

**NC Cyber Academy
Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan
Effective 2019-2022**

Approved by local Board of Education on: 19-MAY-20

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NC Cyber Academy has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement 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 relate to the categories related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C-150.5). These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what an LEA should have in place, and guide LEAs to improve their programs.

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs to align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2019-2022. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

For 2019-2022, NC Cyber Academy local AIG plan is as follows:

NC Cyber Academy Vision for local AIG program: The North Carolina Cyber Academy Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted program provides students with a differentiated virtual learning experience that recognizes the needs of the gifted learner. In addition to varied advanced course offerings, students are afforded learning opportunities that expand thinking beyond the regular curriculum. The goal of the program is to provide intellectual experiences that advance opportunities for gifted learners.

Beliefs: The North Carolina Cyber Academy's strategic plan has five focus areas that include:

Student Engagement
Operation Efficiency
Curriculum Alignment
Positive School Culture
Excellent Teaching

The AIG department will focus on the five main areas of the school focus.

Mission:

The mission of the North Carolina Cyber Academy is to empower children with knowledge, skills and

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character traits to be successful in their education through an engaging, personalized learning experience in a full-time virtual school.

AIG Program Goal:

To identify and nurture individual academic and intellectual potential through challenging coursework and learning opportunities beyond the regular curriculum.

Sources of funding for local AIG program (as of 2019)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
\$0.00	\$5000.00	\$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 screening and referral processes that lead to AIG identification at all grade levels.

District Response:

Any student enrolled at NCCA K-12 may be referred for AIG screening. The referral may come from a student, parent, teacher, or administrator. NCCA will recognize and accept all AIG students that have been identified from another school or district in North Carolina as well as those from another state if documentation of identification is provided.

Any student being referred for AIG services must have a completed Student Referral Form. The form includes the following information:

- Demographic Information
- Nomination information supporting referral
- Outcome of referral (test information, etc.)

Although the CoGAT is administered in third grade, students in Kindergarten-second grade are provided nurturing opportunities in the regular classroom. During the 2020-2021 school year, a nurturing teacher will be placed to work specifically with these students. He/she will also work with regular education teachers on best practices for gifted students. Some of these include differentiation, acceleration and problem-based learning.

Data collection will include aptitude, achievement, grades and teacher notes. Quantitative data may include aptitude and achievement data from multiple sources including NC EOG, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Cognitive Abilities Test, Otis-Lennon School Ability Test and Naglieri. Qualitative data may include the Gifted Rating Scale and grades.

Practice B

Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels 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.

District Response: Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels 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.

District Response:

Initial aptitude screening will be conducted using the Cognitive Abilities Test. The CogAT will be administered each year to all third-grade students as a universal screener to collect data for the initial screening and identification process. Based on CogAT results, any student scoring 80% or higher on a CogAT subtest or composite score will be tested further for AIG identification.

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The CogAT verbal/quantitative/non-verbal (VQN) composite percentile may be used for math and/or reading identification. CogAT verbal (V) subtest percentile may be used for a reading identification. The quantitative/non-verbal (QN) CogAT composite percentile may be used for a math identification. Other aptitude tests are OLSAT and NNAT. Achievement assessments include the ITBS and NC EOG tests.

North Carolina Cyber Academy is aware of the need to identify gifted students at all grade levels. Although official screening takes place in the third grade, any student K-2 that is showing high potential through nurturing and gifted qualities in the classroom may be screened/tested prior. Gifted screening and testing is also provided for any student, K-12 that shows high potential.

North Carolina Cyber Academy has three pathways for student identification for gifted services.

Intellectually Gifted (IG) indicates that a child's intellectual abilities and potential are so outstanding that the child's educational performance may be adversely affected. The IG student has high aptitude scores for both the total/full scale score and in a subtest area (verbal or/and mathematics); however, they do not have the grades or achievement test scores necessary to qualify for Academically Gifted (AG, AM, AR) services. The student needs additional support to be successful in school and to reach their full potential.

Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) indicates that a child's intellectual and academic abilities are highly advanced compared to their peers. The AI student has high aptitude scores for both the total/full scale score and in a subtest area (verbal and/or mathematics). They also have high achievement test scores and an "A" average in the same area. These students need additional support to remain successful in school and reach their full potential.

Academically Gifted (AG) students can be identified in one area of service such as math (AM) or reading (AR), or in both areas of service (AG). The AG/AM/AR students have three out of the four qualifying criteria. These students will have a combination of high aptitude scores for total/full scale score, high aptitude subtest area score, high achievement test scores, and/or high grades.

Pathways for Identification:

Pathway 1: Intellectually Gifted (IG)

To be identified IG, a student must meet one of the following criteria:

- 98% or higher on CogAT, NNAT or OLSAT
- 98% or higher on verbal subtest on CogAT for reading identification
- 98% or higher on Quantitative/Nonverbal composite for math identification

Pathway 2: Academically and Intellectually Gifted and Academically Gifted

To be identified AI, AG, AR or AM, students must meet the following criteria:

- Sum of aptitude and achievement percentiles greater than or equal to 183 points for reading, math or both subjects.

Pathway 3: Academically and Intellectually Gifted and Academically Gifted

To be identified AI, AG, AR or AM, students must meet the following criteria:

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Must have at least 80% aptitude score to use Pathway 3

Must meet 3 out of 5 criteria for identification

- 93% or higher aptitude score

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, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

District Response: In order to provide equal access to the gifted program at NCCA, referrals can be submitted by students, parents, teachers and administrators. All third graders are administered the CogAT and are placed in a screening pool if their score on a subtest or their composition score is 80%. This practice ensures capturing most students that will qualify for AIG services when further tests are administered.

Students who do not qualify for AIG identification through one of the three pathways may receive select services based on demonstrated strengths in select subjects. In addition, NCCA will continue to review and revise identification guidelines to ensure the model aligns to the school's goals of inclusiveness and equity.

NCCA Total Demographics:

Asian 1.9%

Black 23.3%

Hispanic 14.2%

American Indian/Alaskan Native .79%

Multi 7.38%

Native Hawaiian/Pacific .09%

White 52.55%

AIG Demographics:

Asian 3.95%

Black 9.65%

Hispanic 12.28%

American Indian/Alaskan Native 1.32%

Multi 6.14%

White 66.67%

NCCA has the unique opportunity as an online school to differentiate learning for all students through course differentiation by using Edgenuity as the platform for course creation. Courses are easily customized for learner needs. In addition, it is easy to differentiate and accelerate instruction when

needed. The school also hosts weekly differentiated class times for students needing remediation and/or acceleration. Often these are one-on-one sessions.

Practice D

Implements screening, referral, and identification processes consistently within the LEA.

District Response: All NCCA teachers and administrators have access to screening, referral and identification documents through the school's website. Information is provided each year to ensure the process is clearly defined. Students may be referred at any time for AIG screening.

Additionally, a parent brochure is provided to ensure families understand the process for student identification.

Grade level meetings occur on a weekly basis and student data for that week is discussed. During these meetings, students may be referred to the AIG facilitator for screening and/or identification as a result of the data analysis.

Practice E

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

District Response: NCCA publicizes procedures and processes for all stakeholders through the school via the website. The AIG Plan is housed on the website and available for the general public. A chart for identification is also provided. Virtual parent nights are hosted each year to educate parents about the procedures for AIG identification and services.

Practice F

Documents a student's AIG identification process and evidence which leads to an identification decision. This documentation is reviewed with parents/families and maintained in student records.

District Response: The NCCA AIG plan is posted on the school's website available to all parents to ensure access to the AIG procedure for screening, identification, and services. All screened and identified students have an AIG folder that contains screening and identification paperwork. In addition, all identified students have a completed differentiated education plan for each year that is housed in their AIG folder. The DEP is completed by the AIG facilitator, parents and students together.

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, AIG information and DEPs will also be housed within PowerSchool.

For newly identified students, a letter is provided for families explaining the AIG program. When a student has been testing and/or identified, a virtual meeting is conducted with parents to share results and discuss placement. In addition, virtual meetings are held each year in the fall to highlight academic and enrichment opportunities throughout the year. A quarterly newsletter is also provided.

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Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Practice A: Ensure all third graders are screened and tested for AIG when appropriate using the same criteria.
Practice F: Convert to a digital AIG folder that would include all paperwork for the student's entire AIG school career.
Practice F: Develop a four-year plan for district high school students.

Sources of Evidence: Website
DEPS and other paperwork

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

The LEA provides an array of K-12 programs and services by the total school community to meet the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Practice A

Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and learning environments. These services are aligned to a student's AIG identification.

District Response: NCCA is unique in that it provides courses through Edgenuity which allows student choice for courses beyond those that are required. Accelerated coursework is provided at the elementary level through customization of coursework within the learning platform. Enrichment and extension activities are provided at the elementary and middle school levels. Advanced course offerings are provided at the middle and high school levels for students identified as academically or intellectually gifted in the areas of Language Arts, Math, Science and/or Social Studies. This provides students an opportunity to choose rigorous course work as well as courses of high interest. Identified students in math are enrolled in accelerated math courses taught by a certified math teacher that is also AIG certified. Students may also enroll in advanced courses in Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. Each of these courses are taught by certified teachers that are also AIG certified. Through Edgenuity, highly gifted students may enroll in college level courses once they are in high school. These courses are taught by certified Edgenuity teachers. Students who are identified as Intellectually Gifted receive consultative services and/or are enrolled in accelerated courses. In addition, students are provided weekly and monthly challenges led by the school's AIG facilitator. These challenges include topics such as leadership, logic, STEAM, global studies, etc. Academic based virtual and face-to-face field trips are planned and executed each year.

Practice B

Integrates and connects AIG services with the total instructional program and resources of the LEA in policy and practice.

District Response: AIG instruction is aligned with the total instructional program and resources of NCCA. AIG services build on the school's focus of individualization and engagement. Weekly and monthly challenges are created and provide a wide range of choice. They are also scaffolded around the student's curriculum for rigor and engagement. They provide opportunities for students to explore real problems that occur in our world on a regular basis. In addition, they help students relate learning to possible future careers and lifelong learning

The grade level staff meet weekly to ensure the needs of all students are being met on an individual basis. The learning platform is fluid and students are allowed a great deal of autonomy as they progress through the courses in which they are enrolled. Teachers customize courses to ensure the needs of gifted students are being met. They also provide individual live lesson class time on a weekly basis for remediation and/or acceleration opportunities.

In addition, student data is kept up-to-date to reflect the progress of each individual child.

Practice C

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

District Response: Since NCCA is a virtual learning environment, it is essential that AIG students are afforded the opportunity to work together on a regular basis. The master schedule is built in such a way that all teachers have a two-hour window each day to meet with student groups. During this time, AIG students are grouped in various ways including grade level, grade span, interest, etc. to work on problem-based learning scenarios, discuss literature, engage in STEM related activities and take part in Socratic Seminars and other discussions. The groups are fluid and may change based on student need as well as interest. The groups are based on weekly data meetings in which an Edgenuity coach leads. Edgenuity provides ongoing student data and includes many data points such as progression through a course, percentage ahead, percentage behind, actual grade, etc. Weekly and monthly progress reports are sent to parents and students.

Practice D

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.

District Response: NCCA recognizes the need to inform all teachers and administrators about the total AIG program. All AIG program information and the AIG plan will be housed on the school website. A presentation will be delivered to all AIG parents, students and teachers highlighting the AIG plan and learning opportunities for students. There are Q/A nights at the beginning of each school year for all parents. During this time, AIG processes and procedures are explained. In addition, all AIG students have a green folder that is housed in the school data room. These folders contain all student identification documentation as well as current and past DEPs. Going forward, all identified AIG student information, including program services as outlined in the DEPs, will also be housed in PowerSchool as easily accessible for all staff. All AIG students are flagged in Edgenuity and teachers are able to communicate within the system to make notes and recommendations.

Practice E

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

District Response: NCCA understands strong communication between teachers and administrators for each grade span is critical for success. All AIG students have a folder that houses all AIG

documentation. This documentation includes screening information, testing data and yearly DEPs. The AIG facilitator will review and update folders for all AIG students on an annual basis. Communication will occur between the AIG facilitator and classroom teachers to ensure service delivery matches identification area(s). In addition, advanced coursework will be recorded with specific course codes on student reports and transcripts.

Practice F

Addresses the social and emotional needs of AIG students through collaboration among school counseling personnel, regular education teachers, AIG specialists, and others.

District Response: NCCA recognizes the importance of supporting the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. AIG personnel will work collaboratively with counselors to ensure professional development is provided for all teachers serving gifted learners. In addition, students and parents will have an opportunity to participate in various book studies around the topic as well as hear from experts in the field.

Practice G

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

District Response: The virtual environment of NCCA allows students to work at or above grade level when acceleration is warranted. Edgenuity provides appropriate content for gifted learners to excel at a pace that is appropriate for the individual learner. Course acceleration is based strictly on data including past year's performance in course, assessment data including benchmark testing and end-of-year assessment data. In addition, parent and teacher conferences occur to discuss grade and course acceleration.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is available to all North Carolina Public Schools students in grades 9-12 and to middle school students (6-8) for high school courses (e.g. Math I) that are offered in middle school. To be eligible, Phase 1 includes the completion of an assessment such as an End-of-Course (EOC) exam or a North Carolina Final Exam (NCFE). Students must score at Level 5 on an EOC or get 90% or more correct on an NCFE or CTE exam. Students then move to Phase 2 if they have successfully completed Phase 1.

Phase 2 includes the successful completion of an Artifact process that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and the ability to apply their skills and knowledge related to these standards.

Practice H

Implements intentional strategies to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities for under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional. These strategies may include talent

development efforts.

District Response: NCCA recognizes that gifted learners come from all cultural groups and areas of economic backgrounds. All third-grade students are given the CogAT test and a large screening pool is developed to identify gifted learners. In addition, non-verbal tests are available for English language learners and an additional pathway for identification is available.

NCCA will continue to evaluate its identification process for bias and will review and revise lists of accepted aptitude and achievement tests to ensure inclusivity.

Currently, all students, are afforded the opportunity to participate in advanced courses and enrichment activities. Some of these include course offerings that brick and mortar schools do not offer. Additionally, enrichment activities such as STEAM Day, book studies and challenge experiences are provided to reach more diverse learners.

Throughout the year, all students are given extra help during weekly open classroom time in which classroom teachers meet individually or in small groups with students for remediation and/or acceleration. In addition, Edgenuity provides many different forms of leveling for student individualization.

Practice I

Encourages extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG students.

District Response: NCCA recognizes the need for extra-curricular programs and events for gifted learners. Grade level and grade span programs are being developed to provide additional opportunities. These include but are not limited to virtual field trips, face-to-face field trips, challenge day experiences and competitions.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Practice G: Expand social and emotional offerings for students and parents

Practice I: Expand extra-curricular offerings

Sources of Evidence: Presentations for staff

School website

DEP

Record audit

Field trip guides

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

The LEA employs challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum and instruction K-12 to accommodate a range of academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of 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 through the use of differentiation strategies, including enrichment, extension, and acceleration.

District Response: Students enrolled in NCCA can be identified in reading, math or reading and math. Classroom teachers are responsible for differentiating instruction for all students in order to meet their individual learning needs. Gifted students are provided enrichment and extension learning activities on a regular basis by a state certified AIG facilitator. NCSCOS is adapted through enrichment and extension activities that focus on higher-order thinking, student interest and choice. Because NCCA is a virtual school and all students have a personal computer, choice and pacing occurs naturally with Edgenuity. Students can accelerate to higher level courses once mastery is demonstrated at grade level. Honors and AP courses are also available for advanced students. The NCSCOS is adapted on a weekly basis to meet the needs of all learners. Teachers look at data and adjust learning. Course content is modified based on individual student data. Students are also given one-on-one teacher time during individual live lessons and meetings. Additionally, during class live lessons, students are grouped and provided differentiated instruction based on needed content. Often, teachers team up and provide co-teaching live lessons.

Practice B

Employs diverse and effective instructional practices according to students' identified abilities, readiness, interests, and learning profiles, to address a range of learning needs at all grade levels.

District Response: NCCA instruction is personalized based on student ability level and interest. Best practices for AIG learners include:

- Instruction by teachers who have knowledge of the characteristics of gifted learners
- Critical thinking skills embedded throughout instruction
- Opportunities to explore and extend knowledge, based on interest and aptitude

AIG instruction incorporated into the regular student schedule includes such things as:

Socratic Seminar
Problem Based Learning
Blended Learning
Tiered Assignments
Choice Boards
Field Experiences

Practice C

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

District Response: NCCA has a variety of evidence-based resources available for use by classroom teachers and the AIG facilitator. Some of these include:

Prufrock Press resources

Ian Byrd resources

Gifted Guru resources

Socratic Seminar resources

Edgenuity courses

Various online resources

During AIG enrichment, the AIG facilitator uses a variety of the mentioned resources to ensure students are challenged. She is a certified AIG teacher and has participated in professional development specifically for gifted learners. The facilitator collaborates with the teachers to plan differentiated lessons to use these resources. Prufrock Press sells resources exclusively for gifted learners and many of these have been purchased for use with the AIG students. Ian Byrd and the Gifted Guru are gifted educators that provide quality professional development as well as a wealth of resources for use with gifted learners. The AIG facilitator has been trained on Socratic Seminar by Dr. Rick Courtright with DukeTip. Edgenuity courses used in the regular education classroom are differentiated for remediation and/or acceleration. The course content is based on mastery of assessment and benchmarks provided by each individual teacher.

Practice D

Fosters the development of future-ready skills including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and leadership.

District Response: Because NCCA is a virtual school and all students have a school-issued laptop, personalization is easier to implement. Teachers can monitor and facilitate learning and adjust course work when necessary. AIG students are provided opportunities to develop future-ready skills along with collaboration and leadership by working both virtually and in person with the AIG facilitator and other gifted students. Some activities that provide these opportunities include problem-based learning, book studies/discussion, virtual field trips, in-person field trips, challenge day experiences and competitions. Some of these will result in public displays providing students opportunities to showcase their work.

Practice E

Uses on-going assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction and inform flexible grouping practices.

District Response: NCCA uses data from varied sources, both formative and summative, to improve classroom instruction. Data is assessed and disaggregated on an on-going basis to help drive instructional practices for individual students. The AIG facilitator will continually evaluate formative data to better group students for enrichment, extension and acceleration.

All teachers that instruct gifted students use weekly data to inform instruction. Edgenuity courses are differentiated based on benchmark data. In addition, individual class time and teacher support is provided for all learners. Weekly progress reports, based on individual data, is provided to parents and students.

Practice F

Addresses the social and emotional needs of AIG students through affective curricular and instructional practices.

District Response: NCCA recognizes the necessity to address the social and emotional needs of AIG learners. Services to address these needs include:

- Professional development for staff
- Book studies for parents and/or students
- Bibliotherapy
- Teaching a unit on giftedness

It is our belief that educating all stakeholders on the needs of gifted learners, the students will benefit. In addition, since NCCA is a virtual school, teachers and counselors have more time to work individually with students. During AIG enrichment, the AIG facilitator and the students discuss the challenges of being gifted. Course content, such as novels, articles, and videos are used to showcase giftedness in the real world.

Practice G

Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students through purposeful and intentional differentiated curriculum and instruction.

District Response: NCCA classroom teachers are educated on the characteristics of gifted students. Courses are adjusted for individual student needs to nurture their potential. The AIG facilitator provides enrichment activities when necessary to foster student giftedness at a young age. Examples of activities include logic puzzles, mind benders, analogies, tangrams, and pentominoes,

It is our plan to put a well-planned nurturing program in place during the 2020-2021 school year. This is an area that is lacking from NCCA at this time.

Practice H

Develops and implements differentiated curriculum and instruction through collaboration among regular education teachers, AIG personnel, and other related instructional staff.

District Response: NCCA recognizes that staff collaboration is key to student success. Collaboration efforts include those between:

Assistant Superintendent/Federal Programs Director/AIG Facilitator
AIG Facilitator/Classroom Teachers/Counselors
Administrators/AIG Facilitator/Parents/Community

Ongoing collaboration ensures curriculum differentiation for gifted learners and their individual needs are being met.

The AIG facilitator participates in bi-monthly grade level and staff meetings to ensure AIG students' needs are being met. During this time, the AIG facilitator provides resources and professional development for regular classroom teachers.

In addition, AIG student data and courses are shared and discussed. When necessary, new plans are put into place to ensure student success by developing differentiated curriculum and instruction.

Practice I

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 reviewed annually with parents/families to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

District Response: NCCA uses a DEP for all gifted students. The DEP is developed in collaboration with the AIG facilitator, classroom teacher, parents and student. Every AIG student will have a DEP initiated, reviewed, and finalized each academic year and should reflect the services that align with the student's individual needs for the upcoming year. The DEP will be reviewed at the conclusion of each academic year or sooner if necessary. The meetings can be face-to-face, by phone, or by video conference. The DEP contains the following information:

- Areas of identification
- Practices and strategies to be used in instruction
- Measurable goals
- Notation of meeting type
- Parent signature

Identification criteria for placement and student identification type will be entered in PowerSchool to ensure proper documentation is in place.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Practice B: Expand PD for social/emotional learning
Practice C: Expand differentiated curriculum offerings

Sources of Evidence: • PD offerings schedule

- DEPs
- Meeting notes

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

The LEA recruits and retains highly qualified professionals and provides relevant and effective professional development concerning the needs of gifted learners that is on-going 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.

District Response: NCCA employs an AIG-licensed educator as the Federal Programs Director for the school. Additionally, the AIG facilitator is also AIG-licensed.

Job responsibilities of both positions include but are not limited to:

- Provides leadership, supervision, and decision-making for the program
- Writes and revises the AIG plan
- Maintains accurate records
- Monitors the implementation of all AIG services
- Monitors and directs the assessment requirements
- Oversees the referral, screening and identification processes
- Coordinates activities relating to AIG
- Reviews educational research related to improving student achievement and promotes research-based best practices
- Provides professional development

Practice B

Engages AIG-licensed specialists in tasks that explicitly address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

District Response: NCCA recognizes the importance of gifted education. It employs a director to oversee the program along with an AIG facilitator that directly works with gifted students. The AIG facilitator is responsible for the following:

- Develops and implements extra-curricular activities
- Develops and implements weekly and monthly challenges
- Collaborates with classroom teachers
- Provides ongoing PD
- Develops and implements field trips
- Oversees testing and identification
- Communicates with parents
- Develops and implements parent/student seminars

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Practice C

Establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and school administrators.

District Response: Professional development is led by the NCCA Director of Federal Programs and the AIG facilitator. PD modules include but are not limited to:

- Characteristics of the gifted
- Identifying gifted students
- Fostering the social and emotional needs of gifted students
- Differentiating the curriculum for gifted students

School-wide professional development is required for all staff.

It is our believe that ongoing professional development is a best practice; therefore, in addition to day-long sessions, we offer short professional development ideas and practices during monthly staff meetings. By looking at current data, we determine if there are students that would benefit from AIG screening/testing and if current gifted learners are in need of additional support academically and/or socially/emotionally. Once it is determined, either the classroom teachers, AIG facilitator or school counselor communicates with families for support.

Differentiation and other professional development sessions provide all teachers will tools that will ensure higher levels of learning. Some of these include, problem/project based learning, effective strategies in online learning, student choice and independent studies. Many of our students are enrolled in the virtual setting due to their desire to participate in outside interests; therefore, we will begin offering an Independent Study course to provide an avenue for them to showcase their individual talents. This course will be taught by the AIG facilitator.

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.

District Response: NCCA will explore offering an in-school AIG endorsement program to allow teachers to better understand gifted learners and their needs. The endorsement program will lead to teachers taking the gifted education PRAXIS.

Additionally, the school provides reimbursement for university course work. Teachers are encouraged to take these courses to suppo0rt the needs of gifted learners in the regular classroom setting.

While we are still building the AIG program, we intentionally group students that are identified in classes that are taught by AIG teachers. We also provide enrichment opportunities and courses taught by the AIG facilitator. Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, at least four courses will be taught by the AIG facilitator and will give high school credit or will serve as an extra elective course. Some examples include biology, American history, journalism, astronomy, Great Minds in Science, etc.

Practice E

Aligns professional development opportunities with local AIG program goals, other district initiatives, and best practices in gifted education.

District Response: All professional development within NCCA is based on the school's strategic plan. School administrators and other stakeholders collaborate on the needs for professional development. Some needed PD that is planned includes:

- Classroom rigor
- Differentiating Instruction
- Meeting Diverse Student Needs

Since these sessions will be provided by the Assistant Superintendent and the AIG facilitator, strategies for teaching AIG students will be integrated. The AIG facilitator will begin providing point of need PD for teachers through recorded sessions on specific topics.

Practice F

Provides opportunities for AIG specialists and other teachers to plan, implement, and refine applications of their professional development learning.

District Response: The Director of Federal Programs and the AIG Facilitator participate in weekly meetings to ensure AIG students are receiving appropriate instruction. Opportunities to share information, attend professional webinars, and planning for gifted students are a part of the agenda. Ongoing strategies are shared and discussed and teachers collaborate to ensure they are used on an ongoing basis in regular instruction. By using Google Hangouts, teachers are always available to share best practices and strategies at the point of need. Summer course planning sessions are also provided to ensure all learners' needs are met throughout the school year. Edgenuity courses are differentiated for diverse learners to ensure appropriate differentiation. In addition, teachers regularly co-teach and group students within their live lessons to ensure content mastery.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Practice B: Expand AIG PD model
Practice D: Implement a school-wide AIG training model

Sources of Evidence: • Job Descriptions of Director of Federal Programs and AIG Facilitator
• PD agendas and planning notes
• Conference agendas

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

Practice A

Develops partnerships with parents/families that are intentional and meaningful to support the following needs of AIG students:

- * academic and intellectual
- * social and emotional

District Response: NCCA recognizes the need to support AIG parents/families and students.

Support is provided by the following:

- Parent Series: Gifted experts will present topics relevant to gifted education
- Parent/Student informational sessions
- Duke TIP
- Face-to-face student exhibitions
- Face-to-face student challenge experiences

The NCCA AIG facilitator regularly gathers parent and student input through surveys and meetings. Course offerings, enrichment activities and extracurricular activities are designed based on stakeholder input.

Practice B

Shares with stakeholders, including all students' parents/families, information regarding the local AIG program, the local AIG plan, and other policies relating to gifted education.

District Response: All AIG-related information will be housed on the school website. In addition, parents and students have opportunities to participate in virtual information session at the beginning of each school year. A quarterly AIG newsletter will be developed.

Practice C

Establishes and utilizes an advisory group to develop, implement, and monitor 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 and families, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff.

District Response: The NCCA AIG program is supported and monitored by the AIG Advisory Council composed of parents, teachers, and school leadership. The duties of the Council include providing input on the school plan, monitoring the plan and reviewing student growth and achievement data to monitor the effectiveness of the plan.

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Practice D

Informs parents/families and the community of opportunities available to AIG students on an ongoing basis and in their native language.

District Response: Parents are informed of ongoing AIG opportunities through the school website as well as the quarterly newsletter, Edgenuity, and in the appropriate first language. If necessary, translation services are available. Translation services are provided by Language Line and multiple languages are supported. This service allows ELL families personalized language translation whenever necessary provided a live personal translator.

Practice E

Partners with community stakeholders, such as institutions of higher education, local business and industry partners, and others to enhance and gain support for AIG programs and services.

District Response: Since NCCA is a virtual school and students represent many areas across the state, we can solicit support from a wide range of partners. We will utilize stakeholder knowledge to help develop and implement a variety of virtual and face-to-face experiences for different grades and grade spans that are supportive of their instruction. Some of these include: Duke University, High Point University, Waterworks Art Gallery, Hot Glass Alley, local and regional hospitals, NASCAR and others.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Practice A: Partner with families to strengthen learning opportunities for students

Practice E: Expand community partnerships to enhance learning opportunities for students

Sources of Evidence: • Gifted Advisory Council agendas and minutes

- School website
- Informational meetings presentations
- DEPs
- Artifacts from student exhibitions/field experiences

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 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}), which has been approved by the local board of education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

District Response: NCCA utilizes committees of stakeholders to develop a plan in accordance with state legislation. The AIG Advisory Council gains input from stakeholders, committee members, and the NCCA Board to help strengthen the school's plan. The Council holds regular meetings to monitor plan implementation.

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.

District Response: The current AIG plan is available to all stakeholders both online and in print. Processes and procedures are in place to facilitate the implementation of the program. Annually, the AIG Advisory Council will meet to gather feedback from parents/families. Surveys of key stakeholders will be used to assess program effectiveness and gather input for improvement. Additionally, records will be audited annually. In addition, Edgenuity provides a platform for ongoing student success in each course. By monitoring the student performance and participation data, AIG students are supported on an ongoing basis. The platform also allows for both student and parent communication and is utilized to ensure all students are aware of their progress weekly. Parent meetings are provided whenever necessary. Edgenuity data is also essential in screening students for AIG services. When changes are needed to the local AIG Plan, all stakeholders including administrators, teachers, counselors and the Board are made aware.

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.

District Response: Four percent of the charter school budget is allotted to support gifted learners. Our current budget is \$38,343.00. These funds are used to supplement the AIG program. This includes funding for AIG-specific teaching materials, updated testing materials and field experiences/guest speakers. Funding is also available to support teachers that are interested in

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pursuing their AIG license The assistant superintendent develops and monitors the budget to ensure AIG funds are spent appropriately.

Practice D

Maintains, analyzes, and shares student achievement, student growth, and annual drop-out data for AIG students.

District Response: Testing and accountability reports are reviewed annually. NCCA leadership disaggregates data by analyzing and interpreting the AIG-specific subgroup. Weekly meetings led by the Edgenuity coach provide valuable data on every student in the school. At any point in time, the platform provides information on student progression and course success. Weekly progress reports are provided for all parents and students. Follow-up emails and phone calls are made to ensure students are staying on track. If additional help it needed, individual teacher/student sessions are provided. Courses are often differentiated to assist students that might need additional support. In addition to Edgenuity data, all stakeholders disaggregate EOG/EOC data to inform annual instruction. Other data that is used to inform decisions includes, ACT, AP course data, and SAT.

Practice E

Monitors the representation, performance, and retention of under-represented populations in the local AIG program, including students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

District Response: Formative and summative data is analyzed each year to gauge the performance of under-represented populations receiving AIG services. Based on the data, practices are modified to improve student performance. No student is removed from the AIG program based on performance data. Withdrawal from the program can only be initiated by parent request.

Current Demographics:

Asian 1.9%
Black 23.3%
Hispanic 14.2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native .79%
Multi 7.38%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific .09%
White 52.55%

AIG Demographics:

Asian 3.95%
Black 9.65%

Hispanic 12.28%
American Indian/Alaskan Native 1.32%
Multi 6.14%
White 66.67%

By looking at our current demographic data, we will focus on screening and identifying more of our black student population.

We will look at the top 10% of black students and offer enrollment in advanced courses. An advantage for the virtual environment is the ability to offer customized courses when needed.

Practice F

Maintains current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students.

District Response: The human resources department at NCCA maintains records reporting the status for all employees, including AIG staff. Teachers' status is also monitored by the Director of Federal Programs and the AIG facilitator.

Practice G

Elicits regular feedback from students, parents/families, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the local AIG program.

District Response: NCCA solicits feedback from all stakeholders including students on an annual basis using surveys, in addition, feedback is monitored by the AIG Advisory Council.

Practice H

Utilizes multiple sources of data to review and revise the local AIG program and plan during comprehensive program evaluation.

District Response: NCCA will use the following sources of data to review and revise the AIG plan annually:

- Parent/family survey
- Student surveys
- Records review data
- AIG Advisory Council

The survey data help guide course offerings for gifted students. During the 2020-2021 school year, we will begin nurturing primary students and keep anecdotal data. This data will help revise our practices for these learners.

We will continue to revise the plan based on best practices and student needs. An invaluable resource for revision is the vast amount of data we collect from Edgenuity on every individual students enrolled at NCCA. In addition to this data, we also use iStation, Case 21 and other sources

of formative data.

When a revision is made to the plan, all stakeholders are informed via an executive summary communicated through the school website and via email.

Practice I

Disseminates all data from evaluation of the local AIG program to the public.

District Response: NCCA will create an annual digital school AIG report card to keep stakeholders up to date on plan and program updates along with students' growth and stakeholder input. The report card will be shared via the school website and will be included in our digital AIG newsletter to all families of gifted learners.

Practice J

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents and families 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.

District Response: The NCCA AIG plan includes policies and procedures for safeguarding the rights of students. These include rights pertaining to identification, placement, reassessment, transfer and grievance procedures.

Procedures to Resolve Disagreements: NCCA has a plan in place to resolve disagreements.

Step I - AIG Referral Team Conference

Parent/guardian may make a request in writing to the school principal requesting a conference with the school AIG Referral Team.

A conference with the parent/guardian and the school AIG Referral Team will be granted within 10 calendar days of the request. Parents will be notified in writing within 5 calendar days.

If the disagreement is not resolved at the school level, the AIG Referral Team and the principal in attendance, proceed to Step III.

Step II Principal Conference

Parent/guardian may make a written request for a conference with the principal to review the decision within 15 calendar days of the local school AIG Referral Team decision.

Principal will review the recommendation with the AIG Referral Team.

Principal will grant the conference within 10 calendar days of the request and make a written response to the parent within 5 calendar days of the conference.

If the disagreement is not resolved at the Principal Conference, proceed to Step III.

Step III Appeal to the Director of Federal Programs

Parent/guardian may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the Director of Federal Programs within 15 calendar days of receiving the principal's response.

The Director of Federal Programs will review the grievance within 5 calendar days of receipt of the appeal.

Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the appeal, the Director of Federal Programs will schedule a conference concerning the appeal.

A written summary of the appeal will be provided to the parent/guardian and principal within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

If the grievance is not resolved at Step III, then proceed to Step IV.

Step IV Appeal to the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent

Parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Director of Federal Programs to the Assistant Superintendent or the Superintendent for further review and a final decision.

Step V: State Level Grievance:

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the Superintendent, they may file a petition for a contested case hearing in accordance with Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, the Administrative Procedures Act, of North Carolina. The issues for review shall be limited to:

1. Whether the local system improperly failed to identify the student as eligible for services within its gifted education program.
2. Whether the local system implemented and provided those services specified within the differentiated gifted education plan. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall serve the final decision. The administrative law judge shall give a copy of written findings and the decision to the parties and to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Attorney's fees are not available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

NCCA has forms for identification and placement as well as a policy for transfer students.

Student Referral: A student referral form is used by any stakeholder that wishes to nominate a student for AIG testing. The form collects demographic and academic data.

Screening Profile: A screening profile sheet is used to collect important student testing data and is kept in the student's AIG folder as well as housed in PowerSchool.

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Parent Notification: A parent notification letter is used to inform them on the results of AIG screening/testing. The letter also informs them of AIG placement.

Students may be reassessed at any time throughout their school career. The above forms are used for reassessment.

Students transferring from other LEAS that have been officially identified as gifted will be placed in the NCCA gifted program.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Practice B: Meet bi-annually to discuss AIG plan and progress being made to support AIG students.

Practice D: Develop a school-wide AIG report card to determine achievement of AIG students.

Sources of Evidence: Meeting agenda/notes
AIG Report Card

Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):

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