more points on the matrix utilizing multiple criteria for identification including teacher recommendations, grades, and other assessments. - Reciprocity from another school district 4th - 5th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 4th - 5th utilizing EOG Math/Reading scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in Math/Reading to determine eligibility. Verbal, Quantitative, and/or Non-Verbal Cogat scores from 3rd grade may be used up to two years after administration. Additional Cogat assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed.

6-8	* 6th - 8th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 6th - 8th utilizing EOG Reading scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading to determine eligibility. Additional Cogat assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed. Students in grades 6-8th will be required to have a teacher referral/recommendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).	* 6th - 8th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 6th - 8th utilizing EOG Math scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading to determine eligibility. Additional Cogat assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed. Students in grades 6-8th will be required to have a teacher referral/recommendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).	* 6th - 8th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 6th - 8th utilizing EOG Reading and Math scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading and math to determine eligibility. Additional Cogat assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed. Students in grades 6-8th will be required to have a teacher referral/recommendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).	* 6th - 8th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 6th - 8th utilizing Cogat assessments which will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed based on teacher referrals. A 96 percentile on the non-verbal CogAT will be required for placement (IG).	* 6th - 8th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 6th - 8th utilizing EOG Reading and Math scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading and math to determine eligibility. Additional Cogat assessments will be made available to students who have moved into the area or who may need to be re-assessed to determine intellectually giftedness or provide additional data. Students in grades 6-8th will be required to have a teacher referral/recomendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).

9-12	* 9th - 12th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 9th - 12th utilizing EOG & EOC Reading/ELA scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading to determine eligibility. Students in grades 9th - 12th will be required to have a teacher referral/recommendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).	* 9th - 12th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 9th - 12th utilizing EOG & EOC Math scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading to determine eligibility. Students in grades 9th - 12th will be required to have a teacher referral/recommendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).	* 9th - 12th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 9th - 12th utilizing EOG & EOC Reading/ELA and math scores, as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading to determine eligibility. Students in grades 9th - 12th will be required to have a teacher referral/recommendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).	* 9th - 12th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students who have been referred by teachers and/or parents. A 96 percentile on the non-verbal CogAT will be required for placement (IG).	* 9th - 12th Grade Identification Students may be referred in October & March. AIG Specialists will be screening students in grades 9th - 12th utilizing EOG & EOC Reading/ELA scores as well as other percentile ranked assessments in reading to determine eligibility. Students in grades 9th - 12th will be required to have a teacher referral/recommendation (Renzulli Teacher Rating Scale or letter of recommendation).

* **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.

Gifted education services are provided for students who perform at substantially high levels academically and intellectually when compared with their peers. Any student in grades kindergarten through twelve may be referred for these services by a teacher, parent, or administrator.

Identification and placement of children into the AIG program is based on multiple criteria which includes criteria based on aptitude, achievement, teacher rating, product/performance, and grades. A wide range of assessment and service options are utilized to include children with cultural and language diversity, the economically disadvantaged, those among disabled populations, and those who are underachieving. Careful consideration of all factors helps to determine if a student qualifies and the appropriate level of services and supports.

Strategies included in the identification of under-served populations (to include the specific populations of students with disabilities and english language learners) include:

· Nonverbal aptitude assessments

· Identification of characteristics of giftedness beyond typical high academic performance (aptitude/product/performance)

· Training for teachers of characteristics of giftedness including those that are often behaviors that are not considered "teacher pleasing"

· Product/Performance assessments (3rd Grade)

· Individualized testing of students

· Universal Screening of all students in Third Grade and continued re-evaluation throughout school career

Macon County Board of Education recognizes that under representation of special populations of gifted students in gifted programs exists. In an effort to identify and implement gifted programs with improved representation, participation and performance of special populations, Macon County Schools will: consider the special populations within our community; review the methods utilized to identify students for services; assess the types of services offered in light of research addressing underserved populations; and determine what modifications may need to be made in light of current demographics and community expectations. Teachers of academically gifted students will work closely with teachers of English language learners and students with disabilities to identify students demonstrating advanced cognitive skills, ability to grasp and manipulate sophisticated and abstract concepts at an early age, unusually strong motivation and persistence, and advanced comprehension of information and ideas.

Guiding principles for the inclusion of high potential students from special populations in gifted and talents programs are taken from Designing Services and Programs for High Ability Learners (Purcell & Eckert Editors, 2006). These principles will guide Macon County Schools in addressing the issue of under representation, and are as follows:

· A broad range (e.g., academic, artistic, creative, leadership) and level of talents (e.g., latent, emergent, and novice) exists across all populations of students.

· Special populations of gifted students include those who (1) have multiple exceptionalities (e.g., learning disabled) and (2) are culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse (CLED)

· Most of the old rules and traditional methods for defining, identifying, and serving underrepresented gifted and talented students in special populations do not work.

· Adaptations must be made in local and state curriculum standards and gifted program guidelines and regulations to enable more flexible identification procedures.

· Gifted program curriculum, instruction, and services must be tailored and modified to meet the unique profile of students from special populations.

· Both affective (social and emotional) and academic needs of students should be considered when developing programming options.

· The way in which school districts identify and nurture student gifts and talents affect whether student potential is latent, emergent, or fully realized.

· Attempts must be made to develop a broad range of choices and services to enable the diverse group of special population students to develop their academic, artistic, creative, and leadership talents or potential talents during and after the school day as well as at other times of the year.

· Regular opportunities must exist to evaluate the identification of and provision of services for students with talents and gifts from special population groups.

· Parents of gifted students or high-potential children from special populations must be invited and encouraged to actively participate in the process of their children’s talent development.

· Program evaluation practices should enable changes to occur that support successful program participation of CLED students and those with special needs.

Macon County Schools provide guidance and counseling services at all eleven schools within the system. It is recognized that gifted students have a variety of social and emotional learning needs that must be met in order to maximize their potential. These needs are being met through a continuum of services ranging from in class guidance activities, small group activities, and parent meetings/focus groups. At the elementary level, counselors provide classroom guidance which addresses issues across the guidance curriculum, including those related to affective and emotional areas, peer and social interactions, character education, and career counseling. Additionally, focus groups are available as needed within all schools.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	---	<5%	---	---	---	7.23%
Male	---	---	<5%	---	---	---	11.26%
Total	---	---	<5%	---	---	---	9.31%

Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

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* **Practice D**

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

The Macon County Schools AIG handbook (posted on website and provided to each school administrator) provides comprehensive descriptions of the processes of the program including:

· Referral, Screening and Identification processes

· Placement procedures

· Service delivery options

· Rights of parents and students regarding informed consent for individualized testing and placement

· Reassessment of students

· Addressing transfers from other LEAs

· Resolving disagreements

The handbook (attached) outlines the policies and procedures that govern the program. AIG Specialists are well versed in the procedures and support administrators, teachers, counselors, and parents when there are questions.

School AIG Specialists will work in tandem with the AIG Coordinator/Director to ensure the referral, screening, and identification process is communicated to parents, teachers, and stakeholders. This includes announcements, parent events (open house, focus groups, etc.), PLC's with teachers, faculty meetings, and website/social media announcements.

The referral period will be each October and March and will be announced to teachers and administrators via email, PLC's and faculty meetings. Identification screening in third grade will begin with the receipt of the BOG scores. Administration of the CogAT will take place between February 1 and March 31 and scores from the EOG should be available the last week of school (May). AIG Specialists will meet with parents and students during the pre-planning meetings, open houses, or advisory groups to review the DEP and answer any questions about identification and/or services.

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

Macon County Schools sends out a letter to all parents of third grade students explaining the screening process including CogAT testing dates. After screening, each parent will receive the CogAT screening results. If students are eligible for AIG services, parents will receive a DEP and a copy of the identification matrix during a meeting with the AIG Specialist. The general process is described in the AIG handbook and is published on the MCS website. Social media, Thrillshare communication system, and school newsletters will be another way that our AIG Specialists can reach out to our parents, teachers and students to notify them of upcoming referral, screening, and identification processes.

AIG Specialists will be holding parent nights, advisory groups, and other events to disseminate information to parents regarding screening, referral, and identification. In addition, teachers will receive this information in September and February before the referral period begins. This information will be presented in faculty meetings, PLC's, and via email. This information is also part of the local credential that Macon County teachers can complete.

The Macon County Schools AIG Advisory Board meetings are open to all stakeholders and are publicly advertised.

* **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.

Each identified AIG student has a signed DEP kept on file in a secure location at the central office by the AIG Specialists and AIG Coordinator/Director. The DEP and accepted identification measures are also entered into Infinite Campus for newly identified AIG students. The DEP is reviewed and updated annually by teachers, parents, administrators, and AIG personnel. DEPs are reflective of the service options available at each school level (elementary, intermediate, middle, and high school). A copy of the signed DEP and identification matrix will be placed in the student's portfolio.

AIG Specialists will begin keeping a student portfolio for each student in 2022-23. These will contain identification information as well as past and current DEP's. In addition, these portfolios will contain notes/minutes from meetings and exemplary student work when possible.

Our district has a strong physical system in place to document a student's AIG identification process and evidence which leads to an identification decision. We (AIG Specialists and AIG Coordinator/Director) will continue maintaining physical student files with documentation from screening processes, including test scores and referral and results forms.

Parents are provided with information about the identification process and their student's results after the identification process is completed (CogAT scores and Identification Matrix). Consistency in communication is maintained across the district through the use of district-generated form letters for each part of the identification process. Students and parents are encouraged to contact the AIG Specialists and/or AIG Coordinator/Director with additional questions about the process and/or results. After the identification process is complete, an DEP meeting is held for parents of newly identified students. MCS will hold DEP meetings during the open house at each elementary, intermediate and middle school. AIG Specialists will hold “advisory” meetings with 9th - 12th grade students to review their DEP. The DEP will then be sent home for the parents to sign and return.

* **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.

AIG Specialists will keep a student portfolio for each student. These will contain identification information as well as past and current DEP’s. The DEP is reviewed and updated annually by teachers, parents, administrators, and AIG personnel. DEPs are reflective of the service options available at each school level (elementary, intermediate, middle, and high school). A copy of the signed DEP and identification matrix will be placed in the student’s portfolio. In addition, these portfolios will contain notes/minutes from meetings and exemplary student work when possible.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

* Implementation of AIG Specialist positions at each of our eleven schools to provide consistency in communication.

*Improving communication between AIG Specialists, Exceptional Children, and English Language teacher

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Macon County Schools AIG Website
*	AIG Identification Matrix
*	Macon County Schools AIG Handbook
*	Macon County Schools AIG Portfolios with DEP, Identification Matrix, and other identification information

Documents

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

- MCS AIG DEP
- Parent Referral Form
- MCS AIG Handbook

Macon County Schools (560) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

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

Macon County Schools offers the following services to address the unique needs of gifted learners in grades kindergarten through twelve.

- Cluster grouping
- Content acceleration
- Grade acceleration
- Pull-out enrichment
- Online courses
- Dual Enrollment
- Honors courses
- Advanced Placement courses
- Summer Programs
- Extra-curricular opportunities
- Advisory Cohorts
- Macon Early College

Each school year regular education teachers will collaborate with AIG Specialists to complete a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) for identified AIG students. The DEP will outline the program service options appropriate for the student's grade level. Generally, students will receive in-class differentiation in the area(s) of identification with the support, both directly and indirectly, of the AIG Specialist.

Macon County Schools has dual enrollment opportunities available for students through the Macon Early College program, Southwestern Community

College, and North Carolina School for Science and Math. North Carolina Virtual Public School also has courses available for students to take after school hours or during the summer.

Advanced Learning Labs and Remote Resources are available for K-12 students, teachers and parents on the AIG Website - https://sites.google.com/dpi.nc.gov/advlearningandgifted/academicallyintellectually-gifted/remote-learning-resources

K-2 - Students who are referred or identified for nurturing and/or identification will be served by their homeroom teacher, "special" teachers (art, music, STEAM). The Elementary AIG Specialist will work with teachers to provide nurturing activities and resources for students who need accelerated materials and/or growth opportunities for academically and/or intellectually gifted students.

Students in grades K-2 through Franklin area elementary schools receive enrichment through a new STEAM class. This class provides students will a unique nurturing opportunity with an emphasis on problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication. STEAM opportunities are available at Highlands School and Nantahala School through the media center programs, STEM Nights, and in-class projects/activities.

3-5:

Students in 4th grade who are identified for AG will be served by their classroom teacher, specials teachers (art, music, STEM), and through enrichment events each semester. The Elementary AIG Specialist will work with teachers to provide nurturing activities and resources for students who need accelerated materials and/or growth opportunities for academically and/or intellectually gifted students.

Students in 5th grade who attend Mountain View Intermediate and are identified as AM, AR, AG, or AIG will be served through a daily enrichment period. The AIG Specialists will work with these teachers and the Essential Arts (Art, Music, STEM) teachers to help meet the academic and SEL needs of these students. Students who are identified IG will receive support through the STEM classes as well as additional support from the AIG Specialist.

Students who attend Highlands School or Nantahala School will be served by their homeroom teacher, "special" teachers (art, music). Because these schools are so small and usually only contain one class per grade level, AIG Specialists will work with teachers to provide resources for students who need accelerated materials and/or growth opportunities for academically and/or intellectually gifted students. Advanced math students are supported through the iReady math program which differentiates curriculum for their grade level. Teachers at these schools also use math stations where they can differentiate for students who need accelerated materials. The Accelerated Reader program at both of these schools helps provide accelerated reading support and leveled novel studies and non-fiction texts provide accelerated vocabulary development and advanced content.

Students in grades 3-5 through Franklin area elementary schools receive enrichment through a new STEM class. This class provides students will a unique nurturing opportunity with an emphasis on problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication. STEM opportunities are available at Highlands School and Nantahala School through the media center programs, STEM Nights, and in-class projects/activities.

6-8:

Students in 6th grade who attend Mountain View Intermediate and are identified as AG, IG, or AIG will be served through an advanced/accelerated block. Students in this block will be grouped based on ELA and Math content needs and will receive accelerated science and social studies content. Teachers in this block are AIG licensed. The AIG Specialists will work with these teachers and the Essential Arts (Art, Music, STEM) teachers to help meet the academic and SEL needs of these students.

Students who attend Highlands School or Nantahala School in grades 6-8 will be served by their homeroom teacher and specials teachers (art, music). Because these schools are so small and usually only contain one class per grade level, AIG Specialists will work with teachers to provide resources for students who need accelerated materials and/or growth opportunities for academically and/or intellectually gifted students. Advanced math students are supported through the iReady math program which differentiates curriculum for their grade level. Teachers at these schools also use math stations where they can differentiate for students who need accelerated materials. The Accelerated Reader program at both of these schools helps provide accelerated reading support and leveled novel studies and non-fiction texts provide accelerated vocabulary development and advanced content.

All Macon County 6-8 students have the opportunity to receive math acceleration if they have demonstrated the need for advanced math through earning a Level 5 on the EOG the previous year. Students in 7th grade have the opportunity to take pre-algebra and students in 8th grade have the opportunity to take Math I.

In addition, students at Macon Middle School may be placed in an accelerated ELA class in 7th grade and 8th grade in order to prepare them for English I. Starting in 7th grade, AIG students in Macon County will be placed into advisory cohorts. The AIG Specialist will meet with these cohorts a minimum of one time per quarter. These cohort group meetings will include topics such as high school course planning, career exploration, summer/after-school opportunities, SEL support, among others. By establishing these cohorts groups, AIG Specialists can help with transitions between grade levels and schools. This will also ensure the dissemination of information and sharing of opportunities available to AIG students and parents.

9-12:

In grades 9-12 Macon County Schools (MCS) practices open registration (self-registration); options include Advanced Placement, Honors courses, online advanced high school courses, and college-level courses. AIG Specialists will collaborate with identified students to create a rigorous schedule (Four Year Plan) aligned with their academic needs.Students will be advised to register for rigorous advanced coursework in their area(s) for acceleration. At the high school level, individual academic needs will be met through accelerated academic courses through the high school, local community college, and/or state-wide opportunities such as NCVPS, NCSSM, and NC Governor's School. Dual enrollment, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, and AP courses are all options for our high school students. Additional opportunities through CTE (Career and Technology Education) are available to our AIG students. Continuing in 9-12th grade, AIG students in Macon County will be placed into advisory cohorts. The AIG Specialist will meet with these cohorts a minimum of one time per semester. These cohort group meetings will include topics such as high school course planning (4-year plan), career exploration, summer/after school opportunities, SEL support, among others. By establishing these cohorts groups, AIG Specialists can help with transitions between grade levels and schools. This will also ensure the dissemination of information and sharing of opportunities available to AIG students and parents. Academic and enrichment opportunities at the high school level include NC Governor's School, NC School for Science and Math, internships, college tours, independent projects, and others. Through these high school cohorts, the AIG Specialist will be able to assist students with college applications and essays, service opportunities, resumes, and independent projects.

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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.

Increasing awareness of the special social and emotional needs that the AIG students have is an ongoing effort within the AIG program. School counselors are available at each school to work collaboratively with AIG Specialists in identifying students who are struggling with issues in this area and developing plans to assist them. Macon County Schools also strives to help teachers understand more about the characteristics of giftedness and how these can be manifested in social and emotional areas. Macon County Schools will be implementing a local AIG training utilizing the NCDPI Advanced Learning and Gifted Education AIG Booster Shots that will lead to preparation to sit for Praxis #5358 for our teachers that addresses the special social and emotional needs of gifted students. Teachers will be reimbursed for their Praxis exam upon successful completion and reimbursed for the fee to NCDPI for adding AIG to their licensure.

Enrichment trips/experiences will allow students to engage with other AIG learners and provide an opportunity to serve SEL needs.

AIG specialists are essential in working with parents and other school staff in identifying issues related to meeting the social and emotional needs of AIG students. Students have access to counseling, support, and social skills training groups.

Macon County Schools has made resources, which address the unique social and emotional needs of gifted students, available to parents, teachers, and the community through our website (https://wakelet.com/wake/w6FIgI95S4J3_JzGqZoO9). Parents are made aware of these resources through the AIG identification letter and on their DEP each year.

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* **Practice C**

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

The AIG program and services are aligned with the goals of Macon County Schools. The best interest of the student is taken into consideration as well as their area of identification. Activities and learning opportunities fall within the scope of the resources of Macon County Schools. AIG support is available at all schools for students and teachers through our AIG Specialists, AIG Coordinator and AIG Director.

AIG Specialists will be working with teachers and school leaders to connect AIG program services with district and school priorities. This may include working with School Improvement Teams (SIT), Professional Learning Communities (PLC), and Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS) teams.

The implementation of the MTSS process is currently focusing on students who have deficiencies but in this new plan, the AIG Specialists will begin utilizing the MTSS process as part of the referral plan. Professional development for our 6-12th grade teachers a component of the PD will include identifying and serving students in the Tier I who require advanced coursework and acceleration. Programs such as iReady (K-6), EOG/EOC's, and benchmark assessments will allow teachers to accelerate/differentiate for students based on their learning needs.

AIG Coordinator will attend and present at Principal Meetings, Regional AIG Meetings, and/or School Board Meetings.

AIG Leadership (including specialists) will work with Exceptional Children and English Language professionals to continue developing equitable identification practices as well as provide resources to teachers and students.

AIG Leadership will also work with STEAM and STEM teachers to differentiate for Intellectually Gifted students and nurture students' critical thinking and problem solving skills.

* **Practice D**

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

Using multiple criteria and data points to guide instruction for students is a core component of instructional planning and practice in Macon County Schools. The Testing & Accountability Department, along with curriculum directors and AIG leadership will use data to intentionally create flexible groups to provide appropriate instruction for students in all subject areas and grade levels.

Cluster grouping and flexible grouping are a part of the model used at the elementary through middle school level. Cluster grouping is a research-based practice for gifted students. A gifted cluster is a group of gifted and/or high-ability students placed within a mixed-ability classroom. This allows for ongoing, consistent differentiation to occur within classrooms. AIG Specialists provide support to both teachers and students in this structure. Flexible grouping is also encouraged with the use of data to support formation of groups. Groups may be created based on a variety of criteria, according to student interest, mastery level, learner profile, and may change based on current standards or units of study.

At the secondary level, students are grouped according to course selection and course placement. AIG Leadership will work with the district's Office of Testing and Accountability to utilize data to gauge potential for success in enrollment in AP courses, Honors Courses and advanced courses such as Math I, World History, and Earth Science in 8th grade. This data provides guidance to counselors, administrators and master schedulers to ensure students are enrolled in appropriately challenging courses to engage in rigorous content to maximize potential. Middle schools and high schools utilize multiple data points, including gifted identification, course selection, grades, and achievement data to make course placement recommendations and decisions.

Groups of students within advanced courses in middle school and high school are supported directly by classroom teachers. The AIG leadership will continue to develop and provide targeted professional development opportunities for teachers, counselors and administrators to support them with data use and grouping practices at the secondary level (i.e. local AIG training that leads to NCDPI licensure). As target areas for growth in this practice, the department will focus on designing measures of consistency and accountability for grouping procedures and practices based on the comprehensive needs of students. In addition, we will focus on analyzing current AIG student achievement and growth data to inform grouping practices and procedures at the school and district level.

* **Practice E**

Informs all teachers, school administrators, and support staff about delivery of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan.

Communication is an essential component to the success of the AIG program. Efforts are made by AIG leadership to keep teachers, administrators, and support staff up to date with regard to differentiated instruction and policies and procedures related to the program. Additional resources will be made available to teachers on our website with links to state and national AIG organizations. AIG Specialists will work with parents and teachers to create an Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) for their student. This DEP will be shared with administration, classroom teachers, and AIG leadership.

The program director talks with the district leadership team and building level administrators during regularly scheduled meetings as part of district wide departmental updates. At the beginning of each year there is an overview and update regarding policies and procedures at each school. Additionally, administrators are invited to participate as part of the stakeholder review team.

AIG Specialists work with grade level teachers at the school level to implement the referral, screening and identification process twice each year. They also meet both individually and with groups of teachers to develop and support the implementation of ideas for differentiation of the content and the learning environment for gifted students. AIG Specialists also work with teachers in developing enrichment opportunities for students in alignment with the State Standards.

* **Practice F**

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

- Macon County Schools has begun using the Infinite Campus AIG data entry option when students are identified. Because teachers can not access this information, Macon County Schools has decided to create student portfolios. The portfolio will include identification information, DEP's and other information about the student's needs. Portfolios will be reviewed by the teachers/AIG Specialist and will be utilized during parent meetings each year. In addition, an exit survey will be provided to teachers who have had AIG students in their classes. This survey will help provide the AIG Specialists insight into how students have performed academically and their social-emotional/personality traits. By passing this information along through the portfolios, teachers will be informed as to the best ways to serve the students in their class. This will provide consistency during grade level changes as well as school changes and transfers. The portfolios will provide physical samples of student work and interests that will help with advising and talent development.

- The AIG Specialists will provide information to teachers at the beginning of each year regarding the AIG students that are enrolled in their classrooms. The AIG Specialist meets with the Middle School/High School AIG teachers to review information regarding the students transitioning to that level. This transition will also help in the scheduling and communication of the student's four-year plan created during Cohort meetings. Recommendations are made regarding level of services and insight is given into unique learning and social issues of specific students. Also, an informational meeting is held at key transition points to inform parents about services the next level of their child's education.

* **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.

When various data suggests that a student needs individualized acceleration in specific areas there are several options:

· Skipping grade(s)

· Participating in specific content areas and advanced class

· Online courses and instruction

· Acceleration to complete high school classes while in middle school

· Dual enrollment

· Credit by Demonstrated Mastery

The need for acceleration and the appropriate means for acceleration are determined by a team consisting of school personnel, the student, and the parents. Students that would be good candidates for acceleration are typically identified by classroom teachers. Parents may also request a student be considered for acceleration. The MTSS team and AIG leadership reviews student data including any standardized test scores, past performance, and current classroom performance. Additional data may be requested and could include individualized intelligence test, standardized achievement test, and curriculum based assessment in a particular subject area. The committee reviews all aspects of the student including social and emotional status, motivation, ability to work independently, and other pertinent factors. The committee then makes a determination of an appropriate plan for acceleration and identifies resources and personnel needed for implementation.

Content Acceleration/Grade Acceleration: Across grade levels will be considered for students who demonstrate mastery of the grade level/subject content. Scores from iReady in grade K-6, and EOG scores will be analyzed to determine if students need advanced course work. Released EOG tests and course pre-tests may also be used to determine if a student is eligible to receive content acceleration beyond what is being provided in the grade level classroom. With tools and resources such as iReady, Freckle, Edgenuity, and others, advanced content will be provided by the grade level classroom teacher when possible. District Administrators, AIG Specialists, classroom teachers, and parents will determine if placing a student in another grade level course would be feasible or developmentally appropriate.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery: Macon County Schools follows the NC Department of Public Instruction protocol for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM). CDM is the process by which a student may earn credit for a high school course by demonstrating a deep understanding of the content; without course enrollment or seat time. CDM was designed to respond to needs of students, families, the AIG community, school personnel and leadership.

CDM specifically offers NC students the opportunity to personalize and accelerate their learning, thus allowing for optimal student growth while providing an opportunity to have effective seat time to learn new content.

State Board of Education (SBE) policy CCRE-001 Course for Credit provides guidelines for offering Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) to North Carolina (NC) students. CDM is the process in which local education agencies (LEAs) employ a body-of-evidence to award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to enroll in the course for credit. The CDM process is open to all NC public school students in grades 9–12 in high school courses and in grades 6–8 for high school courses offered in middle school. In the English course sequence, only English I may be taken in the middle school. Public school units may choose to open CDM for students in grades 6–8 for middle grades content by creating and using locally developed assessments.

The site below outlines the resources available and procedural guide for CDM. https://sites.google.com/dpi.nc.gov/advlearningandgifted/credit-by-demonstrated-mastery/toolkit-resources

Dual Enrollment: Students qualify for dual enrollment classes in their junior and senior years if they have an unweighted GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students can make appointments with Mrs. McNiff (from SCC) in our counseling office. She presents options and helps them choose courses that will help further their post-secondary plans.

Dual Enrollment courses in the vocational trades offer credit toward certificated programs and do not carry the min GPA requirement.

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

Beginning in preK, students will be assessed by classroom teachers using Ready Rosie to determine their progress in reading. In kindergarten, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment will alert teachers to areas of exceptionality and areas where students may be receptive to nurturing activities. Students in K-3 are given the iReady assessment, STAR Reading Assessments, and Dibels8 assessment where scores can be used to determine areas for nurturing and acceleration through the MTSS process. Classroom teachers will communicate potential high level leaners to AIG Specialists.

Strategies utilized to have a strong nurturing program include:

- Supporting teachers in early identification of students with characteristics of giftedness through AIG Specialist
- Grade/Subject Acceleration
- Consulting with teachers working with the advanced learner groups in the MTSS process so that students have opportunities for acceleration and stronger enrichment activities that tap into creative and critical thinking.
- Differentiation resources
- Afterschool and summer enrichment opportunities
- Parent support through AIG Specialists
- AIG specialist at each school will work with classroom teachers and pull out students as needed.

* **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.

AIG Specialists and classroom teachers use multiple data sources, formal and informal, to meet the advanced learning needs of students throughout the school. Intentional training opportunities are being provided to teachers on identifying and serving all gifted students including underrepresented gifted students. In addition, we are building on the success of our EL partnership for identifying and serving gifted EL students to increase access for other underrepresented groups. The changes to our identification procedures directly support this effort by expanding the ranges for aptitude and achievement, inclusion of multiple criteria such as EOG scores, BOG scores, teacher recommendations and the full battery of the CogAT assessment. In addition, performance assessments will be utilized to determine students who may not test well but who may need to receive talent development services.

Talent development begins with training for K-12 teachers in recognizing talents as well as best practices in developing those talents. The AIG local training will give teachers an understanding of the inequities in AIG identification by highlighting the varying characteristics of gifted learners and train teachers to recognize these characteristics. Resources are provided for teachers in differentiation, curriculum compacting, enrichment, and acceleration to support this talent development. In addition, AIG Specialist will provide additional support to teachers, students and parents and will focus programming on specific needs of students. Through exit surveys, portfolios, assessment and classroom data, AIG Specialists will tailor summer learning experiences, after school events, and resources to these specific needs.

The AIG Advisory Team is made up of a diverse group of teachers, parents, and school leaders. The team intentionally included individuals who represent underrepresented populations to ensure that the program is communicating with those communities effectively and understands barriers to services. This includes convenient meeting times and locations, relevant programs and opportunities for parents and students, and addressing barriers through collaboration and compassion.

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

Macon County Schools personnel recognize the importance of experiential learning for AIG students. We work to provide opportunities for a variety of extra-curricular experiences as part of the AIG program, and provide information and encourage participation in events and activities outside of Macon County Schools.

Information regarding opportunities outside of the school system is disseminated to families as it is received. These include summer camps for gifted children, summer programs at Western Carolina University, North Carolina School for Science and Math and Governor's School.

As part of the structure of the AIG program the AIG students have access to a variety of extracurricular events and opportunities. We sponsor events that will further develop the talents and interests of students by carefully aligning experiences with each student's individual characteristics and interests in mind.

Opportunity	Grade Level	Description	Schools
STEM- E Clubs	3rd – 12th Grade	Funded through the STEM-E grant through WRESA, these clubs offer students an opportunity to attend student conferences and	MVI, MMS, EFE, IVE, SME, CAE, FHS, MEC, NS

		participate in STEM initiatives around the region.	
Smart Tank Competition	3rd – 12th Grade	This Shark Tank like competition is part of the STEM-E initiative. Students form teams to compete. Many of our AIG students participate in this program.	All Schools
Macon Bots Robotics	6th- 12th Grade	This is an after school robotics program using Tetrix and FIRST competitions.	FHS, MMS, MEC, UA, HS, NS, MVI
Macon Aviation Program	9th – 12th Grade	Students can attend this after school program to learn about careers in aviation and work on completing their pilots license.	FHS, MEC, HS, NS, UA
National Honors Society	9-12th Grade	Students can participate in service opportunities and enrichment opportunities. Students must meet National Honor's Society requirements and be invited to participate.	MEC, HS, FHS
North Carolina School for Science and Math	7th – 12th Grade	Dual Enrollment, Residential and Summer programs	FHS, MEC, HS, NS, UA, MMS
Roto-kids	6th Grade	Service organization association/partnership with Rotary Club	MVI
National Inventors Hall of Fame after school clubs	K-6	After school clubs throughout the year based	EFE, SME, IVE, CAE, HS, NS, MVI

		on different themes. Summer Camps	
Math Club	9-12th Grade	Students compete regionally and state	FHS
Summer Enrichment Camps and Summer Academy	K-12	TBD Each year these are different Some are tied to CTE programs at the middle and high school level College Tours for Middle and High School	All Schools
Governor's School	9th-11th Grade	Summer program	FHS, HS, NS, MEC, UA
FBLA	7th– 12th Grade	After school club	FHS & MMS
AIG Seminars/Coffeehouse	7th – 12th Grade	Throughout the year afterschool based on specific topics	FHS, MEC, HS, NS, UA, MMS
Envirothon	7th – 12th Grade	Associated with Agriculture/Natural Resources classes Competition in partnership with Macon Soil and Water	FHS, MMS
Beta Club	9th – 12th Grade	Service opportunities	FHS
Engineering and Design/Science Fair WCU	7th – 8th Grade	Enrichment Class opportunity - competition	MMS

Engineering Tour	7th – 8th Grade	Enrichment Class Opportunity – Attend NC State Engineering Open House	MMS
Semester Enrichment Opportunities	K-4	TBD This is an opportunity for elementary AIG/nurtured students to get together for special programs.	IVE, SME, CAE, EFE, HS, NS

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Portfolios
Expanded afterschool/extracurricular activities
Local support for teachers pursuing AIG Licensure

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Dual enrollment numbers
*	Advanced class enrollment
*	Student portfolios

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	Gifted Education Resources for Parents CDM Toolkit Resources

Macon County Schools (560) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

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

The MCS AIG program supports the NC Standard Course of Study and expects students to receive instruction in a strongly differentiated core curriculum. The NC Educator Evaluation System requires all teachers to differentiate for all students. All students identified as AIG will experience curricula that builds upon and extends beyond the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS). Enrichment, extension, and acceleration of the NCSCOS are adapted through rigor in the classroom, through teachers reviewing student data, and standards mastery to meet students' needs. The AIG program will provide students with opportunities to study curricula in greater depth and at a quicker pace than covered by the NCSCOS and to explore areas of interest beyond the NCSCOS.

By cluster grouping students at the elementary level and by offering accelerated content classes in middle and high school, students, teachers and AIG Specialists will work together in core content areas to focus on skill mastery. Teachers cover the state standards through curriculum compaction, differentiation and acceleration while incorporating critical thinking skills, higher order thinking skills, technology, Project Based Learning (PBL), and creativity.

Every student identified as AIG will be engaged in many opportunities for enrichment, extension and acceleration including, but not limited to:

- Studying in areas of personal interest
- Engaging in civic responsibility lessons, activities, and clubs
- Study groups, group presentations, and collaborative projects
- Project Based Learning
- Honors, Advanced Placement, and Career and College Promise courses
- Field trips
- Virtual Opportunities

K-2

At the elementary level, the MTSS process (data) and curriculum compacting allows students who master skills quickly to be moved onto more difficult content, to spend time exploring concepts in more depth, and to incorporate creativity and critical thinking into the standards. Assessments at the K-2 level will help teachers and AIG Specialists determine nurturing activities and strategies.

- Nurturing in the curriculum and developing individual interests and talents
- STEAM classes for enrichment and curricular connections
- Push-in intervention with AIG Specialists
- Afterschool events and programs
- Summer Camp Extension opportunities

3-5

At the third and fourth grade level, nurtured and identified gifted students participate in a program tailored towards the state standards and LEA goals. AIG Specialists collaborate with regular education teachers in planning and implementing assignments appropriate for identified gifted students. These assignments are aligned with essential standards in the core content areas, and will culminate each semester with an off campus advanced learning experiential opportunity. Student portfolios will be utilized to document the level of each student's participation and success. The AIG Specialist works with the regular education teachers to ensure that appropriate differentiation occurs and provide resources.

Leadership opportunities will be provided for 3rd/4th grade students. These will be facilitated by the AIG Specialists.

- 3rd – nurturing continues and identification begins
- K-4 STEAM classes for enrichment and curricular connections
- 4th - accelerated math for students who score level 5 on EOG
- Cluster group students for content acceleration
- AIG Enrichment/Exploration Day- one day per semester enrichment for all 4th grade AIG students to gather and study a specific topic
- 5th grade PBL daily enrichment class period
- Afterschool events and programs
- Summer Camp Extension opportunities

6-8

In grade six (MVI only), a specialized program exists for gifted students, taught by AIG certified teachers. This program is designed for gifted and high achieving students, in order to ensure that their emotional, social, and educational needs are being met. The focus of the program is acceleration of curriculum and enrichment for students through the use of Project Based Learning tied to state standard objectives. AIG Specialists will also serve as an in-class differentiation specialist working closely with the regular education teacher to ensure that rigorous and relevant instruction is occurring for gifted students who chose not to be involved in the program. The 5th-6th grade students at other schools (HS & NS) will continue to receive services through their regular classroom teacher. AIG Specialists will partner with these teachers to assist with and ensure that differentiation is occurring to accelerate each student in the curriculum.

At the seventh and eighth grade level (MMS), students will be accelerated through advanced language arts and/or math classes that move at an accelerated pace, resulting in student completion of Math 1 while in middle school. Within the next 3 years, our goal is to also make English 1 and World Languages available at the middle school level in order to allow students to gain high school credit. This will be dependent on teacher licensure, enrollment, and human resource availability. The 7th – 8th grade students at other schools (HS & NS & UA) will continue to receive services through their regular classroom teacher. AIG Specialists will partner with these teachers to assist with and ensure that differentiation is occurring to accelerate each student in the curriculum.

- 6th grade PBL accelerated content block
- 7th - 8th grade accelerated classes - Pre-Algebra (7th), Math I (8th)
- STEAM/CTE classes for enrichment and curricular connections
- Wheel enrichment opportunities (MMS)
- Leadership opportunities with student council, yearbook, etc.
- Science and Engineering Club (MMS)
- Robotics Program (6-12)
- Advisory Groups/Cohorts (6th – 12th)
- Afterschool events and programs
- Summer Camp Extension opportunities

9-12

At the high school level, the students are exposed to accelerated curriculum through Honors and AP courses, dual enrollment and online courses. Students at each school in Macon County have different classes available to them depending on teacher licensure, enrollment, and human resource availability. Additional enrichment and extension opportunities are available through clubs and afterschool/summer programs. In addition, opportunities such as NC School for Science and Math and NC Governor's School are available for students who excel in specific content areas.

- AP
- Honors
- SCC Dual Enrollment
- Advisory Groups/Cohorts (8-12)
- Robotics Program (7-12)

- Aviation Program (9-12)
- Choose classes based on interests
- NC School for Science and Math
- Governor’s School
- Leadership - Interact, National Honor Society, FBLA, other afterschool clubs, Student Council
- Enrichment - Sustainability Summit, STEM-E, etc.
- Macon Early College
- Career Technology Education (CTE) course offerings
- Other Afterschool events and programs
- Summer Camp Extension opportunities

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

Ensuring that regular education teachers are providing an appropriate level of differentiation in the classroom is challenging. Many gifted students are given extra work rather than accelerated, exploratory, and enriching activities in the classroom setting. Macon County Schools will make professional development available for the regular education teachers focused on the topic of differentiation strategies for gifted learners. In addition, AIG Specialists will work with teachers throughout the year to help them meet the needs of their students.

The following strategies are employed to make sure that students are placed in classrooms that have diverse and effective instructional practices specific to their identified abilities, readiness, interests, and learning needs:

- Cluster grouping of students for academics
- Quarterly assigned differentiation activities (4th grade) supported by the AIG Specialists that are aligned both with state standards and experiential learning opportunities
- Accelerated block grouping in grade 6 for accelerated and enriched content (MVI)
- Cluster grouping for daily enrichment during intervention class period (MVI)
- Acceleration and advanced courses in middle grades and high school
- Ongoing training and support for regular classroom teachers
- Differentiation strategies that teachers can quickly access and easily implement

The district supports best practices such as pre-assessment for readiness, the use of interest and learning inventories to develop student learning profiles, the use of small group instruction and personalized learning. The AIG Department provides professional learning opportunities for classroom teachers on

instructional strategies that add depth and complexity and provoke critical thinking. Some of the specific strategies emphasized during the training include:

• Accelerated content

• Curriculum compacting

• Learning centers

• Embedded student choice

• Literature circles

• Socratic seminars

• Tiered assignments

• Problem/Project-Based learning

• Authentic learning

• Simulations

Advanced/accelerated coursework in middle school and Honors classes in high school should include, at a minimum, the following instructional practices:

• Pre-assessments used to evaluate student readiness, interest and learning style

• Independent research opportunities

• Choice of product

• A variety of instructional delivery methods

• Student-driven discussions

• Socratic seminars

• Intentional alignment of student interest to future-ready skills

• Interdisciplinary connections

• Focus on concepts, big ideas and generalizations

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

Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that enhance student learning.

Macon County Schools and AIG Specialists will continue to explore research-based supplemental resources and offer professional development opportunities about these strategies to all teachers of gifted students. Our AIG specialists sends out quarterly resources for students that focus on critical thinking/higher order thinking and project based learning for students to engage in. These resources are also used for talent development and provide extension to the grade level/content standards.

The Macon County Schools AIG department currently offers a variety of curricular resources to support differentiation for all content-areas at all levels, K-12. The resources provided by the AIG Department are available at all schools across the district. Implementation support is provided by professional development and AIG Specialist collaboration. Professional development for 2025-2028 will focus on the AIG training that leads to readiness to sit for NCDPI Praxis 5358. We will prepare educators to serve students and enable them to earn an AIG endorsement on their licensure. Our training will focus on identification, communication of the AIG plan, and strategies for working with AIG students.

Macon County Schools will be working on selecting appropriate resources as identified by our AIG Specialists and classroom teachers. Currently, Macon County AIG program has the resources listed below available. This professional library of research-based materials are available to AIG teachers and classroom teachers. Resources in the library include materials that are broad-based gifted education theory and research as well as materials that provide specific lessons and strategies that teachers can implement in their instructional plans.

Educators Quick Guide to Curriculum

Math Curriculum for Gifted Students: Grade 4; Center for Gifted Education at William and Mary; Prufrock Press

The Handbook of secondary Gifted Ed.; Dixon & Moon; National Association for Gifted Education

Jacob's Ladder Reading Grade 4 Joyce VanTassel-Baska and Tamara Stambaugh’s Jacob’s Ladder

HOPE Teacher Rating Scale; Gentry, Pereira, Peters, McIntosh & Fugate; Routledge

Differentiating Instruction with menus for the Inclusive Classroom K-5 Math; Westphal; Prufrock Press

Differentiating Instruction with menus for the Inclusive Classroom K-5 ELA; Westphal; Prufrock Press

Critical Issues and Practices in Gifted Education; Plucker & Callahan; National Association for Gifted Children

Differentiating Instruction with menus K-8 ELA; Westphal; Prufrock Press

Differentiating Instruction with menus K-8 Science; Westphal; Prufrock Press

Differentiating Instruction with menus K-8 Social Studies; Westphal; Prufrock Press

Differentiating Instruction with menus K-8 Math; Westphal; Prufrock Press

Teaching Like Socrates 7-12; Wilberding; Prufrock Press

Differentiated Projects for Gifted Students 3-5; McGree & Keiser; Proofrock Press

Curriculum Compacting 2nd Edition; Reis, Renzulli & Burns; Proofrock Press

10 Performance Based Projects STEM K-8; Stanley; Prufrock Press

10 Performance Based Projects Math 3-5

10 Performance Based Projects ELA 3-5; Stanley; Prufrock Press

Strategies for Diff. Best Practices for the Classroom; Roberts & Inman; Proofrock Press

Differ. Lessons for every learner 6-8; Brulles, Brown & Winebrenner; Prufrock Press

Real Life math mysteries; Tyler; Prufrock Press

Ready to use Genius Hour

Teacher Survival Guide Gifted Education 2nd Edition; Roberts & Boggess

Genius Hour Passion projects; McNair; Prufrock Press

Ready to use resources for mindsets in the classroom; Ricci; Prufrock Press

Mometrix Test Prep Praxis II Gifted Education Study Guide

Mometrix Test Prep Praxis II Gifted Education Flashcard Study System

Public Speaking: A Student Guide; O'Neal; Prufrock Press

Understanding Your Gifted Child from the Inside Out; Delisle; Prufrock Press

Parenting Gifted Children 101; Inman & Kirchner; Prufrock Press

NCDPI Advanced Learning and Gifted Education AIG Booster Shots

Macon County Schools recognizes that often AIG students have unique social and/or emotional needs that affect their learning. In an effort to meet the diverse needs of all AIG students, including those with different social-emotional levels, learning styles, and those who may be at risk, the system has established a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional needs of gifted learners. This plan includes increased communication between the AIG Specialists and content area teachers, as well as guidance counselors and other school personnel.

A variety of services are available throughout the district to all MCS students to address emotional needs, career planning, and interventions for students who may be at risk for academic achievement. The district has prioritized student safety and social-emotional well-being through the addition of district behavior specialists, counselors and social workers to lower the student to staff ratio for student support services. AIG students have access to school counselors, social workers, and Meridian Behavioral Health Services while at school. The district MTSS team has provided district-wide training on the NCDPI MTSS modules 1 and 2 which highlight social-emotional and behavior as an important part of the MTSS process. The district uses Infinite Campus/Educator's Handbook to document behavioral concerns and uses the BASC 3- BESS Behavioral and Emotional Screener.

Many MCS classroom teachers, including numerous AIG Specialists, have already participated in the Youth Mental Health First Aid training, and more will attend in future years. AIG specialists receive specific training about the social-emotional needs of gifted students through coursework, professional development, and conference attendance. In addition, classroom teachers will receive training in the unique social and/or emotional needs of AIG students. AIG Specialists and classroom teachers will work directly with students on topics such as perseverance, study skills, appropriate social interactions and other topics that can be approached in the classroom setting. They are also trained to recognize when referral to other services is needed (school counselor).

At the intermediate and middle school levels, both individual and group counseling becomes critical, particularly for students experiencing identity and adjustment problems. Small group sessions with gifted students that address their unique needs have proven highly successful. Students will also have an opportunity to receive valuable resources though the advisory groups which begin in middle school through high school. Advisory groups will be crucial in helping all students develop self-esteem, set higher aspirations, make appropriate secondary course selections, and develop career plans. Similarly, Macon Early College provides transition activities including school visits, more time with the school counselor, school advising and team building activities.

The NC Standard Course of Study promotes awareness of social issues such as bullying and good decision making. Fifth grade students participate in D.A.R.E. and our elementary schools participate in various skill building programs such as Leader in Me. At the secondary level adolescent literature materials are used in advanced coursework to meet students where they are emotionally and socially. Career exploration, extra-curricular activities, and community service projects allow for self-discovery and for students to further develop their own identity and set goals for their future. Opportunities for academic planning, career guidance and college preparation are made available for gifted learners. Career and Technical Education teachers, Career Development Coordinators, and school counselors are involved in working with AIG students regarding the development of their four year plans as these students select their career pathways and conduct career and college searches. Afterschool Seminars which will focus on career exploration will be provided throughout the year for 7th - 12th grade students.

The Macon County Schools AIG website includes several resources for teachers and parents who may be seeking resources to use at home or for settings outside of the classroom. In addition, The NC Department of Instruction Advanced Learning and Gifted Education has provided virtual lessons for teachers and parents which focus on a variety of social & emotional themes such as Conflict, Balance, and Responsibility- https://sites.google.com/dpi.nc.gov/advlearningandgifted/academicallyintellectually-gifted/remote-learning-resources.

K-6 teachers may utilize the Class Dojo “Big Ideas” conundrums and moral dilemmas to initiate conversations in the classroom and model appropriate responses to stressors and conflict. In addition, some teachers may utilize the Class Agendas and the SEL supports imbedded in the weekly goal setting, vocabulary, and self-care strategies.

The AIG Department will be delivering parent informational sessions which may include: supporting students new to AIG, anticipating the transition from elementary to middle school, and anticipating the transition from middle school to high school. The AIG program will also work to provide a library for teachers and parents of available research-based resources centered on the best practices for meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted students. Such titles may include:

- Cross’ On the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Children (4th Edition)
- Dweck’s Mindset: The New Psychology of Success on How We Can Learn to Fulfill Our Potential
- Duckworth’s Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance
- Sanguras’ Grit in the Classroom: Building Perseverance for Excellence in Today’s Students
- Costa’s and Kallick’s Habits of Mind Across the Curriculum: Practical and Creative Strategies for Teachers
- Boyes’ and Watts’ Developing Habits of Mind in Elementary Schools
- Ricci’s Ready-to-Use Resources for Mindsets in the Classroom

Additional SEL Resources:

- Leutenberg’s and Liptak’s Social and Emotional Gifted Teen Series:
- Friendship Workbook for Gifted and Talented Teens

- Boredom Workbook for Gifted and Talented Teens
- Creativity Workbook for Gifted and Talented Teens
- Motivation Workbook for Gifted and Talented Teens
- Stress Workbook for Gifted and Talented Teens
- Brock's and Hundley's The Growth Mindset Coach: A Teacher's Month-by-Month Handbook for Empowering Students to Achieve
- Ricci's Mindsets in the Classroom: Building a Culture of Success and Student Achievement in Schools

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

The vision for Macon County Schools includes challenging all students to achieve their full academic potential to become successful in the 21st century. This district focus emphasizes the use of purposeful activities and opportunities for learning 21st century skills, which are incorporated into the instructional day. Students are encouraged to apply skills and knowledge in real-world problem-solving situations.

Strategies for teaching 21st century skills include:

- Problem and Project Based learning – Partnership with Open Way Learning
- Summer institutes with focus on social studies, science, community connection, and problem solving
- AP and Honors classes - communication, problem-solving, critical thinking
- Use of technology to practice appropriate communication skills
- Research based projects/Independent projects (Sustainability Summit)
- STEM Classes for all students K-8th
- STEM Exploration through Robotics 6th – 12th
- STEM Exploration through Aviation 9th – 12th
- Career and Technology Education (CTE) for 6th – 12th grade students
- STEM-E Clubs (3-12)
- SMART Tank Competition for Entrepreneurship (3-12)
- Virtual Reality experiences (3-12)
- Internships (11-12)

- 3D Printing integration into classroom projects (5-12)
- Thinking Like a Lawyer by Colin Seale Book Study for teachers/parents (focus on critical thinking in the classroom)
- Music and Arts focus for all K-12 students
- Leadership through after school clubs, yearbook, student council, AIG 4th grade mentor students, social engagement clubs (Beta, Interact)
- STEM Career Fair (5th-6th grade) plus career fairs at Elementary Schools
- STEAM Nights/Duke Energy Science Night (K-6)
- Sustainability Summit (8-12) – Climate Change Summit to build local student leadership teams/projects
- Project Invention After School Programs (K-6)
- Muddy Sneakers Environmental Education Program (5th)
- Drone Class (7-8th grade – MMS) during wheel enrichment
- Wheel Enrichment classes (7-8th)
- Literacy and Math Nights
- STEMtastic Saturday Events (K-12)
- Academic Scholars Program
- National Honor Society events
- Macon Youth Trail Corps (9-12)

Engineering and Design Competition/Club (7-8th – MMS)

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

Macon County Schools implements formative and summative assessments to help determine student mastery of skills and plan instruction based on student needs for acceleration and implementation of rigorous instruction and assignments.

Teachers utilize on-going assessments within their own classrooms. Summative assessments are given regularly and the results are analyzed to provide teachers with information that is used to group students for remediation and acceleration. This information gives teachers the data to make informed decisions regarding appropriate instructional planning for each student and facilitates differentiation.

The district has access to:

- State testing results- EOG, EOC, BOG

- NC Final Exams
- CTE Post Assessments
- preACT
- ACT
- ACT WorkKeys
- Read-to-Achieve
- ACCESS for ELLs 2.0
- CDM, AP Assessments
- Summative and formative classroom assessment
- teacher made and curriculum aligned assessments
- Rubrics

Benchmarking data:

- mClass Dibels8 reading assessments
- iReady Math Screener
- NC Check-Ins
- teacher created benchmarks for high school coursework
- BASC-3 BESS Behavioral and Emotional Screening System
- STAR Reading
- EVAAS data
- Schoolnet school based assessments
- Simple Solutions
- Prodigy Math
- Freckle

Resources for Differentiation – please refer to resources in 3c.

- Differentiation menus

- Curriculum Compacting Cards

Online

- Kahoot
- Quizlet
- Quizizz
- Brainpop
- Discovery Education
- Mystery Science
- Generation Genius
- Seesaw
- Edgenuity

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

As evidenced through data collected via stakeholder surveys, collaboration between AIG Specialists and other professional staff remains a weakness in the Macon County School AIG Program. Currently there is little communication between AIG Specialists and other professional staff. Therefore, a minimum of bi-annual meetings are being established as a way to address this deficiency.

K-6 Teachers & AIG Specialists will compose a team that will be tasked with developing and implementing differentiated curriculum and instruction. These meetings will take place during the scheduled referral periods in October and March of each school year.

During these meetings data such as iReady scores, referral observations and differentiation resources will be reviewed. At this level, our AIG team will work to make sure that teachers are evaluating data and that students who need to receive differentiation/acceleration in the classroom are receiving those services.

7-12 Teachers and AIG Specialists will work with students during advisory group meetings to assist with class selections based on abilities and encourage participation in enrichment/extra-curricular opportunities available to the students. At this level, our AIG team will be working specifically with our AIG students to make sure that they are pursuing appropriate classes and opportunities.

AIG Specialists and additional faculty resources (Media Specialists, STEM teachers, counselors, etc.) will communicate based on specific identified needs of the students. Consultation with these professionals will ensure the most appropriate resources are being directed to the student and their individual needs. For example, media specialists are essential in finding appropriate texts for students based on reading level and age. STEM teachers can craft lessons that are open ended and challenge our academically and intellectually gifted students.

Additional opportunities for collaboration outside of the October and March referral periods are MTSS, PLC's, faculty meetings, team meetings, professional development opportunities and others.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ongoing professional development for all stakeholders in relation to characteristics of AIG students

Targeted PD on curriculum compacting, addressing learning profiles

Identifying key areas to include in student portfolios

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Student DEP
*	Advisory Meeting Notes/Agenda
*	EOG/EOC Scores

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	NCAGT for Educators webpage

Macon County Schools (560) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

* **Practice A**

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

The district level administrators (AIG Director) and the AIG Specialists collaborate on the district self-assessment, AIG Plan development, implementation, and revisions. This collaborative effort allows for comprehensive program planning, development, and implementation that meets the needs of gifted students.

The AIG staff meets regularly to assess the program and make necessary improvements. The staff also plans for yearly program implementation, discusses staff development needs with regard to the AIG program, and reviews progress. In addition, the district administration ensures that AIG program needs are included in district level professional development plans.

The AIG Coordinator will monitor the program in the following ways:

1. Meets regularly with AIG specialists to review practices and procedures;

2. Strategically plans with AIG Specialists to ensure that complete implementation of AIG plan and goals;

3. Discusses AIG program implementation with principals at monthly administrator's meeting;

4. Reviews AIG student performance on summative and formative assessments;

5. Meets with stakeholders to review program and discuss strengths and needs.

6. Maintains budget and ensures that funds are equitably distributed to serve all students across the district.

Macon County Schools will employ AIG Specialists at each of the eleven schools and one district Director in the AIG Department to coordinate, lead, and support the district’s AIG plan and program. The Administrators and AIG Specialists are required to hold a current AIG license as means for employment in these positions.

* **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.

AIG Specialists provide direct service to students, ongoing support to teachers, and provide additional resources, communication, and training to parents of gifted students K-12.

AIG Specialists are experts in regard to differentiation of instruction, consulting, and collaborating with classroom teachers and parents, and in addressing the unique learning, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners. AIG Specialists will have an assigned group of teachers and students that they work with but will also be available as a resource across the district. The AIG Specialists will serve all students and teachers in the district.

Responsibilities of AIG Specialists include:

All Specialist will

- Communicate screening/referral information to teachers, parents, and administration
- Coordinate screening/referral process
- Communicate and document identification and placement data and procedures for teachers, parents, and administration
- Support MTSS process to ensure appropriate modifications for accelerated students
- Analyze data to determine needs of specific students so they can provide resources to help teachers meet these needs
- Provide training and communicate AIG goals via local credential, PLC's, faculty meetings, etc.
- Maintain and communicate IDEP and other paperwork for teachers and parents
- Consult with regular education teachers regarding best practices to serve and accelerate students in their content including differentiation, curricular modifications, compacting, flexible grouping, project-based learning, and nurturing activities/opportunities
- Plan and implement after school enrichment opportunities that tie into curriculum and focus areas for acceleration
- Plan and execute quarterly off campus enrichment trips for elementary students
- Advocate for AIG students and their unique needs with administrators, teachers, and parents
- Work with counselors to address individual student needs
- Assist AIG students with transitions as they progress to the next educational level
- Work with AIG students to identify and develop their individual strengths and talents
- Initiate and execute advisory groups (middle/high)
- Assist students in the creation of their Four-Year Plan (middle/high)
- Assist students in writing essays for application, resumes, and other job ready documents (middle/high)
- Assist students in career and college exploration and preparation (middle/high)
- Evaluate program needs and efficacy through administration of community (parent, teachers, students) surveys and School Needs Assessment data
- Evaluate program needs and efficacy through summative quantitative data such as EVAAS & EOG/EOC

* **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.

Our plan for staff development comes from various sources such as state requirements, district goals & school goals. Professional development also focuses on supporting teachers as they address student needs. These needs are determined through the analysis of data of student academic performance. Included in this data is information regarding success of AIG students. The AIG Leadership is a part of the district professional development planning team and advocates for including professional development that is aligned with the AIG plan and the needs identified through the parent, teacher and student program assessment data collected each year. In addition, data from the working conditions surveys will be utilized to determine professional development needs and how they align with AIG priorities (i.e. working with special populations of students, differentiation, etc.).

At the intermediate (6th-grade) and middle school level, gifted students are placed in accelerated core classes based on their need for acceleration. These teachers will also need to have their AIG add-on license. Financial support will also be given if teachers opt to earn licensure through the “Competency-Based Assessment Via Gifted Education Praxis #5358”. Teachers will be reimbursed for the cost of the PRAXIS test ($130) and the add on licensure fee through NCDPI ($60). Both are conditional upon a passing score or grade and application for add-on licensure with the NC Department of Instruction.

At the secondary level, teachers for advanced classes, such as AP (Advanced Placement), are required to attend training for their AP course and are provided with opportunities to collaborate with AP teachers across the district. AP Master Teachers provide additional support for new AP teachers. AP teachers are also provided with PD opportunities focused on working with diverse groups of advanced students.

Additional opportunities for training and support are offered through WRESA (Western Regional Educational Support Association) and NCCAT (North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching). The North Carolina Department of Instruction has provided “Booster Shots” for AIG Specialists and personnel to gain additional support and insight into how to serve AIG students effectively. Macon County AIG Specialists will provide information sessions to disseminate any new information through faculty meetings and PLC’s (Professional Learning Communities). Student/Parent focused after-school seminars with guest speakers and additional resources will be provided throughout the year and teachers will be invited and encouraged to attend.

* **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.

Provides general education services by personnel who have earned an AIG add-on license.

Macon County will continue to encourage teachers to pursue their add-on licensure. Monetary incentives will be provided for teachers that added AIG onto their licensure through successful completion of Praxis #5358. In the future, these endeavors will grow individuals well equipped to serve AIG students.

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

The trainings available locally and through the encouragement of AIG licensure will cast a broader net to include teachers of diverse backgrounds.

The district has purchased AIG study resources as well as made available PLC opportunities for those seeking to add on AIG licensure. We provide reimbursement for teachers of various backgrounds and certifications that take and pass the Praxis test and help with the fees to add the credential to their license. We believe that by exposing students to educators with various expertise we can grow a more robust and stimulating program.

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

The focus on equity and excellence is evident in our new plan where a significantly greater number of students will have a trained talent scout in the classroom. Professional development will be provided to teachers that will focus on developing the gifts and talents in our students instead of focusing on deficit ideology.

A core part of our training will be identification practices and recognizing the characteristics of gifted students through the use of the Hope Teacher Rating Scales and Renzulli Teacher Rating Scales. Teachers will understand the importance of evaluating a variety of data sources including student products and/or performances as well as the reasoning behind universal screening and ongoing evaluation. Modules in the credential training program will focus on how to recognize students for their strengths, regardless of their background. This aligns with the district's focus on systemic practices that can impact racial equity.

AIG Specialists will reinforce the "talent scout" lens through continued education, the MTSS process, and nurturing in younger grades.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) will be an integral tool for initiating conversations around equity and excellence where individual case studies can be evaluated for inequities and positive mindsets and practices can be encouraged.

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

The Macon County Schools District Professional Development 5-year Plan illustrates the strategic plan to implement training in AIG for all teachers across the district. This professional development will include using resources that the local AIG Leadership and Specialists have vetted, this professional development will be current and applicable to our district needs.

The AIG Specialists will be working with teachers in their classrooms to model effective instructional practices and provide resources that are strategic in the development of students' abilities. AIG Specialists will collaborate with teachers during their planning, PLC meetings, and throughout the MTSS process.

The district leadership will be looking for additional professional development alignment that will meet the needs of our diverse learners and our students' social-emotional needs. Initiatives such as the "Better Brains" conference through WRESA, AVID, and MTSS training across the district which is in alignment with the, illustrate the intentional roll out and synchronizing of the AIG initiatives with our professional development plan.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

We will be increasing training for principals and assistant principals to ensure understanding of the information concerning how students are to be served at each grade level/school as it is outlined in our 2025-2028 AIG plan.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Increase AIG licensed teachers
*	NCDPI AIG Booster Shots

*	PLC meeting notes

Documents

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

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

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

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

Parents/Guardians and other stakeholders are made aware of events and activities available for AIG students through newsletters, informational letters, phone calls, emails, social media and the Macon County Schools AIG website. The local plan is made available on the District AIG website. The Parent/Guardian AIG Advisory Group meets biannually with AIG Leadership to communicate needs, celebrations, and upcoming strategies.

AIG Specialists will work with the Parent/Guardian Advisory team to determine enrichment programs. This includes the 4th grade enrichment trips, after school clubs for intermediate students, workshops and presentations for middle/high students. Programs such as a writer's workshop to help students edit their college essays may include members of the community or representatives from local community college and 4-year colleges. Input from parents/guardians will be essential when providing opportunities for social and emotional support. The advisory team will be actively involved in determining the topics for exploration as well as may assist in finding resources for these events.

AIG Specialists communicate with parents/guardians regarding the specific services and opportunities available to their student. AIG Specialists create and review the DEP with parents/guardians each school year. The DEP outlines the opportunities and services available to the student each school year. This meeting also provides a one-on-one opportunity for parents/guardians to meet with AIG Specialists to communicate goals and concerns. This team approach ensures that specific academic and social/emotional needs are being communicated. Parent/Guardian DEP meetings take place at the beginning of each school year and during placement for new or transfer students.

Parents/guardians and community members, as well as teachers have access to the local AIG plan, and the policies and procedures that are part of the implementation of the plan. These articles are made available as hard copy forms and on the Macon County Schools AIG website.

* **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.

Most of the experiential learning opportunities that take place for AIG students are the result of partnerships with families and people/businesses within the community. AIG students take field trips into the community, which have included the following:

- Visiting local businesses and organizations to learn about local government and commerce

- Learning about environmental issues and science (Conservation Field Day, Mainspring Conservation Trust, Highlands Biological Station, Coweeta Hydrologic Lab, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Blue Ridge Bartram Trail Conservancy/Macon Youth Trail Corps, Appalachian Animal Rescue, PARI (Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute, Macon County Landfill and Water Treatment, etc.)
- Activities that include civic groups and service providers (Carenet, Rotary, firefighters, hospital, library, etc.)
- Increasing awareness of local history and culture (Macon Historical Museum, Cherokee Museum, Biltmore Estate, Foxfire Museum, Macon Gem Club, Deal and Huscusson Farm Tours)
- Opportunities for activities and classes at Southwestern Community College and Western Carolina University (Career and College Promise, dual enrollment, summer programs)
- Service Projects (RotoKids, Rotary Club, Macon Youth Trail Corps, Appalachian Animal Rescue, 30 Hour Famine with Franklin United Methodist Church)
- Career Fairs (STEAM Career Fair, SCC Career Fair)
- CTE Activator Camps in partnership with CTE instructors and partner businesses
- School presence through school-based activities (Wildcat Frenzy, STEM Nights, Literacy Nights, etc.)

* See other opportunities and partnerships listed in Standard 2.I.

We often have guest speakers come into classrooms to share information that is relevant to topics being covered. Donations are made by local businesses for supplies and materials.

Additional partnerships occur in conjunction with grant initiatives such as the STEM-E Grant program which includes local school clubs and events, Smoky Mountain STEM Collaborative which offers summer programming/camps, and SMART Tank Entrepreneurial Competition provide competitions and business/career connections. While these opportunities are available to all Macon County students, AIG Specialists will encourage students to participate.

* **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.

We seek to recruit new representatives of our advisory group and touch on the role during our in-person informational meetings with a language translator.

Macon County Schools has formed an AIG Advisory Group that meets annually to review the program. The focus of the group is to evaluate and discuss service delivery, implementation of the plan, and partnerships. The group is comprised of parents/guardians, regular education teacher(s), AIG Administration, administrator(s), EL teacher(s), and guidance counselor(s). This group also assists the AIG Specialists in communicating the plan, identifying community supporters/partners, dissemination and encouraging participation in parent surveys, and identifying data, trends, and resources to meet student social-emotional needs.

The AIG Advisory Group will assist in the writing of the AIG Plan and will met three times over the course of writing the plan to help guide and evaluate the proposals which will be adopted.

Macon County Schools AIG Leadership will continue exploring the interest and support of starting a PAGE (Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education) chapter (http://www.ncagt.org/nc-page/about-page).

* **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.

Parents/guardians of AIG students are kept well informed of opportunities available to their students within the school system and beyond, through various avenues.

The Macon County School Local AIG Plan can be found on the District website under “Departments”. In addition to the plan, a supplemental document which gives a quick snapshot of the procedures and programs is found on this site. Policies relating to advanced learning and gifted education such as Article 9B (N.C.G.S. § 115C-150.5) can be found on the Macon County Schools website as well as the North Carolina Department of Instruction website which is also linked to our home “Academically Gifted” webpage. An “AIG Events” section lists opportunities for students as well as for teachers and parents/guardians. All information will be made available in other languages to ensure that ALL students and guardians have access to AIG resource opportunities. These may include book studies, seminars, conferences, or other events.

Information is also shared in a variety of ways including:

- Informational meetings
- Emails
- Letters
- Newsletters
- Website
- Flyers
- Publications
- Phone calls
- Social Media
- Classroom communication (Class Dojo)
- SignUp Genius

- Macon County Schools utilizes EL Specialists to translate all pertinent information so that parents/guardians can be made aware of opportunities for their children in their native language. In addition, current technology provides translation services through programs such as Google Translate which can be found on all student iPads K-12.

The Macon AIG program strives to reach all learners as well as their parents/guardians for continued support. Meeting locations and times are flexible and consider parent work schedules, technology and resources available, and availability of transportation. AIG Specialists and AIG Leadership will work with parents/guardians to meet their needs. In this day and time when online meetings are more the norm, virtual conferences, live and recorded webinars, and virtual after-school programs are available to meet the needs of all individuals. Assessment of these local community needs is ongoing and the program will adapt to the best of its ability to meet evolving needs.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

We will increase in person meeting frequency to once per semester this will ensure that all stakeholders are kept abreast of the current AIG plan and how it is being implemented through out the district.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	AIG Plan
*	Advisory Meeting Minutes
*	Experiential Learning Opportunities in our Community

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	Parent Brochure Spanish Parent Night Notes NCAGT Resources for Families

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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.

Macon County works through the self-assessment process to determine the status of the AIG program and to develop a plan that that meets the state policy and guidelines. The plan is approved by our local school board and then sent to the state board for final approval. The local plan is on file in the AIG Program Director's office. Approval of the plan at the local level is reflected both in the plan and in school board minutes.

Macon County Schools' AIG plan is developed by an advisory group representative of our diverse district and the needs of our gifted and advanced students. The AIG Advisory Group was expanded to include a diverse group of educators, parents, and community partners that advocate and share perspectives from their experience and context.

As a part of the plan revision process, the AIG program was evaluated using data, surveys, and informal feedback. Data and feedback were gathered from parent surveys, administrator/teacher surveys, and executive staff regarding services and programming for gifted and advanced students. The advisory group and AIG department worked collaboratively to develop revisions and goals to increase opportunities provided to gifted and advanced students in accordance with state and district expectations. Revisions and goals are supported with evidence-based practices that have resulted in growth of gifted and advanced students.

* **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.

Macon County Schools monitors implementation of the AIG program in order to comply with current legislation and state policy. Procedures are provided to all school staff. These are reviewed annually with AIG staff and at the school level. Records are maintained and samples are reviewed annually for compliance. The AIG Specialists and the Program Director meet regularly on a quarterly basis to review program implementation and assess further needs.

* **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.

100% of state AIG funds are used to:
-pay the salaries of teachers that teach AIG Students

-pay the salaries of AIG Specialists
-testing materials
-fund enrichment opportunities
-classroom materials designed specifically for AIG students

Each year, a strategic budget is developed to support the goals of the AIG plan. The plan goals and budget are aligned to the needs of gifted and advanced students throughout the district. Data and feedback are used to prioritize specific goals and needs each year to ensure that we are building capacity of all teachers to serve gifted students. The annual budget development process occurs in partnership with the director, finance officer, building administrators and superintendent.

* **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.

Data is annually collected and reviewed by AIG staff, teachers, and administrators. Student performance and growth is shared annually with its stakeholders. The EVAAS system provides detailed information to teachers and administrators about growth trends in subgroups, including AIG students. The AIG Program Director analyzes drop-out data via AIG headcounts performed biannually. The AIG Program Director and Specialist then use all collected data to inform policies, practices, and mindset regarding the AIG program and evaluate any necessary changes that need to be made for improvement in services to our gifted population.

* **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.

By using non-verbal aptitude tests, the population of identified gifted students reflects the current population in regards to the cultural diversity that is represented in Macon County. Analysis of the current AIG headcount shows that under-represented populations that are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English Language learners, highly gifted and twice exceptional are being served through our gifted programming. The AIG Program Director and Specialists monitor the representation, performance, and retention of these populations. The education of all staff in Macon County schools on characteristics of gifted students, multiple referral windows during the school year, and the identification matrix that has multiple ways to become identified increase the likelihood of identification in underrepresented populations.

Current demographics for our AIG program: There are 352 students identified as AIG. Our current student population in Macon County is 4371. We have identified 8.05% of our student population. Of the 352 students we have 45 that are hispanic (12.78%), 6 that are 2 or more races, (1.70%), 9 that are Asian (2.55%) and 4 that are black/AA (1.13%). Our team has ongoing discussions and analyses of shifts in our student populations.

* **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.

Macon County Schools maintains up-to-date records regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students. The Director of Personnel in Macon County Schools keeps files on each staff member that are updated annually. In addition, the AIG Director maintains licensure and CEU documentation on staff directly serving in the AIG specialist/teacher capacity. The AIG Director and Specialists utilize the data to make sure AIG students are being served by properly educated personnel as outlined in the local AIG Plan.

* **Practice G**
Elicits regular feedback from students, parents/guardians, families, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the ongoing implementation and effectiveness of the local AIG program to support continuous program improvement.

Macon County Schools AIG staff reviews the AIG program on an annual basis. As a result, recommendations are made that support continuous improvement of the program. This review is expanded to include a wider variety of data such as surveys, student performance trends, and the demographic information of students.

An AIG advisory group comprised of teachers, parents and other support staff will meet biannually to conduct a program review and make recommendations for program improvements. The AIG Specialists and AIG Director are available for discussions with any stakeholder regarding areas of concern and ideas for improvement or the program. AIG program concerns are included in district level data review and program planning so that the unique learning needs of AIG students are taken into consideration as part of district wide initiatives.

Some types of data included are:

-Student performance on assessment (formative and summative)

-Student grades

-Student participation

-Surveys regarding teacher, student and parent satisfaction with the program

-Demographic data on student identification

-Long term student outcomes

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

Information from the stakeholders group is shared with the AIG staff and administrators through a memo at the end of each school year. It has been left up to building level administrators and the AIG specialists at each school to further share information with regular education teachers and parents. Macon County Schools website, the media, newsletters and school board meeting will be utilized to publicly report the results of data collected pertaining to AIG programming.

* **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.

According to Chapter 115C, Article 9B of the General Statutes of North Carolina, a parent or guardian who disagrees with a school's AIG team's decision concerning identification of a student for differentiated services in the school's AIG Program, or appropriate services for the student has the right to appeal that decision.

In the event that a parent/guardian disagrees with a decision made regarding their child, it is hoped that the concerns can be resolved at the local level. If a child or parent experiences difficulties with the AIG program, parents should contact the AIG Specialist. An AIG committee would then be formed to determine the best course of action. If the issue cannot be resolved by this committee, the next step is to involve the district Program Director into the discussion. If this step does not bring about resolution the parent may request mediation between the parent and school. Mediation is a process in which a trained, impartial, third party attempts to guide the opposing parties to reach a compromise. You may request mediation by contacting the Program Administrator located at the administrative offices for Macon County Schools.
If at any time parents cannot come to an agreement with the school system regarding a child's education, the parents have the right to ask for an impartial due process hearing. A due process hearing places the responsibility of resolving the conflict on an Administrative Law Judge in the Office of Administrative Hearings, an agency that has no relationship with the local school system or the State Department of Public Instruction.

Information is available in the AIG handbook as well as on the website. This includes information regarding policies on identification and placement, reassessment/rescreening opportunities, student transfers, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

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Process	Procedure
Informed consent for identification	* Informed consent for identification is provided through the required referral and results form. This form requires a parent signature for the student to be screened for identification and provided services if they are identified. Rationale for Talent Development Screening/ Rescreening: Unidentified MCS students in grades 4-12 may warrant rescreening for potential gifted identification and placement if they demonstrate one or more of the following traits and have not been assessed in the past 12 months by the AIG Department: - Student entered MCS after the initial third grade screening and performance is on at least grade level according to district grade level assessments in both math and reading. - Student has earned a minimum of 95th %ile on an achievement testing (EOGs or EOCs). - Student has been placed on a 504 or IEP with newly implemented testing accommodations and is now performing above grade level. - Student participated in EL identification procedures in 3rd grade, but did not qualify as gifted. - Student is recommended for testing by School Guidance Counselor or another agency or individual working with them.
Informed consent for placement	* Informed consent for services is provided through the required referral and results form. This form requires a parent signature for the student to be screened for identification and provided services if they are identified.

Transfer procedures	*	The primary goal of the AIG department is to serve as the lead advocate for all gifted and advanced students at MCS. Through involvement in district policies, procedures, and practices, the department works to maintain a high level of awareness regarding decisions made that influence gifted students. The LEA plan includes equitable identification procedures, placement, services, reassessment, transfer, and procedures to resolve disagreements that are clearly articulated in written form, as well as communicated by schools. Each of these processes are evaluated annually to ensure students, parents, and families receive adequate support in helping gifted identified students maximize their academic potential. If a student transfers into the LEA and is identified as AIG they will be served without further testing being required.
Reassessment procedures	*	MCS strives to use entry requirements for the Academically Gifted Program that best identify those students in need of accelerated, high-level work. Placement in any of these programs, however, must sometimes be reviewed. A student is responsible for applying him/herself to the work and making steady progress consistent with the program goals. Teachers, guidance counselors, social workers and school administrators will be available to assist the student in overcoming any obstacles to learning. If problems with schoolwork arise, early intervention through communication between the home and school is essential. The following guidelines specify when a parent/ teacher/guidance counselor conference is required.
Procedures to resolve disagreement	*	Procedures to Resolve Disagreements (Effective: August 25, 2013) Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C - 150.7 (7) and § 150B, Article 3, the parent/Guardian has the right to disagree with the following procedures and services: Identification of student and appropriate services for the gifted student. Disagreement with identification/services must be filed within 90 calendar days of the initial decision. 1. The parent/guardian makes a written request for a conference with the school-based AIG committee to discuss concerns regarding identification or services. The school principal is notified of this concern. - A conference between the school and the parent must be scheduled within 15 school days of receipt of the written contact from parents. - At the conference, the committee will share the identification process and the documentation used 2. If the concern/disagreement is not resolved at the school-based conference: - The parent/guardian may appeal the decision by sending written notice to the Director of AIG. - The Director of AIG will notify the school and the Superintendent of the appeal. - Within fifteen days of receipt of the notice of appeal from the parents, the Director of AIG will schedule a conference. The conference must occur within 30 days of the receipt of the notice of appeal, unless the parents request an extension of time. - The Director of AIG will review all documentation and the parent/guardian's disagreement. - At the conference, the Director of AIG will facilitate a process to resolve the parents' disagreement with the district's decisions

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Improve communication amongst stakeholders, AIG personnel, and other school personnel to monitor AIG plan implementation and evaluate plan effectiveness.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Student Records
*	Data backing student placements/identification
*	Minutes from stakeholders meetings

Documents

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

Local Board of Education Approval

Macon County Schools (560) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:
06/30/2025

AIG Related Documents

Macon County Schools (560) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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

Optional Documents		
Type	**Document Template**	**Document/Link**
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	MCS AIG Identification Matrix MCS AIG DEP Parent Referral Form MCS AIG Handbook
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	Gifted Education Resources for Parents CDM Toolkit Resources
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	NCAGT for Educators webpage
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	NCDPI AIG Booster Shots
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	Parent Brochure Spanish Parent Night Notes NCAGT Resources for Families
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	MCS AIG Handbook

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Phrase	Definition
AIG	Academically and Intellectually Gifted
IG	Intellectually Gifted (determined by Aptitude assessment CogAT) - often not academically gifted
AG (AR or AM)	Academically Gifted (Math or Reading) as determined by multiple norm referenced assessments
Cluster Grouping	groups of 2-5 of identified AG Reading, AG Math or AIG students in one class (AIG Specialists/Talent Development Coach will work specifically with teachers who have these cluster groups)
Flexible Grouping	Cross team teaching to serve students in their area of acceleration (AG Math, AG Reading, AIG)
Inclusion	heterogeneously grouping students to develop equity and peer relations as well as serve as intellectual role models. Students are not missing seat time, excluded from class activities, dissuades elitist/deficient stigma. Important in elementary grades for social-emotional development.
Achievement Assessment	EOG, EOC, BOG, iReady, Dibels8, STAR, and others that measure student content knowledge
AIG Specialist(s)	NC AIG Licensed support coach who will work with teachers to assess, plan, and differentiate curriculum for our AIG students.
DEP	Differentiated Education Plan - parent and teacher signature required each year to communicate services provided based on grade level.