Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Mountain Island Charter (36C) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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

Mountain Island Charter School is committed to the development of lifelong learners, innovative problem solvers, and responsible citizens in a global society. Among our students are those who exhibit high academic performance, or who possess exceptional potential for outstanding achievement and leadership as stated in the North Carolina definition of giftedness. Because we believe that giftedness is developed through intellectual challenge, we strive to nurture exceptional capabilities through academic rigor, service opportunities and leadership development. Mountain Island Charter School will deliver a model of differentiated services that enhance and extend the regular education program for academically and intellectually gifted students of all racial, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* $ 86,387.78	* $ 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.

Narrative: Gifted Identification and Eligibility Process

The gifted identification process includes multiple assessment components that work together to determine student eligibility. These components fall into four main categories: Aptitude Assessment, Informal Assessment, Achievement Assessment, and Portfolio Review. Each path provides a flexible yet structured opportunity to recognize gifted potential across different areas.

Aptitude Assessment

Students are assessed using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), which includes Verbal, Quantitative, and a Verbal/Quantitative Composite (VQN) score. Points are awarded based on percentile rankings:

- 96th–99th percentile in any category earns 4 points.
- 87th–95th percentile earns 3 points.
- Below 87th percentile earns 0 points.
- The Overall Age Composite Percentile also contributes points: 12 points for 96th–99th percentile, 6 points for 87th–95th, and 0 points for 86th and below.

Informal Assessment

Informal assessments include the Gifted Rating Scales (GRS), which are used exclusively during the 2nd grade identification process. Students receive 6 points if they have three or more GRS scores at or above the 84th percentile.

Achievement Assessment

Achievement can be measured through i-Ready, IOWA, or NC EOG scores. Points are awarded as follows:

- 96th–99th percentile in Reading or Math earns 4 points.
- 87th–95th percentile earns 3 points.
- Below 87th percentile earns 0 points.

Portfolio Eligibility (2nd grade only)

Students may also qualify through a portfolio review, with eligibility determined by meeting at least one of the following criteria:

1. Scoring in the 87th–95th percentile on the CogAT VQN composite.
2. Earning 3 or more GRS scores in the 84th percentile or higher.
3. Earning 6 points or more on achievement assessments.

Identification Categories

- Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG): Students qualify with a total of 12 points or more through aptitude and achievement or aptitude and GRS
- Academically Gifted (AG): Students qualify with a total of 12 or more points through any combination of aptitude, achievement, GRS, or portfolio.
- Academically Gifted in Reading (AR): Students qualify with 6 points from verbal aptitude and reading achievement.
- Academically Gifted in Math (AM): Students qualify with 6 points from quantitative aptitude and math achievement.
- Intellectually Gifted (IG): Students scoring in the 87th–95th percentile on aptitude, who do not qualify through AG, AR, AM, or Portfolio, may be identified as IG.

Upon parent or teacher request, students, K-12, may be referred to the AIG department to be considered for AIG evaluation. Referral processes at all grade levels include the use of MTSS Tier 1 Data Reviews.

This process ensures that multiple pathways are available for students to be recognized for their gifts, promoting equity and acknowledging different forms of intelligence and achievement.

* **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.

Overview of Phases

The gifted identification process at MICS occurs in six phases, allowing multiple pathways for student recognition through formal and informal assessments.

Phase 1: Informal Assessment (K–1)

- Weekly PETS Lessons build thinking skills in:

  Deductive and spatial reasoning

  - Divergent and convergent thinking
- Data is collected to inform later screening.

Phase 2: Aptitude Assessment

- Students take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT).
- Scores evaluated based on Overall Age Composite Percentile:

  --96th–99th percentile: Eligible for AIG identification.
  --Scores below 93rd percentile require further review in later phases.

Phase 3: Achievement Assessment

- Assessed through EOG or ITBS standardized tests.
- Combined with CogAT:

  --Verbal Aptitude + Reading Achievement ? potential AR (Academically Gifted in Reading)

  --Quantitative Aptitude + Math Achievement ? potential AM (Academically Gifted in Math)

  --6 points on the identification rubric in either reading or math are required for AR/AM eligibility.

Phase 4: Portfolio and Gifted Rating Scale (GRS)

- All students receive a GRS

  --3+ scores at or above the 84th percentile = 6 points on the rubric.
- Portfolio option available; a total of 12 points from GRS, achievement, or a combination of data can result in AG (Academically Gifted) identification

Phase 5: Re-evaluation in Grade 4

- Students not previously identified may be reassessed using updated CogAT and EOG data.
- Students with an EOG average of 95+ may qualify for AM, AR, or AG or reevaluation.

Phase 6: AIG Identification (Grades 4–12)

- Students need 12 points on the rubric from any combination of:

  --Aptitude (CogAT)

  --Achievement (EOG/ITBS)

  --Work Samples

Reciprocity Policy

- Students who missed 2nd grade screening or moved from a school without AIG screening may be referred.
- If identified at a previous school, results are honored with proper documentation.

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* **Practice C**
Ensures AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures respond to under-represented populations of the gifted and are responsive to LEA demographics. These populations include students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, multilingual learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

MICS Commitment to Equitable Gifted Identification

At MICS, we believe in recognizing the diverse strengths of every student. Our gifted identification process is intentionally designed to provide multiple pathways for students to demonstrate their potential. By incorporating a blend of informal assessments, aptitude testing, and achievement testing, we ensure that no single test or score limits a child's opportunity for identification.

To support this inclusive approach, we provide practice lessons that introduce students to the types of questions and thinking patterns they may encounter on aptitude and achievement assessments. These lessons are not only designed to build familiarity, but also to reduce test anxiety and provide every student with an equitable chance to show their abilities.

Additionally, we are committed to nurturing critical thinking from the very beginning of a child's academic journey. All kindergarten and first-grade students participate in weekly lessons that focus on deductive and spatial reasoning, divergent and convergent thinking, and other core components of cognitive growth. These early learning experiences not only enrich the classroom environment but also lay a strong foundation for success in later aptitude testing.

Through this multi-faceted, developmentally appropriate model, MICS ensures that all learners, regardless of background or learning style, are seen, supported, and given the opportunity to thrive.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	<5%	---	---	18.06%	---	19.73%
Male	---	5.49%	---	---	14.86%	---	21.68%
Total	---	5.10%	6.74%	---	16.44%	---	20.74%

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.

Data-Driven, Multi-Pathway Gifted Identification at MICS

MICS uses a comprehensive, data-driven approach to gifted identification, ensuring that multiple pathways are available for students to demonstrate their academic and intellectual potential. At the core of this process is a detailed rubric and an integrated spreadsheet that includes formulas to calculate and track scores across a range of assessments.

This system combines several data points—Gifted Rating Scales (GRS), Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), i-Ready diagnostics, and student portfolios—to give a holistic view of each learner. Each measure is weighted and scored within the rubric, allowing for various combinations of strengths to emerge and qualify a student for gifted services.

For example, a student might qualify through high scores in verbal aptitude and reading achievement (AR), while another may demonstrate giftedness through quantitative reasoning and math achievement (AM). Still others may earn eligibility through a combination of achievement data and strong teacher ratings on the GRS, or by showcasing creative problem-solving and critical thinking in a student portfolio.

By using a centralized spreadsheet with built-in formulas, we ensure that data is consistently analyzed, minimizing subjectivity and maximizing transparency. This structured yet flexible system enables educators to clearly see where students meet identification thresholds—and where additional data collection or observation might be beneficial.

Ultimately, this approach allows MICS to recognize gifted potential in various ways, supporting equity and ensuring that no student is overlooked simply because they do not fit a single profile. Every data point contributes to a fuller understanding of the learner, aligning with our mission to foster growth, challenge, and opportunity for all.

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

Transparent Communication for Gifted Identification

At MICS, we are committed to ensuring that families and stakeholders are well-informed and actively engaged in the gifted identification process. Clear and consistent communication is a foundational part of our approach.

To support this, we hold a dedicated meeting at the beginning of 2nd grade to explain the entire identification process. During this session, we outline the multiple pathways available—through aptitude, achievement, teacher ratings, and portfolio review, and help families understand how each assessment contributes to the identification decision.

In addition to the meeting, we send home detailed information about the identification process both in print and digitally through ParentSquare. This includes grade-specific timelines, testing explanations, and frequently asked questions, ensuring that all families have access to the information they need.

We also make sure to share identification information broadly and accessible. Updates and resources are posted on the school website, shared through ParentSquare notifications, presented in in-person or virtual meetings, and reinforced through written communication such as newsletters or handouts. This multi-platform strategy ensures that all stakeholders—families, teachers, and administrators—remain informed and involved throughout the process.

By keeping communication transparent, timely, and accessible, MICS ensures that every family has the knowledge and support needed to navigate the gifted identification journey with confidence.

* **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.

Parent Communication and Documentation for Gifted Identification

MICS is dedicated to maintaining clear and consistent communication with families throughout the gifted identification process. To ensure transparency and partnership, all parents receive a formal letter notifying them of upcoming assessments. While universal screeners, such as the CogAT, given to all students in a particular grade, do not require parent permission, any additional testing outside of these screeners will require prior written approval from parents or guardians.

Once testing is complete, every family will receive a copy of their child's CogAT results and any additional evaluation data. This helps ensure that parents are not only informed but also actively included in understanding their child’s academic profile.

If a student is identified for rescreening, a letter will be sent home explaining the decision. This communication will include the specific data, such as scores or rating scales, that led to the recommendation for further review.

To ensure organization and long-term documentation, all paperwork related to the identification process, including the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), CogAT scores, GRS results, and other relevant forms, will be stored within each student's cumulative file, identified students information will be housed in a blue folder for easy identification (elementary school). Folders will be passed to middle school admin and utilized as needed throughout the students' secondary experience. This allows for easy access by appropriate school staff and ensures that a full record of the student's gifted evaluation history is preserved.

Through proactive communication and thorough record-keeping, MICS ensures a fair, organized, and transparent gifted identification experience for every student and their family.

* **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.

Differentiated Education Plans (DEP) for Gifted Learners

At MICS, we are committed to supporting the unique needs of gifted students through intentional, individualized planning. A Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is developed for every student who has been officially identified as gifted. These plans serve as a roadmap for meeting each learner's academic and social-emotional needs.

To ensure that families are engaged and informed, conferences are offered (either in person or online) to review the DEP. During these conferences, the team discusses the student's strengths and the strategies that will be used throughout the school year to support their continued growth. Each plan is written to reflect grade-level expectations and the individual learner's profile.

Every DEP includes key components designed to ensure a well-rounded, enriched educational experience. These components include:

- Learning environment adaptations that support higher-level thinking and creativity
- Content modifications that provide appropriate challenge through depth, complexity, or acceleration
- Enrichment opportunities such as special projects, competitions, or interest-based extensions
- Advanced content resources to ensure students are working with rigorous, grade-appropriate material
- Social-emotional supports tailored to the needs of gifted learners, who may experience asynchronous development or heightened sensitivities

By revisiting and updating the DEPs through optional parent-teacher conferences, counselor sessions as requested, schedule creation conversations and through student reflection, MICS ensures that each gifted student's educational plan remains responsive, relevant, and aligned with their evolving needs and abilities.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

- Update the website with the refined identification phases.
- Clearly communicate screening, identification processes and share data monitoring charts with teachers.
- In middle-high, utilize the DEP tool as a communication and reflective opportunity for students, parents, and teachers (use the EL ILP model for middle/high and include counselors)

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Website
*	Data Monitoring Chart
*	DEPs

Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	Identification Process Chart MICS AIG Portfolio Assessment Review

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Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

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

It is important that all AIG students be given the opportunity to reach their potential. IN order to accomplish this task, we must offer K-12 programs and services that address the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

We have established a comprehensive AIG program that enriches and accelerates gifted learners through practices such as extracurricular opportunities, differentiated education plans, and guidance lessons related to awareness and development of social and emotional skills. MICS provides an integrated curriculum model consisting of advanced content, higher-level processes and product development, and interdisciplinary concepts, issues and themes.

K–1 (Kindergarten and 1st Grade):
The AIG teacher will push into classrooms to model and teach critical thinking strategies across content areas, using PETS (Primary Education Thinking Skills), Building Thinking Skills, and Critical Thinking Skills resources. These lessons are designed to lay the foundation for problem-solving, reasoning, and creative thinking. Teachers will be encouraged to integrate these strategies into daily instruction in reading, math, science, and social studies.

Grade 2:
Following the AIG identification process, identified 2nd grade students will receive direct instruction 5 times per week through a pull-out model. The AIG teacher will also provide extension and enrichment resources for classroom teachers to differentiate instruction for both identified and high-potential learners.

Grade 3-5
Identified students will participate in a daily pull-out program during SOAR time for direct instruction 2-5 times per week. The focus will be on enrichment, critical thinking, problem-solving, and interdisciplinary projects aligned with the NC Standard Course of Study. The AIG teacher will also provide extension and enrichment resources for classroom teachers to differentiate instruction for both identified and high-potential learners.

Additionally, the AIG teacher will collaborate with co-teachers, support staff, and counselors to address academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs through enrichment lessons and affective support.

Service Structure Overview:

- Small Group / Inclusion / Co-Taught Instruction: Regularly integrated across all grade levels, with an emphasis on collaboration between the AIG teacher and general education staff.
- Counselor Involvement: Guidance counselors partner with AIG staff to support students’ as needed in areas of social-emotional development, particularly in areas such as perfectionism, peer relationships, and managing academic expectations.

- Collaborative Planning: Elementary AIG teacher participates in grade-level planning meetings to support integration of advanced learning strategies and ensure alignment with core instruction.

In grades 6–12, AIG students are supported and challenged through a variety of advanced learning opportunities, including:

- Honors Courses
- Advanced Placement (AP) Courses
- NCVPS (North Carolina Virtual Public Schools)
- NCSSM (North Carolina School of Science and Math)
- CDM (Credit by Demonstrated Mastery)

CCP (Career and College Promise)

Scheduling is personalized to reflect single-subject AIG identification, such as AR (Academically Gifted in Reading only) and AM (Academically Gifted in Math only), ensuring that each student's schedule is aligned with their specific academic strengths.

The AIG Advisory Board, in collaboration with Assistant Principals and Counselors, works closely with grade-level and content-area interdisciplinary teams to provide:

- Rigorous academic instruction
- Ongoing social and emotional support for gifted learners

An annual evaluation of the gifted program is conducted to ensure continuous improvement. This review focuses on:

- The alignment of services for students identified as AIG, AR, AM, or AG, IG
- Support for students identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG)
- Provision for twice-exceptional students (AIG and EC/504)
  The academic growth of gifted students
- The connection between gifted services and the broader educational offerings at MICS

To further enrich the experience of gifted learners, curriculum extensions are offered, including:

- field trips
- field study opportunities
- Summer study abroad opportunities
- clubs and extracurricular options
- athletics

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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.

To ensure the social and emotional needs of gifted learners are met across all grade levels and learning environments, the AIG program incorporates collaborative, comprehensive services tailored to student needs.

The AIG Coordinator and teachers work closely with school counselors, classroom teachers, and support staff to provide direct and indirect support for AIG students' affective development. This includes implementing research-based resources such as Second Step, Affective Jacob's Ladder, and I'm Not Just Gifted, which help students develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, and positive peer relationships.

At the elementary level, two dedicated full-time counselors collaborate with AIG staff to deliver schoolwide lessons on growth mindset, while also supporting students through targeted small groups and individual check-ins. These efforts are coordinated with the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework to ensure that services are proactive, layered, and responsive to students' individual needs. One full-time middle school counselor and two full-time high school counselors, as well as a college career counselor, work with students to ensure social-emotional needs and future planning needs are met.

All services are designed to integrate social and emotional learning (SEL) into the academic experience of AIG students, with additional support provided through parent engagement sessions, staff professional learning, and ongoing collaboration with school leadership and student support teams.

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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.

Mountain Island Charter School is committed to integrating the AIG program with the school's overall instructional priorities and resources. The AIG program is aligned with the broader educational goals of the school to ensure that gifted learners are supported within the context of the total instructional program.

Funding and resources are strategically allocated and monitored to support the delivery of high-quality gifted services. This includes ensuring AIG students have equitable access to instructional tools, enrichment opportunities, and specialized personnel.

An annual evaluation of the AIG program is conducted to assess the effectiveness of services, alignment with the school's priorities, and the appropriate use of funds and resources. The review includes analysis of student growth, alignment of programming across identification areas (Reading, Math, Intellectually Gifted, Twice-Exceptional), and EC support where appropriate.

Data dives are also conducted, focusing on AIG student achievement and growth on benchmarks to ensure students are showing improvement as the year progresses.

Through this ongoing process, the AIG program remains responsive, resource-efficient, and closely connected to the mission and instructional vision of Mountain Island Charter School.

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

Mountain Island Charter School implements intentional and flexible grouping practices to support the achievement and growth of AIG and other high-ability learners across all grade levels.

In the Elementary School (K–5), daily instruction includes a dedicated SOAR period (45 minutes), during which students are placed into needs-based groups informed by current assessment data. These groupings are regularly reviewed and adjusted to reflect student progress. AIG teachers and grade-level teachers use this time to provide rigorous, differentiated instruction to both identified AIG students and high-potential learners. Support staff are integrated during SOAR to ensure individualized, targeted instruction across groups.

In the Middle and High School, flexible grouping is reflected in students' placement in Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), NCVPS courses, NCSSM offerings, Career and College Promise (CCP), and Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM). Additional grouping opportunities are provided through study halls, tutoring sessions, and test preparation groups for EOG, EOC, and ACT readiness.

For twice-exceptional (AIG/EC) students, foundational elective courses in reading or math are offered to ensure they receive both academic challenge and appropriate support.

Scheduling decisions are made based on individual student needs and strengths, rather than a rigid tracking system, ensuring that placement reflects ability and readiness across content areas.

* **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.

Mountain Island Charter School ensures that all stakeholders are consistently informed about the delivery of differentiated services for AIG students, relevant regulations, and the local AIG plan. Communication and transparency are prioritized through the following:

- An AIG Program webpage will be maintained on the school website, providing access to the AIG plan, service models, and identification processes.
- Teachers and staff are informed during beginning-of-year grade-level meetings about the AIG identification process, service delivery, and instructional strategies for gifted learners.
- Parent communication includes annual letters to all second-grade families explaining the identification process and available gifted services. This information is distributed both in print and via ParentSquare.
- The AIG Coordinator conducts an in-person second-grade parent meeting each year to explain the AIG process and answer questions.
- A Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) conference is offered with parents of identified students to outline goals and services and can be part of regular parent-teacher and/or counselor conferences.

- Ongoing updates and instructional support are shared weekly through ParentSquare to teachers and families, keeping all parties informed about lessons, enrichment opportunities, and available resources.

This structured, multi-channel communication plan ensures that all members of the school community are knowledgeable and engaged in the AIG program's implementation.

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

Mountain Island Charter School implements intentional communication strategies to ensure a seamless continuation of AIG services across grade levels, especially during key transition points:

- A 2nd grade parent orientation is held to explain the AIG identification process and outline available services.
- A conversation between the 5th grade AIG teacher and 6th grade teachers/administrative team facilitates the sharing of student data, DEP information, and instructional strategies to support rising middle school AIG learners.
- Middle school families receive follow-up communications via teacher newsletters and can attend an orientation session to review the transition from elementary AIG to Middle school AIG program.
- 9th grade orientation and high school family meetings are held through counselor course registration meetings and/or as needed and include AIG updates to DEP plans.

These practices promote collaboration among educators and provide families with the knowledge needed to support AIG students throughout their K–12 journey.

MICS is a K-12 campus, allowing for close coordination among elementary, middle, and high school personnel. The leadership structure includes:

- Executive Director
- Middle/High School Principal
- Elementary Principal
- Assistant Principals
- Exceptional Children's Program Coordinator
- AIG Specialist
- Academic Facilitators
- Counselors

This leadership team holds weekly leadership meetings, grade-level/department meetings, and staff meetings, which promote consistent communication and effective collaboration across all grade levels, ensuring that AIG students receive continuous and targeted support.

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

Mountain Island Charter School has developed clear policies and procedures for offering various acceleration opportunities, including compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM), dual enrollment, and subject or grade acceleration. The process for identifying and implementing accelerated instruction and placement options is consistent, transparent, and collaborative.

- The Middle-High AIG Advisory Board meets quarterly or as needed to assess individual student needs and determine the most appropriate acceleration options for each student.
- Teachers collaborate with Instructional Facilitators, Interventionists, Assistant Principals, and the Counseling Department to evaluate and decide on appropriate accelerated instructional and placement options.
- The school follows state guidelines for early kindergarten entry, grade acceleration, and Credit by Demonstrated Master

Acceleration Implementation:

- Students who score a Level 5 on the Math EOG are offered opportunities for advanced math instruction during the school day. For grades 4–5, parents are notified and, with their consent, their Level 5 students are provided math challenge activities and instruction.
- At the middle and high school levels, Level 5 students are moved to the next level of math instruction, with parental consent. These students are also supported with afternoon tutoring/study hall sessions led by MICS MS/HS math staff.This process ensures that highly gifted students receive appropriate acceleration in a consistent and systematic manner, meeting their academic needs effectively.

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

Mountain Island Charter School provides early intervention and talent development opportunities for K-3 students through purposeful and intentional programming, with a focus on cultivating their potential at a young age. These opportunities are designed to foster creativity, problem-solving, and early academic development, supporting young learners as they begin their educational journey.

Early Intervention and Talent Development for K-3 Students:

- PETS (Promoting Enrichment through Talent and Skills) Push-In Model:
  The AIG Specialist works directly with K-1 classrooms to support high-potential students using the PETS program. This push-in model allows gifted students to receive enrichment during regular classroom activities, encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and leadership from an early age.

- Differentiated Instruction:
  Teachers are trained to recognize and nurture the potential of young learners through differentiated instruction tailored to meet the individual needs of gifted students in grades K-3. This ensures that early talent development is aligned with the cognitive, social, and emotional growth of each student.
- Gifted Identification Process for Young Learners:
  The school uses multiple criteria to identify students who may benefit from gifted services in K-3. Through portfolio reviews, teacher observations, and standardized assessments, the AIG team ensures that students are identified early for talent development.
- Enrichment Activities:
  In addition to the PETS program, early enrichment activities such as math games, creative storytelling, and problem-solving tasks are incorporated into K-1 classrooms to engage young students and promote higher-level thinking skills.

Additional Enrichment Opportunities:

While the focus for K-3 is on early identification and nurturing, MICS, at this time, also offers the LEGO First Robotics Club enrichment program throughout the school that 2-3 students can participate in.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The AIG Department conducts regular evaluations to ensure that the early intervention and talent development strategies are effectively meeting the needs of K-3 students. This evaluation includes tracking progress through assessments and observations to determine if students are receiving the appropriate level of challenge and support.

* **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.

Mountain Island Charter School is committed to promoting equity and excellence by ensuring that all students, especially traditionally under-represented groups, have access to advanced learning opportunities. The AIG department has developed intentional services aimed at addressing the needs of these students, including the following key initiatives:

School-Wide Plan for Under-Represented Populations: We have implemented a school-wide plan to serve traditionally under-represented AIG populations, based on demographic trend analysis. This plan includes inclusive identification practices and the development of Differentiated Education Plans (DEP) that take into account learning differences, cultural backgrounds, and language barriers.

- Multiple Pathways for Identification: To ensure broader access to gifted services, students have multiple opportunities to qualify through a multi-year, multi-mode identification process. The AIG team is committed to using a variety of criteria to ensure all students are assessed equitably.
- Collaboration Across Departments: The AIG Coordinator collaborates with the EC department and the ELL department to implement the school-wide plan for under-represented students. This collaboration ensures that the needs of diverse learners are met through differentiated instruction and targeted interventions.

- AIG Services in Grades 4-5: Pull out services will be provided for AIG students and resources will be added to the pacing guide for enrichment for students who score level 5 on EOGs to provide differentiation in the regular education classroom for students not identified.
- Middle and High School Support: In grades 6-12, the counseling department ensures appropriate course placements and college/career planning for gifted students. This ensures that students receive the support they need to excel academically and plan for future success.

Through these efforts, Mountain Island Charter School ensures that all students, regardless of their background, have access to rigorous and challenging learning opportunities. We aim to create an inclusive and equitable environment where every student can reach their full potential.

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

Mountain Island Charter School provides a broad array of extracurricular programming to support and further develop the talents and interests of AIG students, both during and outside of the school day. These activities are designed to engage students in meaningful experiences that go beyond the traditional academic curriculum and foster their creativity, leadership, and problem-solving skills.

Examples of Extracurricular Opportunities at MICS:

- Academic Competitions and Clubs:
  - Math Olympiad
  - Battle of the Books
  - Robotics Club
  - Chess Club
- Leadership and Service Clubs:
  - Key Club
  - National Honor Society (NHS)
  - Junior National Honor Society (JNHS)
  - Interact Club (service-oriented student group)
- Fine Arts:

- Opportunities in choral music, drama, band (5th and up) and visual arts provide gifted students with an outlet to express their creativity beyond the classroom.

- Athletics:
  - Over 30 types of team sports encourage physical activity, teamwork, and leadership development.

- Summer Enrichment and Travel:
  - A Career Accelerator program is offered each summer, providing middle school students with an opportunity to explore careers.
  - The Raptor Navigator program is offered to middle school students after school for career exploration.
  - Middle and High school students have the opportunity to participate in summer study abroad programs.
  - Information about additional summer opportunities in North Carolina and across the nation is shared by the AIG Coordinator and/or Guidance Department.

Additional Enrichment Opportunities:

- MICS students are encouraged to participate in the Governor's School program, providing advanced learning in the arts and sciences.

- Field trips and field study opportunities are planned annually to extend the curriculum and provide real-world learning experiences.

Evaluation and Expansion:

The AIG Department conducts an annual evaluation of the gifted program to ensure the effectiveness of the services provided and to identify areas for growth. This evaluation focuses on the alignment of services for all AIG students, including those identified in Reading, Math, and twice-exceptional students (AIG and EC/504).

As interest, funding, and resources permit, additional enrichment opportunities will be introduced, ensuring that MICS continues to provide a well-rounded education that meets the diverse needs of its gifted students.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

- Inclusion of counselors in AIG data dives and discussion to ensure SEL, future college and career planning (career development plan implementation in middle school and review in high school), as well as any other developmentally appropriate needs are met

- Consider increasing K-3 enrichment options

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	DEP Plans
*	Data Dive minutes and data charts
*	Club/extracurricular rosters and offerings (on website)

Documents

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

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.

Enrichment Through Diverse Resources and Professional Development

At MICS, we believe that gifted education should be rich, dynamic, and responsive to the needs of the whole child. To support this, we utilize a variety of high-quality resources to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of our gifted learners across math, literacy, and SEL, while also integrating science and social studies into the learning experience.

Instruction is enhanced through specialized curriculum and materials such as William and Mary units, Jacob's Ladder, novel studies, and Challenge Math, which are designed to promote critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and depth of understanding. Students also engage in hands-on, higher-level learning experiences such as Math Olympiad, Robotics, and Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Digital Literacy education, allowing them to apply their skills in collaborative and real-world contexts.

To ensure consistent and effective implementation of these strategies, MICS provides ongoing professional development opportunities for classroom teachers. These trainings focus on how to differentiate instruction for high-ability learners, whether through enrichment, acceleration, or compacting the curriculum. By equipping educators with the tools and strategies needed to meet gifted learners where they are, we create classrooms that are both challenging and inclusive.

This multi-faceted approach ensures that all students are not only challenged academically, but also supported socially and emotionally—preparing them for a future of curiosity, confidence, and continued growth.

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

Personalized Pathways for Gifted Learners

At MICS, we recognize that gifted learners have unique strengths, interests, and learning styles. As part of our commitment to personalized learning, students may be identified in several areas, including Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG), Advanced Math, and Advanced Literacy. Once identified, students are grouped according to their specific strengths, allowing them to engage in targeted instruction that challenges and inspires them.

Within these groups, students are given the opportunity to make choices based on their individual interests and passions. Learning experiences are intentionally designed to be meaningful and engaging, often taking the form of Project-Based Learning (PBL), novel studies, culminating projects, and concept-based lessons. These opportunities not only deepen content understanding, but also encourage creativity, problem-solving, and ownership of learning.

By providing both structure and flexibility, MICS creates an environment where gifted learners are empowered to explore, connect, and thrive—academically and beyond

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

Enriching the Whole Child Through Challenging and Meaningful Learning

At MICS, we are committed to nurturing not only the academic talents of our gifted learners but also their social, emotional, and creative potential. To do this, we offer a wide range of enrichment resources and learning experiences designed to challenge students and support their growth in every domain.

Our curriculum includes rigorous, research-based materials such as the William and Mary units, Jacob's Ladder, novel studies, Challenge Math, and Math Olympiad. Students also engage in hands-on, high-interest learning through Robotics and Project-Based Learning (PBL). These resources promote deep content understanding, critical thinking, and real-world application.

In PBL environments, students collaborate, communicate, and problem-solve as they explore meaningful questions and design solutions. These experiences encourage adaptability and teamwork while giving students choice and voice in their learning.

We also focus on developing students' critical and creative thinking skills through strategies such as questioning techniques, Socratic seminars, puzzles, and strategic games. These practices build intellectual agility and foster a love of learning that extends beyond the classroom.

Equally important is supporting the social and emotional development of our gifted learners. Using resources like Affective Jacob's Ladder, I'm Not Just Gifted, and the Second Step program, students explore empathy, self-awareness, perseverance, and personal responsibility. These SEL components are embedded into the learning experience, helping students build a strong foundation for both academic success and lifelong well-being.

In Middle and High School, we also use the Second Step program and students meet regularly with counselors via classroom push-in or scheduled meetings as needed.

The Pre-AP College Board curriculum will be a resource for middle school and high school honors classes to increase the rigor. We will evaluate adopting the curriculum for specific high school courses and determine if this is an appropriate adoption before revising our plan in 2028-2029.

By integrating rigorous academics with social-emotional learning and creative exploration, MICS creates a vibrant, supportive environment where gifted learners can thrive.

* **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.

FOSTERING DURABLE SKILLS AND MINDSETS

MICS is committed to fostering durable skills and mindsets that support post-secondary success by implementing the NC Portrait of a Graduate tool and aligning instruction with the Digital Learning Initiative Standards. Through integrated Problem-Based Learning (PBL), students develop critical 21st-century competencies such as adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, empathy, a learner's mindset, and personal responsibility.

Collaborative planning between AIG specialists and grade-level teachers ensures intentional integration of durable skills into interdisciplinary units. AIG curriculum maps are reviewed and revised annually to support this integration encouraging global awareness and real-world application.

Teachers share resources via Google Drive and email, fostering a collaborative teaching environment. Ongoing professional development further equips educators to design and deliver instruction that nurtures durable skills across all content areas.

Middle school students have an opportunity to join Raptor Navigators, an afterschool Career Exploratory program and all 8th graders complete Career Leadership Projects emphasizing student choice, research, personal responsibility, and presentation skills enhanced by technology. High school students explore college and career pathways, promoting long-term planning, adaptability, and goal setting.

Through this comprehensive, skills-driven approach, MICS ensures that all students are prepared to thrive in a complex and diverse society.

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

Using Data to Drive Growth and Empower Learners

At MICS, we believe that meaningful growth begins with understanding where each student is—and where they have the potential to go. To support our gifted learners, we closely analyze EOG (End-of-Grade) and i-Ready diagnostic data to tailor instruction that meets their individual strengths and areas for growth.

This data is not only used by educators, but also shared with students as a tool for reflection and empowerment. Through guided conversations, students review their own data, identify trends, and set personalized learning goals. This process fosters a sense of ownership and helps students take an active role in their academic journey.

By combining thoughtful data analysis with student-led goal setting, we create a learning environment where gifted students are continually challenged, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential.

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

Collaborative Support for Differentiated Instruction

At MICS, collaboration is key to meeting the diverse needs of gifted learners. Ongoing professional development and planning meetings between the AIG teacher and classroom teachers play a vital role in ensuring that instruction is both challenging and responsive.

These collaborative sessions provide time for educators to co-plan differentiated lessons, share strategies, and align on how to best support advanced learners within the general education setting. By working together, teachers can tailor the curriculum, pacing, and instructional approaches to provide enrichment, acceleration, and deeper learning opportunities where appropriate.

This team-based approach strengthens instructional practices schoolwide and ensures that gifted education is integrated, intentional, and accessible for all students who need it.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

- AIG Modeling/Teacher coaching opportunities
- Sharing resources through google classroom, email, PLC meetings
- Utilize Advisory Boards to deliver professional development opportunities
- Use Pre-AP curriculum/teaching frameworks and improve Honors course rigor/expectations (clear/consistent differentiation)
- DEP--middle/high school ownership and goal-setting; career/future planning
- Digital Literacy program aligned to Portrait of Graduate
- Data Reviews of AIG students

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Elementary AIG schedule
*	AIG Google Resource Drive
*	Meeting minutes
*	Pre-AP curriculum
*	DEPs
*	Data Review minutes/charts

*	Digital Literacy program framework

Documents

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

Mountain Island Charter (36C) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

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

Mountain Island Charter School employs an AIG-licensed educator to serve as the AIG Coordinator, who leads the planning, development, implementation, revision, and monitoring of the local AIG program and AIG plan. The AIG Coordinator collaborates closely with K-12 administrators, regular education teachers, and the AIG Advisory Board to ensure the program meets the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners.

Using benchmark data, the AIG Coordinator provides formative and summative program data and progress updates to school leadership to guide decisions related to instruction, curriculum, and student services. This collaborative, data-driven approach ensures that the AIG program remains responsive, equitable, and aligned to best practices for gifted education.

* **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.

At Mountain Island Charter School,the AIG Specialists on the AIG Advisory Board, works with teachers to meet the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted learners. These services include direct instruction, small group instruction, independent study, and enrichment opportunities designed to challenge students beyond the standard curriculum.

In addition to academic instruction, AIG students benefit from social and emotional support through small group counseling, leadership development, and extracurricular programs. The AIG specialists on the Advisory Board work in collaboration with classroom teachers, counselors, elective teachers, and instructional coaches to ensure the consistent delivery of services aligned with the local AIG plan. This comprehensive team approach ensures that gifted students are supported holistically throughout their K-12 experience.

* **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.

The AIG Coordinator and other qualified personnel will provide PD at the beginning of the school year to familiarize teachers, specialists, counselors, teaching assistants and school administrators with the AIG plan and AIG students' unique academic, social, and emotional needs.

Professional development will be provided during summer and/or throughout the school year providing training on differentiated instruction and strategies to enhance instruction for gifted students in the regular classroom.

In addition, the AIG Coordinator, some teachers, and other staff will attend the North Carolina Association of Gifted Teachers (NCAGT) convention. Gained information will be shared with staff as a follow-up to give every staff member opportunities to enhance their AIG knowledge and resource bank.

* **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.

General Education Services Provided by Qualified Personnel

Mountain Island Charter School ensures that general education services for gifted learners are delivered by educators who either hold an AIG add-on license or have met local education agency (LEA) requirements for serving advanced learners. These educators are equipped with the knowledge and strategies necessary to differentiate instruction and meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of AIG students.

To maintain a high level of instructional quality, MICS invests in professional development by offering in-house training and providing financial support for off-campus learning opportunities. AIG-licensed specialists collaborate with grade-level teams and individual teachers to plan, model, and support differentiated instruction.Through ongoing professional learning, MICS ensures that gifted students receive appropriate services from qualified educators.

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

Recruitment and Retention Plan for AIG-Licensed Educators

Recruitment Strategies

Grow-Your-Own Initiatives

MICS is committed to developing internal talent by:

- Offering tuition assistance or test reimbursement to current staff members pursuing AIG licensure.
- Creating a mentorship model that pairs aspiring AIG educators with experienced, AIG-licensed staff for ongoing guidance and support

Retention Strategies

Professional Support & Collaboration

- Provide sustained mentoring and coaching for newly hired AIG-licensed educators to ensure a strong start and continued growth.
- Facilitate regular collaboration between AIG specialists and general education teachers to promote program integration and shared instructional strategies.
- Encourage participation in AIG professional learning networks, statewide conferences, and leadership roles.

Incentives and Recognition

- Offer leadership roles within the AIG program and across school-wide academic initiatives to increase visibility and engagement.
- Recognize and celebrate AIG educator contributions through staff spotlights, performance bonuses, and personalized professional growth plans.

Culturally Responsive Practices

- Embed equity-focused professional development into ongoing schoolwide PD to support culturally responsive instruction for gifted learners.
- Promote an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives and educator backgrounds are valued within the AIG program.

This approach ensures MICS not only recruits and retains highly qualified AIG professionals, but also builds a community where they feel supported, empowered, and inspired to grow within the school.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Maintain a database of licensed AIG staff, including licensure status and professional development progress
- Conduct annual reviews of recruitment and retention data to inform future planning
- Solicit feedback from AIG educators to assess satisfaction, needs, and future goals

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

Plan for Professional Learning in Gifted Education at MICS

Mountain Island Charter School (MICS) is committed to providing focused professional learning opportunities to foster equity and excellence in gifted education. The school's approach will include the development of mindsets, policies, and practices that prioritize the needs of gifted learners and promote inclusive and equitable services.

Professional Learning Opportunities for Teachers, Parents, and Staff

Parent and Teacher Communication

- Distribute newsletters to parents and teachers, highlighting information about gifted education, identification processes, and strategies for supporting gifted learners at home and in the classroom.
- Host introductory meetings for parents and staff, offering insights on the gifted identification process and how to support gifted students.

AIG-Focused Professional Learning for Staff

- PLC meetings includes AIG-focused information on best practices for gifted education, such as differentiated instruction, mindset shifts, and creating inclusive learning environments.
- MICS Administration and the AIG department will coordinate professional learning opportunities focused on:
  - Changing mindsets about gifted education, emphasizing the importance of equity and inclusion.
  - Reviewing and adjusting policies to ensure that gifted learners have access to the most appropriate instruction and resources.
  - Integrating culturally responsive practices to address the diverse needs of gifted students from all backgrounds.

Ongoing Professional Development

- Develop tailored training sessions to support teachers and staff in recognizing and addressing the needs of underrepresented gifted populations.
- Offer training on assessment strategies and how to differentiate instruction effectively for gifted learners.
- Encourage collaboration among teachers, administrators, and AIG specialists to integrate gifted education best practices across the curriculum.

Evaluating Success

- Gather feedback from teachers, parents, and staff to assess the impact of the professional learning sessions on their understanding and ability to support gifted learners.
- Review student outcomes and ensure the alignment of the professional learning efforts with the improvement of services for gifted students.

By focusing on mindsets, policies, and practices, MICS will provide high-quality, equitable education to gifted learners and ensure that all staff are equipped to meet their needs with excellence.

* **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.

Plan for Professional Development in Gifted Education at MICS

Mountain Island Charter School (MICS) is committed to providing ongoing professional development that is aligned with local AIG program goals, district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education. This professional learning ensures that teachers are well-equipped to differentiate instruction, add rigor, and accelerate learning objectives for gifted students.

Professional Development Goals and Opportunities

Year-Long Professional Development

- MICS will develop year-long professional development goals based on the current needs of the AIG program. These goals will ensure that teachers are equipped with the skills needed to support gifted learners effectively.
- Professional learning opportunities will be offered in a variety of formats, including:
  - Book studies
  - Grade-level PLC sessions
  - Division-wide PLC sessions
  - Whole-faculty half-day and full-day sessions
  - Webinars and other digital media formats

AIG-Specific Methodology

- Professional development will focus on differentiated instruction, goal-setting, increasing rigor, and effective questioning techniques.
- AIG teachers will have opportunities to develop advanced content area knowledge and technological proficiency to meet both state and national standards.
- Differentiation strategies will be a key component of professional development, helping teachers design learning experiences that meet the needs of all students, particularly gifted learners.

External Training and Conferences

North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented (NCAGT) Conference

- MICS will send representatives to the NCAGT Conference annually, allowing AIG teachers and administrators to stay current on the latest trends and strategies in gifted education.

Regional NCDPI AIG Meetings

- The AIG Coordinator or representative will collaborate with regional NCDPI AIG consultants and attend state meetings to stay informed of state-level best practices in gifted education.

AIG PD Webinar Series

- The AIG Coordinator or representative will also participate in AIG-focused professional development webinars, ensuring continuous learning and application of new strategies to enhance the gifted program.

Sharing Knowledge with MICS Faculty

- The AIG Coordinator will share key takeaways from these external opportunities with the MICS faculty through:
  - Emails
  - Small group meetings
  - Academic team meetings facilitated by administration

Collaboration and Continuous Improvement

Advisory Board Collaboration

- AIG Advisory Board will meet quarterly to plan and monitor the local AIG program. These meetings allow for collaboration and ensure that all AIG-related strategies are being effectively implemented.

AIG and Regular Education Collaboration

- The AIG Coordinator, AIG teacher(s), and regular education teachers will work closely to foster a deeper understanding of the academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted students. This collaboration will ensure that AIG strategies are consistently applied across all classrooms.

Networking with Other LEAs

- As a charter school, MICS will engage with a local traditional AIG LEA and other local charter schools to share best practices, refine gifted education strategies, and foster AIG expertise through state and/or regional meetings.

Refining Professional Learning Applications

- The professional development plan will include opportunities for teachers to refine their practice and apply what they've learned. This will be supported through regular feedback, peer observations, and coaching sessions.
- Assessment data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development efforts and to adjust instruction as needed to continue improving the learning experience for gifted students.

By aligning professional development with MICS's AIG program goals, state and district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education, the school ensures that all teachers have the support they need to enrich and accelerate learning for gifted students.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

- Increase AIG certified staff
- Summer PD around Honors/Pre-AP/AIG--participation includes opportunity to add-on AIG licensure
- Create PD plan and use Advisory board/certified staff to provide PD

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	AIG Licensure status
*	#of staff taking Praxis for AIG certification add-on
*	Summer PD rosters & # of teachers participating

* Professional Development rosters for AIG training

Documents

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

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.

Supporting Gifted Learners: A Collaborative Approach

Utilizing Parent seminars and orientation sessions demonstrates that MICS is dedicated to supporting the unique needs of gifted learners. The goal is to nurture not only AIG students' academic growth but also their personal passions and social-emotional development. MICS recognizes that gifted students often require a learning environment that is responsive, enriching, and supportive of their distinct ways of thinking and feeling.

To help families better understand and meet these needs, MICS will also curate a collection of valuable resources specifically designed to address the social and emotional needs of gifted students providing insights and strategies for navigating challenges and encouraging well-being.

We also keep families connected and informed through regular updates and newsletters shared via ParentSquare. These communications highlight what students are working on in their learning journeys, offer practical tips for supporting their growth at home, and include a comment section to foster two-way communication. MICS believes that collaboration between home and school is essential, and welcomes feedback, questions, and insights.

In addition, we conduct performance reviews for all identified gifted students, evaluating their progress across multiple areas: content, process, product, and affect. These reviews are shared with parents, providing them with a comprehensive look at their child's growth and development. The reviews are also placed in the student's cumulative folder, ensuring that this important information is readily accessible for future reference and ongoing support.

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

In order to further extend AIG students' educational opportunities, MICS has formed partnerships with local business and other institutions that can increase the opportunities for our students.

MICS has formed a new partnership with Blum, a nearby business known for its fully automated warehouse, as a way to bridge classroom learning with real-world applications. By connecting our robotics program with the advanced technology used at Blum, students will have the opportunity to see firsthand how the skills they are developing in school translate into real-world careers and innovations. This partnership aims to inspire students by showing them the tangible

impact of robotics in industry and spark ideas for their future paths. MICS and Blum have also worked together to offer Apprenticeship opportunities to high school students.

In addition to this initiative, MICS will launch a survey for AIG parents to gather information about their careers, areas of expertise, and hobbies. The long-term goal is to create a dynamic database of community resources that we can draw from to enrich student learning. Whether it's connecting students with local professionals, arranging field trips, or incorporating guest speakers into our curriculum, we believe that tapping into the strengths of our parent community will create meaningful, real-world learning experiences and strengthen the bonds between school, home, and the wider community.

The AIG Department in conjunction with the High School counseling department works with local colleges to create opportunities for visits as well as learning experiences to expose our students to college life. A partnership has been formed with Gaston Community College, Central Piedmont Community College, and Belmont Abbey to offer Career and College Promise (CCP) courses allowing our high school students to enroll and complete college level courses.

* **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.

The AIG advisory group plays a vital role in shaping and guiding the direction of our AIG (Academically or Intellectually Gifted) program. The elementary group and the middle-high group include teachers, parents/guardians, and administrators and reflects the diversity of our school community. The group meets regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of our program, discuss areas for improvement, and make necessary revisions. Together, the board ensures that the AIG program is responsive, inclusive, and aligned with the needs of our gifted learners.

* **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.

MICS is committed to keeping families informed and involved throughout every stage of their child's gifted learning journey. At the beginning of 2nd grade, MICS hosts parent meetings to explain the AIG identification process. These sessions help families understand how students are evaluated and what to expect as they move through the identification timeline.

For families of students identified as gifted in grades 3 through 5, MICS offers DEP (Differentiated Education Plan) meetings. These meetings provide a comprehensive overview of the policies and procedures that guide our program, along with the resources and instructional strategies we use to nurture and develop each student's unique talents.

Conferences are offered annually and embedded at key transition points in middle school and high school and combined with teacher conferences and/or course registration and scheduling needs.

To support ongoing communication and access to information, our website is updated as needed with informational one-pagers, a summary that outlines our AIG plan, services, policies, procedures, and available advanced learning opportunities as well as a variety of resources that address AIG needs. Additionally, we use ParentSquare to post regular updates that highlight learning opportunities and the choices available to students and families. Through these efforts, we aim to build a strong, transparent partnership with parents that supports gifted learners every step of the way.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

- Website resources (updated for all levels)
- Parent Newsletters (continue in elementary, but added to middle-high program)
- Create one-pagers to address AIG-related topics and needs
- DEP expectations/meeting timeline
- Parent skills/career survey and database
- Blum partnership and increase, create other community partnerships that will impact AIG student experience

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Informational One-pagers
*	DEP timeline
*	website
*	Partnerships & database

Documents

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

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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.

To ensure our AIG program continues to meet the evolving needs of our gifted learners, the AIG coordinator and teachers collaborate closely with school administrators across elementary, middle, and high school levels. Together, they gather input from a wide range of stakeholders through surveys and complete a comprehensive self-assessment of the current program. This thoughtful, data-driven process helps us identify strengths and areas for growth, allowing us to craft a plan that is responsive, inclusive, and aligned with best practices in gifted education.

Once the plan is developed, it is presented to our principals, Assistant Principal of EC Services, Executive Director and Board for review and feedback. Any necessary adjustments are made based on their recommendations before the final draft is submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for review and comment. This collaborative and reflective approach ensures that our AIG plan is both community-informed and grounded in accountability, ultimately supporting the success and development of our gifted 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.

Mountain Island Charter’s approach to supporting gifted learners is grounded in data, collaboration, and ongoing communication. We begin with digital data collection for students in grades K–5, allowing us to closely monitor academic growth and identify advanced learning needs early on. For students who demonstrate exceptional performance—specifically those who score a level 5 on the End-of-Grade (EOG) math assessment—we provide access to advanced math opportunities to ensure they are appropriately challenged and engaged.

To keep families informed and involved, we hold annual meetings with parents of identified students. These meetings provide updates on student progress, program goals, and available supports. Additionally, our AIG Advisory Board, which includes administrators and key stakeholders, meets regularly to review student data after benchmark assessments and to ensure effective implementation of our program. This team-based approach allows us to assess what's working, address areas of need, and ensure we’re continuously improving the educational experience for our gifted learners.

* **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.

Use of AIG funds allow us to grow and improve the staff, the curriculum, and the instruction for our AIG student success.

Under the Executive Director's lead, the MICS administration will work with the financial department to determine the AIG budget based on the state formula. Once the budget is determined, the MICS administration will prioritize needs and utilize funds in an efficient, effective manner that meets the goals of our program.

* **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.

The MICS identification and support process for gifted learners begins early and is designed to grow with students throughout their elementary years. In kindergarten, we collect informal data through careful observation during AIG lessons, focusing on key areas of gifted thinking such as divergent, analytical, convergent, creative, and evaluative thought. These observations help us recognize early signs of giftedness in a natural, engaging environment.

In first grade, we continue with observational data during AIG lessons, looking for the same higher-level thinking skills. In addition, all classroom teachers complete a Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) for every student, which provides a broader perspective on each child’s potential across multiple domains.

By second grade, students enter a formal evaluation process. This includes data from the first-grade GRS, along with results from nationally normed assessments such as the CogAT, IOWA Test, and the i-Ready diagnostic. These multiple data points help create a comprehensive profile of each student’s abilities and learning needs.

In grades 3 through 5, we continue to collect and analyze student data from sources such as the Beginning-of-Grade (BOG) test, End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments, and i-Ready diagnostics. By tracking patterns and trends over time, we can identify both strengths and areas for growth, ensuring that all gifted students are not only recognized but also given the support and opportunity to continue growing and excelling.

In middle and high school, grades, benchmark data, and end of year testing are all taken into account to ensure that AIG student needs are being met. We review future plans and college enrollment data to inform our practices.

* **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.

Our commitment to equity is at the heart of our gifted identification process. We’ve designed our identification rubric to offer multiple pathways, ensuring that a student’s race, ethnicity, language background, or economic circumstances do not limit their opportunity to participate in gifted education. By creating a more holistic and inclusive process, we aim to recognize the diverse expressions of giftedness across all student populations.

To support this approach, we use a comprehensive data collection spreadsheet that draws from multiple data points. These include the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS), CogAT, IOWA assessments, i-Ready diagnostic results, and portfolio screenings. This layered method allows us to build a well-rounded understanding of each student's strengths and potential, helping us identify students who might otherwise be overlooked through more traditional, single-measure methods.

* **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.

Ensuring that credentials for AIG personnel are maintained is important for student and program success.

Hiring practices used by the Executive Director and administrators adhere to state licensure requirements. AIG licensure credentials are maintained by the AIG Coordinator and AIG teacher(s) and monitored by administration. Student placement is determined by the academic team and professional development and collaboration with an AIG certified teacher is available to teachers who serve AIG students.

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

Each year, we distribute surveys to all of our stakeholders—including parents, teachers, and students—to gather valuable feedback about our gifted program. These surveys play a key role in helping us understand the effectiveness of our services, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that our program continues to meet the diverse needs of our students. By actively listening to our community, we can make informed, data-driven decisions that support continuous growth and improvement.

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

We hold regular meetings with school administrators to discuss the current state of our AIG program. These meetings provide an opportunity to review student progress, assess the effectiveness of our services, and identify any challenges or opportunities for growth. By maintaining regular communication with administration, we ensure that the program stays aligned with both student needs and district goals, while making necessary adjustments to continuously improve the learning experience for our gifted students. Any adjustments that need to be made are shared with our families and stakeholders and are updated on our website.

* **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.

Throughout the identification process, we ensure that parents and guardians are fully informed. Letters and results are sent home to explain the procedures and provide detailed information about their child's participation. When the gifted tests are not administered to the entire grade level, we require parental signatures for consent to participate. This transparent communication helps families stay engaged and understand the process.

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*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas for Strengthening the Standard:

- Advisory group data dives after benchmarking to focus on AIG student data

- Annual Stakeholder survey and feedback

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	DEP notes
*	Survey data
*	Data Dive notes/charts

Documents

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

Local Board of Education Approval

Mountain Island Charter (36C) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:
06/09/2025

AIG Related Documents

Mountain Island Charter (36C) Charter 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	Board Approval Letter

Optional Documents		
Type	**Document Template**	**Document/Link**
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	Identification Process Chart MICS AIG Portfolio Assessment Review
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	

Mountain Island Charter (36C) Charter District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Phrase	Definition