

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Orange County Schools (680) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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

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

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

* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

In Orange County Schools, we believe that giftedness exists within all student groups, that students demonstrate gifted behaviors in many ways, and that gifted learners have unique learning needs. We aim to provide a program of inclusive gifted education, committed to equity and excellence, that recognizes and responds to diverse outstanding abilities. We will provide a program of inclusive gifted education through:

- Screening, referral, and identification processes that recognize giftedness
- Differentiated curriculum and instruction that enriches and enhances the North Carolina Standard Course of Study
- Comprehensive policy and programming aligned to the NC AIG Program Standards and district goals K-12
- Consistent and effective partnership with our diverse community
- Opportunities for high quality professional development

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 425,475.00	* \$ 272,900.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

*** Practice A**

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

Orange County Schools has developed ongoing opportunities for screening, referral, and results processes that lead to Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) identification at all grade levels. To ensure a transparent and consistent process is used, Orange County Schools uses three steps: screening, referral, and results.

In the screening process, the district reviews district, state-wide and local data points to compile a list of students who may need gifted education services. During the referral process, additional data is collected on students who have demonstrated a potential need on the administered screening tools. The screening and referral processes help to create a learner profile. With the results process, the school's Needs Determination Team (NDT), composed of an administrator, AIG specialist or contact, classroom teachers, and support staff, reviews each child's profile and makes an identification decision. The decision is then communicated to the student's parents/guardians in writing and in a parent/guardian results meeting. The steps of each part of the process are outlined below:

Step 1: Screening

Screening can take place at all grade levels. These activities and assessments vary by grade span. Beginning in late 2nd grade and above, Orange County Schools uses a universal screening process that considers activities and assessments that all students participate in to support screening purposes. A grade-span overview of this process is provided below:

- Kindergarten- Mid-2nd Grade: Early AIG identification for young children is rare, but it is sometimes needed to meet student needs. For students who are performing at least one year or more above grade level in both reading and math, individual screening using one-on-one assessments can be utilized to determine if early identification is needed. K-2 AIG identification is linked to whole-grade or single-subject acceleration. Early entrance to kindergarten or whole-grade acceleration automatically identifies a student as gifted in reading and mathematics.
- Late 2nd Grade: All 2nd-grade students take an aptitude assessment that measures reasoning skills in verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal areas. Students who perform at or above the 85th percentile will also be given a norm-referenced achievement assessment. This testing will occur in the spring of 2nd grade. Students who score at or above the 85th percentile on either assessment move on to the referral step.
- 3rd-8th Grade: End-of-grade (EOG) reading or math tests are used to screen students for a referral. Students who score a level V achievement level or who score in the top 10 percentile will move to a referral.
- 9th-12th Grade: End-of-course (EOC) English or math tests are used to screen students for a referral. Students who score a level V achievement level or who score in the top 10 percentile will move to a referral.

Step 2: Referral

After screening, students who score at or above the screening threshold are referred to the school's Needs Determination Team (NDT). Parents and teachers may also refer students to the Needs Determination Team and students may self-nominate. The team gathers additional data (i.e. math pre-tests, Dibels, aimswebPLUS, Mastery Connect, observations, interviews, checklist of gifted and talented behaviors) to develop the learner profile and records it on the Data Collection Record form. There will be three windows for identification (fall, winter, spring), but nominations will be accepted throughout the school year and will be held until the next window opens. A student can be referred once in a 24 month period. Windows will be publicized on the OCS website and will be 15-20 school days in length depending on the calendar dates for each year of the plan. Step 3: Results The school's Needs Determination Team reviews the learner profile and determines if the student meets the criteria for identification. The team's decision is then communicated to the student's parents/guardians in writing at a results meeting. OCS will disseminate information about the screening, referral, and results process in a variety of ways: ▪ The AIG page of the OCS website will include the following items: • Dates of the referral windows • Referral and identification flow chart • Referral form • Identification pathways • AIG brochure and/or infographic ◦ The AIG brochure and/or infographic will be updated to include the information above and will be available at all schools and on the OCS website ▪ An annual informational meeting will be held at each school site ▪ AIG specialists will communicate information to faculty and staff at their schools ▪ Written documents will be available in English and Spanish. If there is a need for written documents to be made available in other languages, parents/guardians may make this request through the district's Family Engagement Team, the AIG facilitator or through the school-based AIG specialist.	* 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. Students may be identified as academically gifted, intellectually gifted, or academically and intellectually gifted. The definitions and identification pathways are provided below. Definitions: Academically Gifted: Academically gifted students perform, or show potential to perform, at substantially high levels of accomplishment, when compared with others of their age, experiences, and/or environment, in the academic areas of reading and/or math.
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Intellectually Gifted: Intellectually gifted students perform, or show potential to perform, at substantially high levels of accomplishment, when compared with others of their age, experiences, and/or environment, in reasoning and critical thinking in areas outside of reading and math.

Academically and Intellectually Gifted: Academically and intellectually gifted students demonstrate evidence that meets the definitions of both academically gifted and intellectually gifted as listed above.

Identification Pathways:

Students may qualify as academically gifted in reading only (AR); academically gifted in math only (AM); academically gifted in reading and math (AG); intellectually gifted (IG); or academically AND intellectually gifted (AIG), through the pathways listed below. The purpose of having multiple pathways is to ensure that no single criterion prevents a student from identification, and ensures that both quantitative and qualitative data is used in the identification process.

To be identified as gifted in reading (AR), a student can meet the criteria in ONE of the pathways listed below:

- Pathway 1 - Aptitude: 95th percentile or higher on the verbal reasoning portion of a standardized aptitude assessment (CogAT) or...
- Pathway 2 - Aptitude & Achievement:
 - Spring of 2nd Grade: 90th percentile or higher on the verbal reasoning portion of approved aptitude test (CogAT) and 90th percentile or higher on an achievement test (IOWA).
 - Grades 3 -12: 90th percentile or higher on the verbal reasoning portion of the CogAT and top 10 percentile on EOG/EOC assessment
 - Pathway 3 - Fall Portfolio: A portfolio of standard artifacts that demonstrate high performance or the potential to perform in reading will be collected during the fall window only for students who have scored in the top 10 percent of their grade level group on a standardized assessment (CogAT, IOWA, EOG/EOC). This portfolio will include a reading performance task that is universally administered for qualifying students. The reading performance task is scored collaboratively by AIG staff without identifying student information present along with a gifted and talented rating scale and student performance data collected by the AIG Specialist.
- Pathway 4 (Highly gifted): 98th percentile on both a standardized aptitude and achievement assessment in reading. An IDEP (Individualized Differentiated Education Plan) will be written.

To be identified as gifted in math (AM), a student can meet the criteria in ONE of the pathways listed below:

- Pathway 1 - Aptitude: 95th percentile or higher on the Quantitative reasoning portion of a standardized aptitude assessment (CogAT) or...
- Pathway 2 - Aptitude & Achievement:
 - Spring of 2nd Grade: 90th percentile or higher on the quantitative reasoning portion of the CogAT and 90th percentile or higher on an achievement test (IOWA).
 - Grades 3 -12: 90th percentile or higher on the quantitative reasoning portion and top 10 percentile on EOG/EOC assessment
- Pathway 3 - A portfolio of standard artifacts that demonstrate high performance or the potential to perform in math will be collected during the fall window only for students who have scored in the top 10th percentile of their grade level group on a standardized assessment (CogAT, IOWA, EOG/EOC). This portfolio will include a math performance task that is universally administered for qualifying students. The math performance task is scored collaboratively by AIG staff without identifying student information present along with a gifted and talented rating scale and student performance data collected by the AIG Specialist.

▪ Pathway 4 (Highly gifted): 98th percentile on both a standardized aptitude and achievement assessment in mathematics. An IDEP (Individualized Differentiated Education Plan) will be written. To be identified as gifted in reading and math (AG), a student must meet the criteria for one pathway in reading listed above, and for one pathway in math listed above. It does not need to be the same two pathways. For example, a student may qualify for reading via Pathway 1 and math via Pathway 3. To be identified as intellectually gifted (IG), a student must score at the 95th percentile or higher on the nonverbal portion of a standardized aptitude assessment. To be identified as academically and intellectually gifted (AI), a student must meet the criteria for one pathway in reading or math listed above, and the criteria for intellectually gifted. To add an area of identification to an existing area of identification, Pathway 3 (fall only) will be utilized. For students who transfer into Orange County Schools with an AIG identification from another system (within or outside of NC) the identification area will be honored. The student's differentiated education plan (DEP) or IDEP will reflect appropriate service delivery. For students who transfer into Orange County Schools without an AIG identification who wish to pursue it, a potential identification process can occur by the end of the first nine weeks to ensure adequate time for data collection. The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and IOWA Assessments are administered to all 2nd graders and can also be administered to students in grades 3-8 as needed. Other assessments that are administered to all students, including end-of-grade assessments and district benchmark assessments, can be utilized in the identification process. If needed, the AIG department can also administer the following alternative assessments: Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test (NNAT2). Additional assessments may be performed by licensed psychologists when a student is a candidate for whole grade level acceleration, or if the student is potentially twice exceptional, meaning he/she is both gifted and has learning differences. Valid test results from licensed private practitioners are also accepted for identification. Please see the "Guidelines for Independent Evaluation" on the OCS AIG website for more information.  Click here to remove the table and use only the narrative field.	* 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. Goal 1 of the OCS Strategic Plan emphasizes that through a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), all learners will excel by having access to and benefiting from rigorous curriculum and instruction that is research/evidence based to prepare them for college, career, and civic engagement. In alignment with this goal, the 2025-2028 AIG plan cycle will ensure that AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures include research-based best practices to identify students. Based on data and researched-based practices, OCS will provide consistent implementation of the following strategies to ensure AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures are responsive to varied populations of gifted students: ▪ Universal early learning experiences: In Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade, all students in the district participate in activities to practice advanced thinking skills. The activities place an emphasis on critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, curiosity, and growth mindset. This process is also known as "front loading," and is designed to ensure that all students have access to challenging activities prior to formal identification. As AIG
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specialists and classroom teachers work to provide universal early learning experiences to these students, they will observe students and create a digital or hardcopy portfolio of work to identify children who show the potential to perform, at substantially high levels of accomplishment, when compared with others of their age, experiences, and/or environment, in the academic areas of reading and/or math.

- Universal screening: In grades 2 and above, students are screened for AIG services. All students take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Beginning in grade 3 and continuing through grade 12 all students complete end-of-grade and end-of-course tests. This ensures that all students have access to assessments that are used for AIG screening, rather than relying solely on parent or teacher referrals. AIG specialists will use data from this universal screening to systematically search for 2nd grade students who show the potential to perform, at substantially high levels of accomplishment, when compared with others of their age, experiences, and/or environment, in the academic areas of reading and/or math.
- Local norms: Whenever possible, local norms will be used. Local norms may include district or school-based norms. This ensures that students are compared to others of their age, environment, or experience.
- Portfolio pathway: The portfolio pathway to identification in reading and math allows students and teachers to submit artifacts to demonstrate high potential and is scored using a points-based rubric to reflect performance on a task or series of tasks. Portfolios provide profiles of student strengths that highlight interests, talents, learning preferences, and achievements. Portfolios provide a forum for talent identification and development.
- Alternative assessments: When necessary, alternative assessments are available, including the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test 2 (NNAT2) to ensure an accurate profile of learners.
- Highly gifted identification pathway: Orange County Schools has identification pathways in reading and math to identify students who are highly gifted and need substantial differentiation and modification of their curriculum and instruction that can include:
 - Compacted curriculum
 - Consideration for whole-grade acceleration as appropriate for students identified as HG (Highly Gifted) in both reading and math (K-8)
 - Referral for single-subject acceleration as appropriate for students identified as HG (Highly Gifted) in reading or math (K-8)
 - Independent learning and/or inquiry based projects
 - Expanded academic options in teacher-led, online courses aligned to the North Carolina Common Core Standards and the North Carolina Essential Standards via the North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS)
- Parent/guardian engagement: Ongoing district and/or school-based parent/guardian engagement will provide opportunities to clarify the program goals and processes. The district AIG facilitator and AIG specialists will also work to provide parents/guardians with various ways they can challenge, encourage, and understand their gifted child in home, school, and community settings.
- Ongoing communication and collaboration with other departments: The AIG department partners with Exceptional Children (EC), English Language Development (ELD), Title I, MTSS, and other groups to provide opportunities for students to show strengths that may lead to identification or that can provide additional support after a student is identified. Data that is gathered for students going through the Exceptional Children (EC) evaluation process, as well as student performance on the ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) test, administered to Kindergarten through Grade 12 students who have been identified as Multilingual Learners (MLs), will be shared with the AIG department. This data can be included in AIG student identification decisions.
- Headcount Analysis: A headcount analysis of AIG student demographics is conducted yearly. District summary results of this analysis will be shared with stakeholders, including district leaders, the AIG Advisory Committee, and the local Board of Education Student Achievement Committee.

During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, the AIG department will continue to strengthen the screening, referral, and identification procedures.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	22.86%	9.78%	8.83%	---	14.45%	---	27.45%
Male	22.78%	11.25%	10.57%	---	15.23%	---	29.72%
Total	22.82%	10.54%	9.72%	---	14.82%	---	28.63%

Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

<5%

* Practice D

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

OCS has procedures in place to ensure that the screening, referral, and identification processes are implemented and monitored consistently across the district. Procedures include:

- Use of common nurturing and screening materials for all kindergarten-2nd grade students across the district. A digital resource bank of lessons and/or activities will be created, organized, monitored, and updated as needed by the elementary AIG specialists. Resources will be accessible by all AIG specialists and can be shared with K-2 classroom teachers, teacher assistants, instructional coaches, and/or administrators as needed.
- Establishment of district-wide referral and identification windows across the year; the dates of which are published on the Orange County Schools AIG website.
- Updates for principals and school faculty prior to windows to ensure procedures are followed.
- Use of a flow chart and table for the various identification pathways to ensure proper data collection.
- Use of a district-wide data collection record for all students under consideration for AIG.
- District AIG personnel will meet annually with school-based AIG specialists, and, when needed, building principals, where paperwork and service delivery plans are reviewed to ensure fidelity.
- During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, the district will utilize a collaborative digital learning platform to communicate, collaborate, and organize information essential to each school-based Needs Determination Teams. This will help to ensure consistency in practices across schools.

* Practice E

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

large.

Using on-going assessment to differentiate curriculum and instruction and inform flexible grouping practices for AIG students is essential. There are several formative assessment tools already in place district-wide:

- Math and reading unit pre-assessments (3-8)
- District-wide benchmark assessments in English Language Arts, Math, and Science (Grades 3-8, Science Grades 5 and 8 only)
- District-wide benchmark assessments in English II, Biology, Math I, and Math 3 in high school

After each assessment window, the district AIG facilitator will work with district leadership to compile and disaggregate the data in various ways, including by school. The AIG specialists then analyze the data with two purposes in mind:

- to analyze AIG student performance to determine if current services are effective in meeting students' learning needs
- to identify high potential students who are not formally identified as AIG, but may benefit from participating in talent development activities.

AIG specialists then collaborate with classroom teachers to group and regroup students on an ongoing basis. At the school level, teacher-created formative assessments, such as exit slips and interest surveys, can be used to group and regroup students.

Schools conduct data meetings to discuss assessment results, with particular importance on how those results are utilized to group students flexibly and provide targeted instruction based on those needs.

Summative assessments, such as End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) tests, are used when determining the appropriate class or cluster placements for the upcoming school year, as well as evaluating the overall effectiveness of services.

*** 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.

The OCS AIG department maintains documentation of the identification process and evidence which leads to an identification decision. A Data Collection Record (DCR) is established for each student being considered for AIG identification. The DCR indicates which identification pathways and instruments were utilized with the student, and indicates the outcome of each student under consideration. The names and signatures of all members of the school's Needs Determination Team who were involved in the decision process are included on the DCR. A letter is sent home to families to explain the identification decision, and a copy of the DCR is sent home with the identification results letters. The results letter also includes information about the appeal process. Results meetings will be held by school-based AIG specialists for each student to provide further information regarding the child's identification process and results. Ongoing district and/or school-based parent/guardian communication will provide opportunities to clarify the program goals and processes. Written documents will be available in English and Spanish and in additional language translations upon request.

Additionally, a pink AIG folder is maintained for each identified student. This folder includes data collected during the identification process, a copy of the DCR, and annual Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) or Individualized Differentiated Education Plans (IDEPs). A notification is also placed in the student's cumulative record folder indicating that they have an AIG folder with their identification data. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, the district will work to maintain an electronic record of data collection and results in Infinite Campus. This will ensure easy access to documentation of the identification process if or when students move schools or districts.

All documents are available in English and Spanish. If there is a need for written documents to be made available in other languages, parents/guardians may make this request through the district's Family Engagement Team, the district AIG facilitator, or through the school-based AIG specialist.

*** 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 (DEPs) or Individualized Differentiated Education Plans (IDEPs) are developed for all AIG-identified students.

For elementary students, the DEP or IDEP lists the four primary AIG service delivery options that will be provided to the student, including:

- Consultation/collaboration with classroom teachers
- Cluster grouping
- Flexible grouping
- Push-in/co-teaching services

Pull-out services can be provided when a demonstrated need is identified.

Elementary AIG specialists will communicate quarterly with parents/guardians in order to provide updates on the service delivery options, differentiation and content modification opportunities that their child has received.

For middle-grade students, the Differentiated Education Plan lists the AIG service delivery options that will be provided to the student, including:

- Advanced courses to be taken
- Service options such as consultation/collaboration, cluster grouping, co-teaching, and pull-out services (according to demonstrated need)
- Possible content modifications
- Extracurricular activities
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (as appropriate)

Middle Grades AIG specialists will communicate quarterly with parents/guardians in order to provide updates on the service delivery options, differentiation and content modification opportunities that their child has received. The Middle Grades Differentiated Education Plan will also list instructional strategies that the student may receive, including:

- Compacting
- Tiered assignments

- Learning menus/contracts
- Blended learning

Differentiated Education Plans or 4 Year Plans will be developed for students in grades 9-12 for academic and extracurricular planning purposes

- Honors, AP, and IB courses to be taken
- Advanced courses in Career and Technical Education (CTE) and the arts
- Online course and enrichment options
- Extracurricular activities
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- College and Career Pathways (CCP) options

At the beginning of the school year, AIG specialists in elementary and middle schools and staff at high schools will host an informational meeting for parents/guardians of AIG students. At the meeting, the service delivery options and tiers of services are explained, so that parents understand what is included in their child's Differentiated Education Plan or 4 Year Plan.

After the meeting, parents/guardians are provided with a copy of their child's DEP, IDEP, or 4 Year Plan to review and sign. If parents have specific questions about their child's DEP or IDEP, they may set up an appointment for a phone call or parent/guardian conference with their school-based AIG specialist. DEPs and IDEPs will also be available in Spanish. If there is a need for written documents to be made available in other languages, parents/guardians may make this request through the district's Family Engagement Team, the AIG facilitator, or through the school-based AIG specialist.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

- Continue to monitor identification data to identify and remove barriers to access for high potential students
- Strengthen the "front-loading" of advanced thinking skills in grade K-2, prior to formal identification
- Strengthen communication and collaboration with EC, ELD, Title I, MTSS and other departments
- During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, work to transition all record keeping to a digital format

Planned Sources of Evidence

* OCS Strategic Plan

* OCS Instructional Framework		
* Identification Pathways Table		
* Referral and Identification Flow Chart		
* Data Collection Record		
* AIG Headcount Analysis		
* AIG brochure/infographic		
* AIG district presentation		

Type	Documents	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	Document Template	N/A

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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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.

The Orange County Schools AIG program uses a talent development framework to guide the creation and implementation of services for gifted learners. There are several key components in the talent development framework, as described by Paula Olszewski-Kubilius, a gifted education researcher from Northwestern University:

- Both general intellectual abilities and abilities associated with specific domains (e.g academics, art, athletics, music, performing arts, etc) of talent are important
- Domains of talent have different trajectories
- Opportunities are essential for talent development
- Opportunities must be taken
- Durable skills are valuable
- Thinking and planning is for long-range outcomes

Programming is organized by grade span, with each grade span having a specific purpose. The purpose and scope of each grade span is outlined below:

Kindergarten-2nd Grade: "Experiences and Exposures"

The purpose of programming in kindergarten-2nd grade is to expose all students in those grades to activities, text, and tasks that require various kinds of higher-order thinking, such as divergent and inventive thinking. All Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade students will participate in these activities. In 2nd grade, all students participate in readiness activities such as verbal analogies and pattern completion in preparation for the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT.) Classroom teachers provide differentiated instruction for students who demonstrate advanced learning needs in specific academic areas. The AIG specialist consults with the teachers to provide ongoing support in planning. Depending on scheduling and student need, the AIG specialist may work with small groups

of Kindergarten-2nd grade students on specific skills or tasks. Student performance data will be used to make grouping decisions, and these groups are fluid, flexible, and rotate throughout the year.

3rd-5th Grade: "Talent Development"

The purpose of programming in grades 3-5 is to provide AIG students with learning opportunities to develop their talents in their area or areas of identification. Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) will ensure access to high quality instruction and resources for all students and schools based on their needs. To align with the district's multi-tiered system of support framework, there are three tiers of services in reading, math, and intellectually gifted. Tier 1 services are provided through differentiation in core instruction. Tier 2 services are provided through supplemental instruction using materials designed for gifted learners. This can occur in the regular classroom or outside the regular classroom. Tier 3 services are provided for students who have intensive learning needs in reading and math who need a more individualized plan of study. Each tier of service is aligned with students' area or areas of identification and demonstrated learning needs, and are outlined below.

For students identified in the area of reading:

Tier 1 (differentiation in core instruction)

- Above-grade level reading materials
- Skills-based small group work

Tier 2 (targeted supplemental curriculum and instruction)

- Integrated content projects or units
- Socratic Seminars
- Skills-based small group work

Tier 3 (intensive individualized learning plans)

- Independent learning contracts in reading
- Single-subject acceleration

For students identified in the area of math:

Tier 1 (differentiation in core instruction)

- Pre-assessment and accelerated pacing in small group
- Challenge tasks, stations, or games
- Skills-based small group work

Tier 2 (targeted supplemental curriculum and instruction)

- Curriculum compacting
- Math tasks or units designed for gifted learners often during enrichment block
- Skills-based small group work

Tier 3 (intensive individualized learning plans)

- Independent learning contracts in math
- Single-subject acceleration

For students identified as intellectually gifted:

- Problem-based learning tasks
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) challenges or projects
- Critical thinking games
- Flexible thinking activities
- Visual-spatial logic tasks and games

Service delivery models for 3rd-5th grade AIG students include:

- Consultation/collaboration (the AIG specialist and classroom teacher work together to plan instruction; the classroom teacher delivers the instruction)
- Cluster grouping (groups of AIG students are placed together in a class)
- Push-in/co-teaching (the AIG specialist goes into the regular classroom and teaches with the regular classroom teacher)
- Pull-out/Resource (the AIG specialist works with students outside the regular classroom)

- Online learning
- Blended learning

Elementary AIG specialists, with help from the middle school AIG specialists, will support 5th grade students and their families as they prepare to transition to middle school by providing a school based transition meeting within the last nine weeks. The elementary and middle school AIG specialists will work together to ensure that gifted and advanced students and families understand the middle school opportunities available to them based on their identification(s) and interests.

6th-8th Grade: "Independence and Agency"

The purpose of programming in grades 6-8 is to continue to provide opportunities for AIG students to develop their talents in their area or areas of identification while providing them with a greater opportunity to make choices about their learning. As with 3rd-5th grade programming, services for students grades 6-8 are organized into Tier 1, 2, and 3 in reading and math identification. The descriptions for each tier match those provided in the 3rd-5th grade span, however, there are some additional opportunities to take high school courses for credit while still in middle school. Those opportunities include:

- Math I
- Math II (via North Carolina Virtual Public School)
- English I
- Spanish I

Service delivery models for 6th-8th grade AIG students include:

- Consultation/collaboration
- Cluster grouping
- Push-in/co-teaching
- Pull-out/Resource
- Advanced courses
- Online learning
- Blended learning

Middle school AIG specialists, with help from high school teachers and counselors, will work to support 8th grade students and their families as they prepare to transition to high school. The middle school AIG specialists will work to ensure that gifted and advanced students and their families understand the opportunities available to them based on their identifications, interests, passions, and talents.

Middle school AIG specialists, with help from high school staff, will support rising 9th grade students and their families as they prepare to transition to high school by providing a school based transition meeting. The middle and high school staff, including counselors, will work together before winter break to ensure that gifted and advanced students and families understand the high school opportunities available to them based on their identification(s) and interests.

Elective classes in the arts and career & technical education, as well as extracurricular activities, also support middle school student talent development. AIG students can choose to participate in these activities based on their interests, passions, and talents. AIG specialists will communicate and collaborate with elective teachers to provide best practices for supporting and nurturing gifted and advanced learners to ensure that their diverse learning needs are addressed throughout their instructional day.

9th-12th Grade: "Planning for the Future"

The purpose of programming in high school is to provide opportunities for students to develop deep knowledge and skills in their area or areas of identification, and to begin to think about their futures beyond high school. Opportunities for high school AIG students are provided within the high school course and extracurricular offerings. These include:

- Honors, Advanced Placement (AP) International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses: High school AIG students, with the support of their school counselors and teachers, may select appropriately challenging courses in academic subjects, performing/visual arts, and career and technical education. Transcripts are monitored periodically by the assistant principal or school counselor assigned to support AIG services to ensure that students enroll in rigorous courses. School staff will work to increase enrollment in advanced courses such as AP, CCP, Honors and IB programs, while also maintaining or increasing the success of these programs. The AIG department will work to support the district's outreach plan of action which includes access opportunities for nurtured and identified students.
- North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS): The NCVPS provides AIG students with access to courses that are otherwise not available in OCS. Students receive credit for courses completed through NCVPS.
- Dual Enrollment: Gifted students wanting to pursue advanced coursework may enroll in courses at an institution of higher education through the College and Career Pathways (CCP) program.
- Governor's School: Gifted high school students may apply to attend the North Carolina Governor's School, a summer program that provides students with highly advanced coursework in humanities, social sciences, mathematics, sciences, and visual/performing arts.

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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.	
Gifted children have unique traits & needs that influence their life experiences (Fonseca, 2015). OCS recognizes that these characteristics can be shaped by the support we offer. In order to deliver an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the needs of gifted learners, across all grade levels and learning environments, the OCS AIG department will collaborate with local, state, and/or national liaisons based on student needs. These needs may include, but are not limited to: ▪ anxiety ▪ perfectionism ▪ post secondary planning ▪ situational stressors ▪ social struggles Classroom teachers and AIG specialists will communicate with advisors, family liaisons, social workers, and/or school counseling personnel when individual student concerns arise. In some schools, school counselors serve on the Needs Determination Team. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, the AIG department will work to strengthen opportunities for personnel who work with AIG students and student services personnel to collaborate and serve students. For example, this collaboration may look like an AIG specialist and a school counselor exploring perseverance by facilitating a small group discussion and/or activity based on a piece of literature, a film, a performance, or a visual art. AIG specialists also collaborate with administrative teams at the elementary and middle school levels to create effective cluster groups, so that students have like-ability peers in their classes. At the high school level, school counselors or advisors support all students, including AIG students, with selecting and joining extra-curricular activities in their areas of interest. When requested, AIG personnel and AIG specialists will also work to provide parents/guardians with various ways they can understand and support the needs of their gifted child(ren). This work and support will be based on research-based practices and will be communicated in a variety of ways (phone, e-mail, newsletters, websites, social media platforms, family nights, etc).	
 	Click here to remove the table and use only the narrative field.
* Practice C Integrates and connects the AIG program and services with the district's priorities and resources through policy and practice.	
OCS works to ensure that the AIG programs and services are integrated into the instructional program of the district. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, the AIG department will review the local Board of Education policies regarding class placements and grouping practices to ensure they align with best practices in gifted education. At the district level, AIG Personnel will attend Curriculum and Instruction leadership meetings to ensure that AIG is considered as instructional decisions are made. AIG personnel and school-based AIG specialists may also serve on curriculum adoption teams to ensure that materials chosen for district-wide implementation include resources or suggestions for gifted learners.	

In alignment with Goal 1 of the OCS Strategic Plan, AIG services are integrated into the district's multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) structure. This helps to ensure that AIG students have access to differentiated core instruction (tier 1), supplemental acceleration/extension/enrichment (tier 2), or intensive individualized plans of study (tier 3), based on demonstrated student needs. This also ensures that students who may need AIG services in one area but intervention services in another area (for example, a twice-exceptional child who needs AIG services in math but needs supplemental intervention in reading) is able to receive both means of support. The AIG department and the exceptional children (EC) department collaborate to develop parallel processes and utilize common language when describing student needs. The AIG department has adapted the EC department's guidelines on specially designed instruction (SDI) to describe how AIG services accelerate, enrich, or extend the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS,) and how tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3 services grow in intensity as students move up tiers. Students may also access courses not offered in OCS via North Carolina Virtual Public School. A variety of applications and websites may also be used for students to create differentiated learning projects. Digital Learning Coaches (DLC) are utilized to assist teachers in using technology effectively for assessing student learning, differentiating instruction, and providing rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning experiences for all students. Digital Learning Coaches conduct needs assessments, develop technology-related professional learning programs, and evaluate the impact on instructional practice and student learning.	* Practice D Develops procedures for intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate the achievement and growth of AIG and other students with advanced learning needs. Orange County Schools encourages the use of flexible grouping on a consistent basis at the elementary and middle school levels. Groups are formed and reformed based on students' demonstrated needs on a variety of formative assessment tools. These tools can include benchmark assessments, pre-assessments in math, reading level assessments, and other formative assessments. When possible, benchmark data is disaggregated, providing access and opportunity for students can be included in advanced learning opportunities. Flexible groups can occur within the class or across classrooms. In a math setting, this may mean students take a pre-assessment prior to the start of a math unit. After an analysis of the results students are grouped with others of similar skill levels. In a reading setting, advanced readers may be grouped together in a literature circle or book, with opportunities to analyze and interpret the text through dialogue, journaling, questioning, writing, research, or art. Flexible groups may also be created based on student interests and choices. For example, a teacher may create a differentiated product menu, where students can choose how to demonstrate their understanding of content. The teacher may then group students who have chosen the same type of product together so that they can collaborate, support, and offer feedback to one another.
* 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. In order for AIG students to receive services appropriate to meet their needs, AIG specialists must work with other stakeholders within the school. In elementary and middle school, classroom teachers review and sign Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) and Individualized Differentiated Education Plans	

(IDEPs). AIG plan and policy updates are shared at the beginning of year faculty meetings. All teachers and other support staff can access information about the plan and program on the Curriculum and Instruction (see AIG section) of the Orange County Schools website. Information about the AIG program and policies is shared at principal meetings. AIG specialists (at the discretion of school administration) will attend grade-level and content-area Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. During school data meetings, information about AIG student demographics and differentiated curriculum and instruction is shared. District AIG personnel will continue to communicate with district leadership and principals regarding AIG policies and practices.	* Practice F Communicates among and between teachers and schools to ensure an effective continuation of K-12 services, especially at key transition points. Transitioning from elementary to middle school is one of the key stepping stones in a child's education. To facilitate this transition, AIG folders for rising 6th-grade students are hand-delivered to middle school AIG specialists, and transition meetings are held with school staff. School-specific transition meetings will be held for families at each middle school as well. This process allows elementary specialists to pass along vital information. Additionally, at the beginning of each school year, AIG specialists review class placements and cluster groups to ensure proper placement. Orange County Schools AIG students transitioning to high schools will receive a variety of consultations pertaining to high school. Middle school AIG specialists will complete DEPs for rising 9th graders or collaborate on 4 year plans. They will hand deliver AIG folders to guidance counselors and hold transition meetings with school staff. School-specific transition meetings will be held for families at each comprehensive high school. Additionally, AIG students will participate in presentations from the high school counselors and teachers regarding course selection and participate in 9th grade orientation activities to learn about school resources and extracurricular opportunities. In addition, AIG specialists input student identification information in Infinite Campus. This process ensures awareness and continuation of K-12 services, especially at key transition points.
* 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.	OCS offers several opportunities for acceleration when there is a demonstrated need. This includes early entrance to kindergarten and first grade, whole grade level acceleration, single subject acceleration, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, AP and IB courses, and dual enrollment at an institution of higher education. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year and throughout the duration of the 2025-2028 AIG Plan, all requests for early entrance to Kindergarten or whole grade acceleration must be made by the parent/guardian in writing and received by the AIG district facilitator by April 1st of the previous school year. An early entrance to kindergarten and first grade letter, flowchart, checklist, and notification and consent form will be available on the OCS website. Families who wish to enroll children in kindergarten who are not yet 5, or enroll their children in first grade who are not yet 6, by the August 31st cutoff date may pursue this option. The steps for early entry are outlined below: 1: Parents/guardians contact the district AIG personnel in writing to indicate their interest in early entry to kindergarten or 1st grade. 2: The AIG personnel will conduct a phone call or in-person meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss the early entry process. 3: The parents/guardians arrange for the required testing and documentation to be completed. Parents/guardians are responsible for any costs related to testing and documentation.

4: The child visits the school to participate in activities for the grade they wish to enter. A kindergarten or first-grade teacher will administer additional assessments.

5: All documentation is shared with district AIG personnel. AIG personnel and the Executive Director of Elementary or Secondary Schools review the documentation and make a placement recommendation to the receiving school principal.

6: The parents/guardians meet with the principal of the receiving school to learn the placement results.

For whole grade level acceleration in elementary and middle school, the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) is used to determine student readiness. The IAS examines student aptitude, achievement, and holistic student readiness. The steps for whole-grade level acceleration are outlined below:

1: Parents/guardians notify the principal and the AIG specialist in writing that they are interested in whole grade level acceleration.

2: The principal and the AIG specialist meet with the parents/guardians to explain the whole grade acceleration process. If requested by the principal, district AIG personnel may be present at the meeting.

3: Testing is conducted by an Orange County Schools psychologist. If the parents/guardians choose, they may have the testing conducted by an independent licensed psychologist at their expense.

4: Additional data is gathered from classroom teachers and parents/guardians.

5: The AIG specialist, with support from district AIG personnel and other district leadership personnel, reviews the data and makes a placement recommendation to the principal. It is recommended that students receive a score of 46 or higher on the Iowa Acceleration Scale to be recommended for whole grade level acceleration.

6: The principal and AIG specialist meet with the parents/guardians to review the placement results. If requested by the principal, district AIG personnel may join this meeting.

Single-subject acceleration opportunities are available for grades K-8. In grades K-7, students may single subject accelerate in one area, reading or math, only; students who need acceleration in both areas should pursue whole grade level acceleration. In grade 8, students may accelerate in more than one subject. Historically, opportunities for single-subject acceleration in math have been provided to students in grades K-8. That opportunity will continue in the 2025-2028 plan cycle. The AIG department, through communications and collaborations with district leadership, will work to strengthen the awareness of these opportunities to parents/guardians and families.

The steps for single-subject acceleration in reading grades K-7 are outlined below:

Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year and throughout the duration of the 2025-2028 AIG Plan, all requests for single-subject acceleration must be made by the parent/guardian in writing and received by the facilitator, principal, and school AIG specialist. All required assessments must be completed by June 15th.

1. Parents/guardians contact district AIG personnel and/or the school-based AIG specialist in writing to indicate their interest in single-subject acceleration in reading. Both parties will be made aware of the parents'/guardians' initial communication.

Classroom teachers are also able to contact district AIG personnel and/or school-based AIG specialists regarding single-subject acceleration for a student(s) who demonstrates the need in reading. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, professional learning opportunities regarding single-subject acceleration will be provided to classroom teachers so that they are aware, informed, and empowered to ensure that acceleration opportunities are considered for students who demonstrate a need in reading.

2. District AIG personnel or the school-based AIG specialist meets with the parents/guardians to explain the single-subject acceleration process.

3. The AIG specialist, with support from AIG personnel and the Executive Director of Elementary or Secondary Schools, will communicate with the parents/guardians the intended day(s) for testing.

4. The testing is administered by the AIG specialist or an instructional support personnel in two-phases. In phase 1, students must score 90% correct or higher on a reading test of the grade level they wish to skip. In phase 2, students must complete a writing sample and score proficient on a rubric of the grade level they wish to skip.

5. Additional data is gathered from classroom teachers and parents/guardians.

6. The AIG specialist, with support from AIG personnel and the Executive Director of Elementary or Secondary Schools, reviews the data and makes a placement recommendation to the principal.

7. The school-based principal reviews the assessments, the AIG Specialist's recommendation, and may include district leadership or teacher feedback to make the final recommendation for student's placement.

8th graders who demonstrate strong performance on their 7th grade reading End-of-Grade test and strong work ethic in class can be placed in English I, a high school level English course, in 8th grade.

The steps for single-subject acceleration in math grades K-7 are outlined below:

Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year and throughout the duration of the 2025-2028 AIG Plan, all requests for single-subject acceleration must be made by the parent/guardian in writing and received by the school principal, AIG specialist, Content Coaches, and AIG Facilitator and all required assessments must be completed by June 15th.

1. Parents/guardians contact district AIG personnel and/or the school-based AIG specialist in writing to indicate their interest in single-subject acceleration in math. Both parties will be made aware of the parents'/guardians' initial communication.

Classroom teachers are also able to contact district AIG personnel and/or school-based AIG specialist regarding single-subject acceleration for a student(s) who demonstrates the need in math. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, professional learning opportunities regarding single-subject acceleration will be provided to classroom teachers so that they are aware, informed, and empowered to ensure that acceleration opportunities are considered for students who demonstrate a need in math.

2. District AIG personnel or school-based AIG specialist will meet with the parents/guardians to explain the single-subject acceleration process.

3. The AIG specialist, with support from district AIG personnel and district math personnel, will communicate with the parents/guardians the intended day(s) for testing.

4. The testing is administered by the AIG specialist or an instructional support personnel in two-phases. In phase 1, students must score 90% correct or higher on a math test of the grade level they wish to skip. In phase 2, students must complete a math performance tasks assessment, consisting of open-ended questions. Students must score 80% or higher and score proficient on a rubric of the grade level they wish to skip.

5. Additional data is gathered from classroom teachers and parents/guardians.

6. The AIG specialist, with support from district AIG personnel and the district math personnel, reviews the data and makes a placement recommendation to the principal.

7. The school-based principal reviews the assessments, the AIG Specialist's recommendation, and may include district leadership or teacher feedback to make the final recommendation for student's placement.

Compacted Math Course Opportunities

6th grade Math: This will be offered during the core math instructional block.

In designing class rosters, classroom teachers should play an active role to ensure the best environment for all students to learn mathematics. Flexibility may be necessary to allow movement of students to best meet their needs. Shifts can occur at the end of each nine weeks or semesters with parent input and notice.

Differentiated instruction will be provided within the classroom instructional time.

Focus support for students will occur for 6th grade. The following supports will be considered:

- AVID may be utilized to provide support through a tutorial process. The tutorial process may be supported by partnerships with high schools/local universities. This idea will be explored with middle school AVID teachers.
- Afterschool Program & Tutoring
- MTSS support groups for math
- Enrichment for the advanced 6th grade content will be provided during math core and enrichment blocks
- AIG specialists will be used to provide support for students in both the classroom and through advanced planning of differentiated lessons as well as push in support.

Advanced 6th Grade Math: This course content will be offered during the core or enrichment block. Students may have a 6th grade Math and Advanced 6th Grade Math in their schedule.

The additional 7th grade standards will also be taught within the enrichment block.

The enrichment block may include an opportunity to use Jo Boaler's Mathematical Mindsets visual mathematics to focus on identifying talent and additional resources that promote critical thinking.

Advanced 6th Grade Math or AIG teachers will need to be flexible allowing students the opportunity to participate if they are showing the need for enrichment opportunities.

Advanced 7th Grade Math

The Advanced 7th Grade Math course includes additional 8th-grade standards.

8th Grade Math Math 1

Students may qualify for advanced math based on placement guidelines. An overview of the placement guidelines is shared below. The placement guidelines in their entirety can be located on the OCS district website.

Pathway 1:

Students must qualify in at least one of the following criteria below:

- Advanced score of level 5 on the current or previous year's EOG.

- Minimum of 85th percentile on the math portion of a nationally recognized achievement test

Pathway 2:

Students who do not qualify by way of Pathway 1 may be accelerated into a middle school advanced math class or Math 1 in 8th grade by using the following matrix. Students must qualify in at least two criterias from column A or one criteria from column A and one criteria from column B.

Column A

Current Grade of 85% or better in Math 6 or Math 7 accompanied with an 80th percentile or higher on current EOG.

Column B

Or

Demonstrate success with at least four standards on the OCS Mathematical Practices Look Fors Checklist during a formative assessment lesson.

Current score of 4 in math on report card from 5th grade accompanied with an 80 percentile or higher on most recent EOG.

Emerging Talent Recommendation (top 10 percent (with floor of 85th percentile) in current EOG or previous EOG at their school or most recent benchmark).

Actively seeks the challenge of a rigorous mathematics curriculum. Survey to determine readiness for advanced coursework is administered to the student and their parents/guardians.

Students who have completed Math I prior to 8th grade may take Math II (online via North Carolina Virtual Public School).

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is available for eligible high school courses. CDM offers middle and high school students the opportunity to personalize and accelerate their learning by earning credit for a high school course through demonstrating mastery of course content, without being required to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time. Students who wish to pursue CDM will need to show mastery of course content by completing two phases. In phase I, students must complete an exam of course content. In phase II, students must create a product/performance that exhibits a deeper understanding and application of course content. The CDM process, application, timeline, and school contacts are available on the Curriculum and Instruction page (see Secondary Education) of the OCS website. OCS must follow the CDM deadlines as provided by the NCDPI.

Advanced learners may also take college-level courses while still in high school. A wide array of Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses are available at the high school level. These include in-person classes and online options. Students may also enroll in community college courses via the Career Pathways programs.

*** Practice H**

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

Orange County Schools cultivate the potential of young students with differentiated curriculum and instruction, and the use of research-based supplemental materials. Through curriculum mapping and standard treatment protocol development, OCS is working to ensure that all Kindergarten-3rd grade students will have the opportunity to engage in early intervention and talent development opportunities through high-end learning tasks.

Using research-based instructional practices grounded in the Science of Reading, classroom teachers can provide students with appropriately challenging reading materials and use student data to appropriately group students for guided reading and strategy groups. In math, classroom teachers can use real-world problem sets to engage students in high-level thinking, or use tiered problem sets from the core unit materials or the Primary Challenge Math book. AIG specialists may attend professional learning community (PLC) meetings to offer ideas and resources for differentiation in the regular classroom. AIG specialists may also offer pull-out sessions on a flexible, rotating basis, depending on scheduling availability and student needs.

The AIG department uses a specifically designed curriculum to offer young students exposure to higher order thinking activities. Currently, the curriculums may include: Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS), and Wonders, Patterns, & Changes.

Prior to the administration of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT,) all 2nd grade students will participate in activities to prepare them for the types of problems they will see on the CogAT. Problem types include analogies, number puzzles, and pattern recognition.

*** 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.

In alignment with Goal 1 of the OCS Strategic Plan, the AIG department works to develop mindsets, policies, and practices to promote access and excellence by broadening access to advanced learning opportunities through a variety of intentional efforts to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities in grades 4-12. These strategies are outlined below:

Use of Local Norms

Because AIG students are those who perform, or show potential to perform, at substantially high levels of accomplishments when compared to others of similar age, experience, or environment, using local norms allows the AIG department to compare student performance to peers. Whenever possible, local norms at either the district or school level are preferred over national norms.

Targeted Nurturing Activities

In elementary and middle school, students who are not formally identified as AIG but are demonstrating a need for acceleration, extension, or enrichment based on classroom performance can participate in lessons and activities that are designed for advanced learners. These activities can be provided by the classroom teacher or the AIG specialist.

The AIG department also works to provide intentional programming for highly gifted students. Because AIG will be included in the district multi-tiered system of support (MTSS,) highly gifted students will receive more intensive services. This may include whole grade level or single subject acceleration, or opportunities for independent learning contracts in areas of interest to the student. At the high school level, the AIG department will collaborate with the high school counseling departments to inform students with qualifying indicators about advanced learning opportunities such as NC Governor's School, Duke University's pre-college programs, and/or summer enrichment camps offered by local and/or state colleges and universities.	* Practice J Enhances and further develops the talents and interests of AIG students through extra-curricular programming during and outside of the school day. There are many extra-curricular activities available for students in OCS. These activities meet and develop AIG students' academic and intellectual talents, while building and enhancing durable and 21st century skills. Offerings vary by school and may include, but are not limited to: Elementary School: ▪ Spelling Bee ▪ Curriculum Nights ▪ Battle of the Books ▪ Various Clubs ▪ Student Leadership Opportunities ▪ Odyssey of the Mind Middle School: ▪ National Junior Honor Society ▪ Student Leadership Opportunities ▪ Yearbook ▪ Battle of the Books ▪ Athletic teams ▪ Visual/performing arts High School:
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▪ National Honor Society ▪ Subject-specific Honor Societies ▪ Key Club ▪ Habitat for Humanity ▪ Student Government ▪ Future Business Leaders of America ▪ Future Farmers of America ▪ Visual/performing arts ▪ Various Clubs ▪ Athletic teams	* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard ▪ Continue to hone and refine curriculum and instruction for advanced learners ▪ Integrate strategies to support the durable skills of gifted learners into the district multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework ▪ Increase extra-curricular offerings ▪ Update the AIG section of the OCS Curriculum and Instruction website ▪ Create a guidelines document for flexible grouping to support AIG specialists and classroom teachers especially at the high school level ▪ Strengthen supports for students in NCVPS courses at the elementary and middle school levels ▪ Collaborate with IB Coordinator, administrator over AP, and CCP representatives to refine communication process with eligible students ▪ Collaborate with the career & technical education department on work shadow and internship opportunities
Planned Sources of Evidence * OCS district website * OCS Strategic Plan	

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
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AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources		N/A	
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Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

Orange County Schools (680) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

*** Practice A**

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

In elementary and middle school, AIG specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to extend, enrich, and/or accelerate the NC Standard Course of Study. At a minimum, the AIG specialists meet with grade level or content area Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) once per month to design curriculum. For example, they may work to embed enrichment opportunities into units of study within the classroom or provide a menu of extension activities to choose from when working with the AIG specialist. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, AIG specialists will be included in the development and revision of OCS curriculum maps for core subject areas.

While very few students in Kindergarten-2nd grade are formally identified as AIG, classroom teachers provide differentiation for budding advanced learners based on demonstrated needs. This can include leading guided reading groups with above-grade-level texts, providing challenge center activities in math, and offering inquiry-based activities in science. Sometimes, based on availability and student need, AIG specialists may work with small groups of students inside or outside the classroom. These groups are fluid, flexible, and rotate throughout the year.

In alignment with Goal 1 of the OCS 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, services for AIG students in elementary and middle school are organized by tiers as part of the district-wide multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework.

For students who are academically gifted in math, differentiated curriculum can include:

- Conducting pre-assessments to identify students who need compacted math units (Tier 1)
- Providing open-ended math tasks and tiered assignments (Tier 1 and Tier 2)
- Using supplemental materials designed for mathematically talented students (Tier 2 and Tier 3)
- Offering single subject acceleration in math (Tier 3)
- Offering a compacted math curriculum in middle school, resulting in students completing a high school math course while still in middle school (Tier 2)
- Highly gifted math students completing at least two high school math courses while still in middle school (Tier 3)

For students who are academically gifted in reading, differentiated curriculum can include:

- Providing open-ended reading tasks and tiered assignments (Tier 1)
- Providing narrative and informational texts at varying levels of complexity (Tier 1)

▪ Creating opportunities for conceptual discussion, with a focus on themes, concepts, generalizations, issues, and problems rather than a review of facts, terms, and details (Tier 1 and Tier 2) ▪ Using supplemental materials designed for advanced readers and writers (Tier 2 and Tier 3) ▪ Offering single subject acceleration in reading in grades 3 and higher (Tier 3) ▪ Offering English I, a high school course, for advanced readers in 8th grade (Tier 2) For students who are intellectually gifted, differentiated curriculum can include: ▪ Providing exposure to activities that promote higher-order thinking, such as logic puzzles and analogies (Tier 1 and Tier 2) ▪ Offering enrichment projects in content areas that match student interest (Tier 2 and Tier 3) All elementary and middle schools also have intervention/enrichment time built into their day. During this time, AIG students participate in enrichment, extension, and/or acceleration activities that extend their understanding of content area standards. High school students participate in lunch tutorials during which they may work with teachers or tutors to meet their individual learning needs. Digital resources and blended learning may also be used to adapt the curriculum. For example, teachers may offer enrichment/extension activities or self-paced lessons on their digital learning platform. Several AIG specialists have developed advanced math and/or reading units that students access via various digital learning platforms. At the high school level, content area teachers differentiate instruction for advanced learners in Honors, Advanced Placement (AP,) and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes. This might include using accelerated pacing of the Standard Course of Study to provide students with more time to delve into in-depth projects or conduct original research. Teachers of advanced courses may also use materials more typically seen at the college level, particularly in AP or IB.	* Practice B Uses students' identified abilities, readiness, and interests to address a range of learning needs K-12. Orange County Schools supports the use of effective instructional strategies to meet students' learning needs. At the elementary and middle school level, school-based AIG specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to implement instructional strategies in the classroom or during pull-out sessions. Teachers use the NC Standard Course of Study to develop literacy lessons that are aligned with research-based instructional practices grounded in the Science of Reading. Foundational literacy skill development includes phonemic awareness, phonics, and sight recognition instruction utilizing the Heggerty curriculum, Letterland, and decodable readers. Language comprehension skills are developed using supplemental materials that encourage background knowledge acquisition, vocabulary development, and comprehension strategies. Writing is taught through Into Reading and Into Literature. During this time, teachers can provide materials to students at varied and appropriate levels of challenge. AIG specialists may provide content replacement or enrichment projects during pull-out sessions, or co-teach with classroom teachers to provide targeted extensions within the core curriculum. At the high school level, students may register for Honors, AP and IB courses based on their strengths and interests. Additionally, students may take courses not available in OCS through the North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) or dual enrollment in community college courses. Over the course of the 2025-2028 plan cycle, the AIG department will work to ensure that AIG specialists and classroom teachers who work with AIG students are familiar with and utilize the following instructional practices: ▪ Pre-assessment and compacting
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- Tiered assignments

- Flexible tasks

- Learning menus/contracts

- Playlists

- Problem-based learning

- Questioning

- Concept-based units

Classroom teachers may receive professional development on the strategies listed above through job-embedded collaboration within professional learning communities (PLCs) or as part of the professional development sessions outlined in their school professional development plans. Teachers may also choose to utilize additional instructional strategies, such as Socratic seminars, debates, or project-based learning to provide a high level of challenge to students and facilitate collaboration and communication skills.

*** Practice C**

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

The AIG department utilizes a variety of supplemental materials to augment curriculum and instruction for AIG students. Resources are selected and implemented based on the specific needs, and abilities of the students being served. Importantly, the supplemental materials enrich and extend the core curriculum. They may sometimes be used for content replacement. Resources are revisited regularly to allow opportunities to evaluate effectiveness. The evidence-based resources currently used in the OCS AIG program include the following materials:

Kindergarten-5th Grade:

- Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS)
- Wonders, Patterns, and Changes
- Concept Quest
- Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program
- Primary Challenge Math
- Upper Elementary Challenge Math
- Algebraic Thinking
- Math Rules
- Venn Perplexors

▪ Logic Links 6th grade-8th Grade: ▪ Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program ▪ Desmos ▪ Algebraic Thinking ▪ Challenge Math ▪ Challenge Units for Gifted Learners: Math 6-8 9th Grade-12th Grade: ▪ College Board lessons/units ▪ International Baccalaureate course scope and sequence documents These materials are used to enrich the core curriculum in the regular classroom and during pull-out sessions. For example, a teacher may use materials from the Challenge Math series to offer a tiered assignment with problems at varying levels of difficulty on a particular topic. Digital supplemental resources may be used as well.	* 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. Orange County Schools works to provide learning experiences that foster future-ready skills at a high level. These learning experiences are particularly valuable for AIG students, and currently include opportunities to engage in real-world problem solving within the core curriculum. These opportunities include programs/resources such as Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) problems in elementary math, and Socratic seminars during which students connect literature and informational texts in middle school English Language Arts. AIG specialists work to develop project-based learning opportunities that are connected to units of study in the core curriculum. Additionally, there are many extracurricular opportunities for students to engage in real-world problem solving and leadership. Offerings vary by school, and may include but are not limited to: Elementary: ▪ Battle of the Books ▪ Spelling Bee ▪ Robotics Club ▪ Lego Blitz
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- STEM Challenge Design
 - Environmental Club
 - Leadership Club
 - Digital Learning Platforms (NCVPS)
 - Odyssey of the Mind
- Middle School:
- STEM
 - Robotics Club
 - School newsletter
 - National Geographic Bee
 - Spelling Bee
 - Girls Who Code
 - Future Business Leaders of America
 - Spirit Club Council
 - Tabletop Gamers Club
 - Battle of the Books
 - National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)
 - Yearbook Club
 - Odyssey of the Mind
 - Digital Learning Platforms (NCVPS)

High School:

- Anime Club
- Art Club
- Robotics Club

- Beta Club
- Environmental Protection Club
- Family Career And Community Leaders Of America
- Drama Club
- Red Cross Club
- Literary Magazine
- National Honor Society (NHS)
- Key Club
- Peace Club
- Odyssey of the Mind
- Student Government Association
- National Spanish Honor Society
- Model United Nations
- Future Business Leaders of America
- Future Farmers of America
- Digital Learning Platforms (NCVPS)

Digital learning platforms are also used to foster critical thinking, curiosity, creativity, collaboration and communication skills. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, AIG specialists through a partnership with the Department of Public Instruction's ReThink Education initiative will work to become experts in how to use new statewide blended learning models that add online learning to existing classroom teaching—and become trainers and leaders in their community.

*** Practice E**

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

Using on-going assessment to differentiate curriculum and instruction and inform flexible grouping practices for AIG students is essential. There are several formative assessment tools already in place district-wide:

- Math and reading unit pre-assessments (3-8)
- District-wide benchmark assessments in English Language Arts, Math, and Science (Grades 3-8, Science Grades 5 and 8 only)

▪ District-wide benchmark assessments in English II, Biology, Math I, and Math 3 in high school After each assessment window, the district AIG facilitator will work with district leadership to compile and disaggregate the data. The AIG specialists then analyze the data with two purposes in mind: ▪ to analyze AIG student performance to determine if current services are effective in meeting students' learning needs ▪ to identify high potential students who are not formally identified as AIG, but may benefit from participating in talent development activities AIG specialists then collaborate with classroom teachers to group and regroup students on an ongoing basis. At the school level, teacher-created formative assessments, such as exit slips and interest surveys, can be used to group and regroup students. Schools conduct data meetings to discuss assessment results, with particular importance on how those results are utilized to group students flexibly and provide targeted instruction based on those needs. Summative assessments, such as End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) tests, are used when determining the appropriate class or cluster placements for the upcoming school year, as well as evaluating the overall effectiveness of services.	* Practice F Collaborates with a variety of personnel, based on student needs, to implement differentiated curriculum and instruction. AIG specialists will continue to meet regularly with content area, grade level, or specialty (ex. EC/ELD) professional learning communities (PLCs) to collaborate, align instruction, analyze assessment results, and adjust the instruction, curriculum, and/or environment to respond to the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners, across all grade levels. Additionally, the AIG specialists will continue to meet monthly for their own PLC to collaborate, review assessment results, and design curriculum and instruction. The AIG specialists then communicate this work with instructional staff at their buildings. Classroom teachers may also collaborate with their school-based AIG specialist to determine student learning outcomes and instructional practices to implement during a particular unit of study, and then co-plan and/or co-teach the unit. The effectiveness of the instruction may be determined through student assessment results, student work samples, and/or student (or teacher) reflection. AIG specialists have access to Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for twice-exceptional students and will be expected to meet with EC specialists at least twice per year to discuss student needs and progress. It is recommended that the AIG specialist attend IEP meetings for students who receive both EC and AIG services. The Curriculum and Instruction team partners with the AIG PLC to provide professional learning, personalized coaching, and support data-based needs.
* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard ▪ Continue to develop alignment documents between core curriculum materials and supplemental materials for advanced students ▪ Refine nurturing materials for Kindergarten-2nd grade ▪ Formalize and implement affective curricula and instructional practices, including training for support staff such as school counselors	

- Develop a process for 8-12 creating and communicating DEPs
- Develop outline of learning opportunities for parents/guardians
- Collaborate with school-based PLCs to determine relevant professional learning opportunities
- Collaborate with EC department to develop a AIG progress report at the elementary level

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Curriculum alignment documents	
* Differentiated Education Plans (DEPS)	
* AIG specialist schedules	
* Differentiated lesson plans and/or assignments	
* Performance data spreadsheets	
* OCS Strategic Plan	
* OCS Instructional Framework	
* PLC agendas	

Type Documents

Document Template

AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources

N/A

Document/Link

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development	
Orange County Schools (680) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development <i>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.</i>	* Practice A Employs an AIG-licensed educator as lead coordinator to guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program and plan. Orange County Schools employs a district-level instructional facilitator to guide the AIG program and plan. This district-level instructional facilitator is recognized as the “AIG Facilitator” or “AIG Coordinator” in local, state, and/or national communications. Each term is interchangeable. The AIG facilitator holds an up-to-date AIG license. The facilitator oversees the overall plan implementation and evaluates its effectiveness. These responsibilities include: ▪ Monitoring the screening, referral, and results processes and conducting an annual headcount analysis ▪ Monitoring the provision of AIG services and differentiated curriculum and instruction through school visits, classroom walk-throughs, and schedule reviews ▪ Supporting building principals with cluster grouping and scheduling decisions - Conducting data analysis of AIG student performance ▪ Facilitating the AIG advisory committee ▪ Communicating with the local Board of Education and the community about AIG program performance and initiatives ▪ Participating on district-level leadership teams to ensure that the needs of AIG students are addressed in district-wide initiatives ▪ Developing and leading professional development for AIG specialists, classroom teachers, and other instructional support staff During plan revision years, the AIG facilitator is responsible for developing a timeline and executing a revision plan that includes evaluating the current plan, gathering feedback from stakeholders, leading a team of plan writers, and presenting the new plan to the local Board of Education for approval.
* Practice B Engages AIG-licensed specialists in tasks that explicitly address the academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs of K-12 AIG students and supports the implementation of the local AIG program and plan.	AIG-licensed specialists are assigned to each elementary and middle school. Allotments are based on the number of students on the AIG headcount for each school and the total size of the school. The specialists provide both direct and indirect services to AIG students, and support enrichment activities. AIG specialists spends at least 70% of their time engaged in direct services, which include:

▪ Tier 1 (universal differentiation in core instruction) ▪ Tier 2 (targeted supplemental instruction that accelerates, extends, or enriches the Standard Course of Study) ▪ Tier 3 (intensive, individualized instructional plans for highly gifted students) AIG specialists spend up to 30% of their time engaged in indirect services, which may include: ▪ Attending PLC meetings to collaborate, align instruction, analyze assessment results, and adjust the instruction, curriculum, and/or environment to respond to student needs ▪ Developing resources and materials to be used for acceleration, extension, or enrichment in the regular classroom ▪ Observing teachers and offering peer feedback The AIG specialists share their schedule with their principals and the AIG facilitator at the beginning of each school year to ensure that their time is allotted appropriately and in alignment with the AIG plan.	
* 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 department will use insights from school-based PLCs and school improvement teams to develop a variety of professional development requirements and/or opportunities for personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, instructional specialists such as Exceptional Children and English Language Development teachers, student services personnel, and school administrators. These opportunities may include: ▪ Professional development opportunities for all school staff at the beginning of the school year covering cluster grouping practices, DEPs, specific information on the different gifted service learning models, differentiation strategies, and consultation/collaboration best practices. ▪ Mini-PD sessions designed to highlight and promote best gifted instructional practices, provide tangible support for gifted learners, and provide job-embedded professional development that is targeted, meaningful, quick, and can support all personnel involved in AIG programs and services. These opportunities and/or requirements will be part of the district professional development plan for Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).	
* 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. Orange County Schools makes every effort to ensure that teachers providing general education services to AIG students are well prepared to teach them. In elementary and middle school, principals are provided a list of teachers in their building who are AIG licensed, and are strongly encouraged to place AIG students in those classes. AIG personnel will make a concerted effort to cluster AIG-identified students in general education classrooms where the classroom teacher is licensed in AIG (when possible). Principals are provided with a clustering guidelines document to support their decision-making process. In high school, teachers who are assigned to teach Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes complete professional development through the College Board and the IB Programme.	
* Practice E Develops strategies for the recruitment and retention of AIG-licensed professionals, including those of diverse backgrounds.	

In alignment with Goal 3 of the OCS 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, the AIG department will develop strategies for the recruitment and retention of AIG-licensed professionals. The AIG facilitator may be included in district leadership's dissemination of the following leading measures:

- monthly turnover by role, department/school
- quarterly review of bi-lingual staff by language spoken, role, department/school
- promotion data
- Beginning Teacher data
- Teacher Working Conditions Survey Data for district and school

The Chief Academic Officer and the AIG specialist will work with Human Capital to support hiring practices for teachers with an AIG add-on. Filtering of the district's application system will identify candidates who have AIG Licensure or Gifted Certification from outside North Carolina. During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, the AIG facilitator and the AIG specialist job descriptions will be revisited to ensure they are in alignment with the key strategies of Goal 3 of the OCS Strategic Plan. OCS will also develop, implement, monitor and continuously improve a district strategic recruitment plan to develop a highly qualified workforce.

The AIG department will work to establish professional development opportunities and/or requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, instructional specialists, student services, personnel, and school administrators. The Curriculum and Instruction team partners with the AIG PLC to provide professional learning, personalized coaching, and support data-based needs. In addition, a partnership with other local education agencies (LEA), regional education service agencies (RESA), institutes of higher education, or other groups will be formed or strengthened to provide local and/or regional professional development opportunities.

*** Practice F**

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

Our district plan for providing opportunity and access for all students includes the following key strategies and/or action steps:

- Research evidence based instructional models, strategies, school structures, and programs that have success increasing student outcomes.
- Introduce models of rigorous, research-based instructional strategies as an evidenced based model of instruction for all students
- Implement programs that have success in eliminating the access and opportunity gaps that exist in OCS and for the students for whom the gaps exist

The AIG department, through a partnership with district leadership, will be included in the development and implementation of plans for providing professional learning opportunities that realize opportunity, access and excellence in gifted education. These focused professional learning opportunities should include opportunities to gain insights on evidence-based best-practices from local, state, and/or national leaders. These professional learning opportunities will include insights on ways to expand the view of giftedness, how to systematically search for students with the potential to achieve at high levels, and how to assist with the creation of programs and services that emphasize identifying and serving students across our community.

* Practice G

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

The goal of the Orange County Schools AIG program is to provide gifted education through a talent development framework. The AIG department works towards having professional development offerings that align with these goals.

School-based AIG specialists receive monthly professional development during their professional learning community (PLC) meetings. At each meeting, AIG specialists explore an aspect of talent development that is relevant to their work. This may include:

- Readings from scholarly articles or professional texts
- Curriculum development
- Analysis of student performance data
- Cognitive and metacognitive strategies to promote learning and independence

AIG specialists are also offered opportunities to participate in content-area professional development in the areas of reading, math, science, social studies, and digital learning. These offerings are provided in several formats, including online Canvas modules, face-to-face sessions with content-area instructional leaders, and off-site professional development with the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) and the North Carolina Association for Gifted and Talented (NCAGT).

Additionally, gifted education best practices are being incorporated into district-wide professional development. As all OCS educators are trained in the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework that supports academic and behavioral growth for all students, strategies for AIG students will be included. This may include, for example, learning about pre-assessment and compacting, choice menus, or tiered assignments. Student services personnel may learn about issues relating to AIG learners such as perfectionism and overexcitabilities. This will be phased in during the 2025-2028 plan cycle.

AIG specialists meet monthly for their own professional learning community (PLC.) During the 2025-2028 plan cycle, AIG specialists will work to refine their PLC practice to be able to:

- build a collaborative culture that is committed to collective inquiry, action research, and continuous improvement
- develop a shared understanding of assessments, analyze evidence of student learning, and use that evidence to learn from one another and respond to the individual needs of students
- build a systematic process to provide additional time and support for nurtured and AIG students who are experiencing difficulty and to ensure every student has a clear path to deeper learning

Annually, the specialists will develop Professional Development Plans (PDP) and review evaluative data to reflect on their practice, set professional goals, and outline action steps to achieve these goals. PDPs are data-informed and align with school/district determined needs. Professional development opportunities will be offered for classroom teachers of AIG students, which can include collaboration cycles in which the specialist and the teacher work together to implement new strategies and improve student performance. School based AIG specialists also regularly attend grade-level or content area PLC meetings to discuss data, instructional strategies, and resources. The Curriculum and Instruction team partners with the AIG PLC to provide professional learning, personalized coaching, and support data-based needs.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Include strategies for supporting advanced learners in all professional development related to MTSS
- Establish specific professional development modules and requirements for classroom teachers who are assigned AIG clusters
- Establish specific professional development modules for non-classroom teachers who work with AIG students, such as school counselors, social workers, and administrators
- Collaborate with the Student Support Division of Orange County Schools

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG facilitator job description	
* AIG specialist job description	
* AIG specialist schedules	
* OCS Strategic Plan	
* OCS Instructional Framework	

Documents

Document/Link

Document Template

AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources

N/A

Standard 5: Partnerships	
Orange County Schools (680) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0	
Standard 5: Partnerships	<i>The LEA ensures ongoing and meaningful participation of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the local AIG program to develop strong partnerships.</i>
* Practice A Develops intentional, two-way partnerships with parents/guardians to support the following needs of AIG students: ▪ academic and intellectual ▪ social and emotional.	
In alignment with Goal 4 of the OCS Strategic plan, the AIG department works to intentionally strengthen two-way partnerships with families, schools, and community stakeholders to ensure all students have what they need to be successful. There are several avenues by which these partnerships are developed, some of which are listed below: ▪ Annual informational meetings during Meet the Teacher Night, Rising 6th Grade Night, and 9th Grade Orientation ▪ Parent input via bi-annual AIG Advisory Council meetings ▪ Annual Review of each student's DEP with the parent/guardian and student ▪ Dissemination of a Parent Guide to the AIG Program, which includes information about the screening, referral, and identification process, service options, and additional family resources ▪ Email, phone, virtual, and/or in-person conferences with families and the school-based AIG specialists as requested. ▪ OCS Family and Teacher Focus Groups will include parents/guardians of AIG students ▪ School-based Family Fun/STEM Nights will include parents/guardians of AIG students Additionally, the opportunity of forming a Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education (PAGE) chapter for Orange County Schools will be revisited by the AIG Advisory. PAGE is a state-wide organization that is supported by the North Carolina Association for Gifted and Talented.	
* 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.	

The AIG department will work to expand and strengthen partnerships with businesses and organizations during the 2025-2028 plan cycle. We will continue to provide information about extracurricular opportunities through local university and community college programs, and will continue to support AIG specialists who are applying for grants, such as the annual North Carolina Electric Cooperatives' Bright Ideas grant. The department will work with the AIG Advisory Committee to establish a working group of parents to support extracurricular activities, events, and partnerships, such as inviting in-person or virtual guest speakers to schools. Additionally, the AIG department will take steps to develop partnerships with local institutions of higher education. We are expanding our AIG website to include a partnerships page.	* 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 department will utilize an advisory group to develop, implement, monitor, and revise the OCS AIG plan and provide feedback on a regular basis during the 2025-2028 plan cycle. Members of this advisory group include parents/guardians, classroom teachers, administrators, instructional support staff, community members, and high school AIG students. The AIG Advisory Committee has the following guidelines in place: Purpose ▪ To advocate for students who need differentiated approaches for advanced instruction in order to meet their academic and intellectual needs. ▪ To improve the overall quality of gifted programming for students. ▪ To foster clear and constructive two-way communications among parents, schools, and the school district. Function ▪ To provide feedback to the parent and educational communities regarding the status and implementation of gifted programming at respective schools. ▪ To recommend strategies for improving services and opportunities to students in K-12. ▪ To serve as a liaison for sharing of programmatic successes and constructive feedback among the district, school and parent groups in our community. Meetings and Members ▪ Hold bi-annual meetings during the school year ▪ Meetings may be held in person or virtually ▪ Regular attendance is encouraged ▪ Appointment to the committee is by application which includes a background check; final appointment decisions are made by the AIG facilitator.
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During meetings, the committee reviews AIG programming, student performance trends, budgetary concerns, and provides feedback on these items. The committee may also bring forward topics for discussion based on questions or concerns they have received from the community. The AIG department will continue to work with school-based outreach personnel to recruit committee members.	* 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.
Sharing information about the AIG policies, plan, and program with stakeholders is a priority for Orange County Schools. The AIG specialists hold a yearly information session for families at their schools and update their staff at a beginning-of-year faculty meeting. These sessions outline the screening, referral, and identification process, including identification criteria, as well as the service options. Information about the AIG program and policies is also shared during the annual district-wide Comprehensive Needs Assessment meeting. Additionally, comprehensive information about the AIG program is available to all families and community members on the Orange County Schools website. This includes: ▪ Screening, referral, and identification processes and criteria ▪ Program service options for each grade span and area of identification ▪ Procedures for single subject acceleration, whole grade level acceleration, and credit by demonstrated mastery ▪ Program personnel and contact information ▪ Resources for families To continue to strengthen this practice, new brochures for the AIG program will be created during the 2025-2028 plan cycle. The brochures will be available in all schools and various community locations. The AIG department will work to make all written documents available in multiple languages. If there is a need for written documents to be made available in other languages, parents/guardians may make this request through the district's Family Engagement Team, the district AIG facilitator or through the school-based AIG specialist. The AIG department is consistently working to improve how we inform families and the community of opportunities available to AIG learners. School-based AIG specialists send home quarterly newsletters, which include opportunities for students that occur inside and outside of school, such as the Spelling Bee, Battle of the Books, and National Junior Honor Society. The AIG department will also share information and opportunities through the OCS website, a district AIG newsletter, and through OCS social media platforms. Communications will be available electronically and hard copy, and in other languages, if requested. Interpretation services are available for the annual district information session and for conferences with AIG specialists and classroom teachers. Interpretation services, both in-person and virtual, are provided by the OCS Family Engagement Team.	

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard		
▪ Send home more frequent service communications with parents (ie at the start or end of each unit) that outline how curriculum and instruction is/was being differentiated for advanced learners ▪ Expand opportunities for mentorship and internships for secondary students ▪ Strengthen advisory group; ensure representation including community members, AIG parents/guardians, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff		
Planned Sources of Evidence		
*	Quarterly school-based AIG newsletters	
*	District-wide informational slide decks	
*	AIG Advisory Committee agendas and minutes	
*	AIG webpage on the Orange County Schools website	
*	OCS Strategic Plan	
*	OCS Instructional Framework	
Type		Document/Link
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources		N/A

Standard 6: Program Accountability

Orange County Schools (680) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 6: Program Accountability

The LEA implements, monitors, and evaluates the local AIG program and plan to ensure that all programs and services are effective in meeting the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

*** Practice A**

Develops a written AIG plan to describe the local AIG program, in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy (N.C.G.S. §115C-150.5-.8 {Article 9B}), based on a comprehensive program evaluation. This Local AIG Plan has been approved by the local board of education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

Orange County Schools develops a written AIG plan in accordance with state legislation and policy. In developing the plan, feedback is gathered from a variety of stakeholders and data is collected and analyzed. The following process for plan development is utilized:

Step 1: Gather quantitative and qualitative data on program performance, including student performance data and stakeholder feedback (educators, parents, students).

Step 2: Analyze the data and complete the self-assessment.

Step 3: Based on the self-assessment, identify areas for improvement.

Step 4: With the plan writing team, brainstorm and create ideas to strengthen targeted areas.

Step 5: Share ideas and receive feedback from community stakeholders, including the AIG specialists, AIG Advisory Committee, and district staff. The AIG department will utilize an advisory group to develop, implement, monitor, and revise the OCS AIG program and plan during the plan cycles.

Step 6: Finalize revisions and share with the district Cabinet officers, principals, and the Board Student Achievement Committee.

Step 7: Present to the Board of Education for final approval.

*** 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.

The AIG department monitors the implementation of the program and the plan to ensure compliance with state legislation and policies as well as local policies. There are several structures utilized to monitor implementation:

- A Data Collection Record is completed and placed in the AIG folder for each student referred to the Needs Determination Team to ensure proper data collection
- A headcount analysis is completed bi-annually to monitor AIG identification

▪ All AIG specialists submit their schedule to their principal and the district AIG facilitator for review • The AIG facilitator may visit AIG specialists and classroom teachers to observe classes • During monthly AIG PLC meetings, there is time dedicated to compliance measures, such as updating the headcount, and professional development on using AIG curriculum resources ▪ AIG student performance is shared during school data meetings ▪ The AIG facilitator and the Curriculum and Instruction Leadership Team meet monthly to address and problem-solve challenges as they arise ▪ The AIG facilitator shares information pertaining to the AIG program and policies with the Board of Education Student Achievement Committee at least annually, and more frequently if requested by the committee	* Practice C Develops and monitors a budget using allotted state funds, and local funds if applicable, to address the needs of the Local AIG Plan in accordance with state policy. The AIG department receives both local and state funds. The district AIG facilitator, with support from the Curriculum and Instruction Leadership Team, monitors the budget in collaboration with the district Chief Financial Officer to ensure that funds are utilized for the AIG program. The Chief Financial Officer provides a budget summary, including how all AIG funding is allocated, to the AIG facilitator. The AIG facilitator collaborates with the Chief Academic Officer to identify funding for materials or resources for items that are beyond the scope of the dedicated AIG budget. This includes having a plan to fund the purchase of testing materials necessary to meet the current needs of the local AIG plan.	* Practice D Maintains and analyzes multiple sources of student achievement and growth data, as well as annual dropout data for AIG students. Data is disaggregated to recognize patterns and trends over time and inform mindsets, policies, and practices for equity and excellence. The AIG department maintains, analyzes, and shares multiple sources of student achievement and growth data regarding AIG students. At the district level, an annual headcount analysis is conducted to monitor identification rates. Additionally, the district AIG facilitator provides an analysis of AIG student performance on EOGs and EOCs to school-based AIG specialists and principals. Summaries of the district-wide AIG student performance are shared with the AIG Advisory Committee, the district curriculum directors, and the Board Student Achievement Committee. The conclusions drawn from the data are utilized to identify areas for program improvement and to allocate resources. At the school level, AIG specialists share data about AIG student performance with grade level and content area teams, and during data meetings. Data sources include benchmark assessments and identification round results. In alignment with Goal 1 of the OCS 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, the AIG department will work to identify needed changes in curriculum and instruction in order to close achievement, access, and opportunity gaps for all students. By 2026, OCS will increase the graduation rate to at least 90% for all students. To support this work, the district AIG facilitator will collaborate with the district data manager to compile and maintain a list of AIG students who have dropped out of school. The AIG facilitator then communicates with district and school-based staff, including MTSS teams and school counselors, to determine the reasons behind the student dropping out, and works with school-based staff on steps that can be taken to bring the student back into school if possible.
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* 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.	
The identification and performance of all students in the AIG program is a priority for Orange County Schools. ▪ Referral: Regular Data sweeps, parent/teacher/self-referral ▪ Identification: Data is utilized for CogAT universal screener for 2nd graders. Portfolio pathway for identification now includes a universal task for students to complete that is scored by the AIG Specialist PLC (student identifiers are redacted prior to scoring of assessment) Monitor/Retention: Reporting mechanisms in the student information system are utilized to create an annual headcount analysis. This analysis currently includes information about the OCS population as a whole. The AIG department currently maintains and shares data about the AIG student performance on end-of-grade tests, end-of-course tests, and other assessments such as district benchmark assessments. The AIG department also collaborates with the Testing and Accountability department to disaggregate performance data. Performance and retention of students is also monitored in EVAAS, which determines how much a student improves in performance from year to year. When students enter high school, a designated AIG contact person, typically a school counselor or assistant principal, periodically monitors their grades and course selection to ensure that they are pursuing, and having success in, rigorous courses in their area of identification.	
* 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. The Human Resources (HR) department maintains and utilizes the credentials of personnel serving AIG students to align with the goals and strategies outlined in the OCS AIG plan. This list is shared with the AIG facilitator. The HR department also monitors the completion of professional development for licensed teachers via the online LINQ system. The AIG facilitator and/or specialists will lead professional learning opportunities for teachers and other licensed school personnel serving K-12 AIG students. Documentation of personnel who participated in these opportunities is shared with administrative teams and building-based AIG specialists. AIG personnel will make an effort to cluster group AIG identified students in general education classrooms where the classroom teacher is licensed in AIG (when possible).	
* 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. Orange County Schools elicits regular feedback from students, parents/guardians, families, and other stakeholders. During plan revision years AIG students and their families complete a survey that addresses programming, communication, and ideas for improvement. There will be bi-annual meetings of the AIG Advisory Council. The AIG department will provide quarterly newsletters as well as be available for ongoing parent feedback. School-based AIG specialists meet regularly with classroom teachers to discuss AIG programming and brainstorm ideas to more effectively meet students' needs. AIG specialists also meet with parents/families during events such as Meet the Teacher night to foster relationships with families and establish a dialogue about the program.	
* Practice H Shares local AIG program evaluation data with school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and other community stakeholders.	

Data from the evaluation of the AIG program will be shared publicly in a variety of ways. Survey insights and results from parents/guardians, teachers, and students are shared with the AIG specialists, school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, the AIG Advisory Committee and other community stakeholders. Relevant sections of the surveys, such as those referring to curriculum and instruction, may also be shared with principals. The AIG headcount analysis is shared with AIG specialists, principals, and the local Board of Education. District-level headcount data may also be presented to the public at the annual Comprehensive Needs Assessment meeting if requested. At this meeting, representatives from each school, including parents, teachers, and administrators, are present. The summative results from the district's Self-Assessment of NC AIG Program Standards are shared with the AIG specialists, the AIG Advisory Committee, and the local Board of Education.	* Practice 1 Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents/guardians through established written policies, procedures, and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements. The goals, identification criteria, and service options of the OCS AIG Program are communicated to parents/guardians. To ensure parents' and students' rights are safeguarded, parents/guardians of referred students must sign consent to test, refer, review data, and identify before AIG identification can proceed. Students' identifying information will be redacted during the data review and identification process. A results letter including pertinent data from the Data Collection Record is shared with the parents/guardians of the referred student to make sure parents are informed of the referral and identification process. Transfer students who were identified as gifted in their previous district will continue to be identified as gifted in Orange County Schools. Services for transfer students will match demonstrated needs. If a student is referred to the Needs Determination Team but does not qualify for AIG identification, the student may be re-evaluated and referred again after two calendar years. In the event that a parent/guardian disagrees with a decision, the district will attempt to resolve the concerns at the local level. The following procedures should be followed to resolve any disagreements. STEP 1: APPEAL TO THE SCHOOL NEEDS DETERMINATION TEAM AND THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL 1. The parent/guardian may request a conference with the Needs Determination Team (NDT) and the principal at the child's school. This request must be made in writing. The NDT should be given ample opportunity (10 school days) to convene all members together for the conference. 2. At this conference, the individual student profile, which includes test and assessment scores, observation results, report cards, and in-class work samples, will be examined and discussed. Information used to determine eligibility for AIG identification and/or service delivery options shall be reviewed with the parent/guardian. If needed, the NDT may ask the child's teacher(s) to provide further documentation concerning student characteristics and achievement. 3. Minutes will be recorded on the Needs Determination Team Appeals Agenda and Meeting Notes form, and signatures will be obtained from those involved. 4. The NDT and the principal will send an Appeals Decision Letter to the parent/guardian within 10 school days of the conference. 5. If a re-assessment of the student is requested, the assessment must take place within 30 school days.
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STEP II: APPEAL TO THE DISTRICT AIG FACILITATOR AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ELEMENTARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the NDT and the building principal within 10 school days of receipt of the Appeals Decision Letter. The appeal must be made in writing to the district AIG facilitator and the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The conference shall be scheduled within 10 school days of receipt of the written request. The school AIG specialist and the child's teacher(s) may be invited to this conference along with the parent/guardian.
2. The AIG facilitator and the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction shall review the concern. During the conference, they may request further information from the child's teacher(s), the school AIG specialist, the NDT, or the principal.
3. Minutes will be recorded on the Needs Determination Team Appeals Agenda and Meeting Notes form and signatures will be obtained from all those present.
4. The AIG facilitator and the executive director of curriculum and instruction will send an Appeals Decision Letter to the parent/guardian within 10 school days of the conference.
5. If a re-assessment of the student is requested, the assessment must take place within 30 school days.

STEP III: APPEAL TO THE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ELEMENTARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the AIG facilitator and the appropriate executive director within 10 school days of receipt of the Appeals Decision Letter. The appeal must be made in writing to the chief academic officer and the appropriate executive director of schools. The appeal may be mailed to: Chief Academic Officer, Orange County Schools; 200 East King Street; Hillsborough, NC 27278. The conference shall be scheduled within 10 school days of receipt of this request.
2. The Chief Academic Officer and the appropriate Executive Director of Schools will review the concern. During the conference with the parent/guardian, they may request further information from the child's teacher, the AIG specialist, the parent/guardian, the principal, and/or AIG facilitator.
3. Minutes shall be recorded on the Needs Determination Team Appeals Agenda and Meeting Notes form, and signatures will be obtained from those present.
4. The chief academic officer and the executive director of schools will send an Appeals Decision Letter to the parent/guardian within 10 school days of the conference.
5. If a re-assessment of the student is requested, the assessment must take place within 30 school days.

STEP IV: APPEAL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the chief academic officer and the appropriate executive director of schools to the Superintendent within 10 school days of receipt of the Appeals Decision Letter. The appeal must be made in writing. The appeal may be mailed to: Superintendent; 200 East King Street; Hillsborough, NC 27278. This conference shall be scheduled within 10 school days of the receipt of the request for appeal.
2. The Superintendent will review the concern. During the conference with the parent/guardian, he/she may request further information from the child's teacher(s), the school AIG specialist, the parents, the principal, the AIG facilitator, and/or the chief academic officer.
3. Minutes shall be recorded on the Needs Determination Team Appeals Agenda and Meeting Notes form and signatures will be obtained from those present.
4. The Superintendent will send an Appeals Decision Letter to the parent/guardian within 10 school days of the conference.

5. If a re-assessment of the student is requested, the assessment must take place within 30 school days.

*At this point, the Superintendent may request mediation in order to resolve the concern. This shall be done by an impartial mediator.

STEP V: APPEAL TO THE LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION

1. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Superintendent to the Local Board of Education within 10 days of receipt of the Appeals Decision Letter. This appeal must be in writing. Please submit an appeal to: Orange County Board of Education; 200 East King Street; Hillsborough, NC 27278.
2. The concern will be reviewed at the next available Board meeting. The Board may request further information from the child's teacher(s), the school AIG specialist, the AIG facilitator, the parents, the principal, the Chief Academic Officer, and/or the Superintendent.
3. During this meeting, minutes will be recorded on the Needs Determination Team Appeals Agenda and Meeting Notes form and signatures obtained of those present.
4. The Board will send a final Appeals Decision Letter within 30 school days of the Board meeting at which the concern was reviewed.
5. If a re-assessment of the student is requested, the assessment must take place within 30 school days.

STEP VI: STATE LEVEL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Once all efforts have been exhausted within the school system, the parents/guardians 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:

- Whether the local system failed to determine eligibility for services within its gifted education program.
- Whether the local plan developed under G.S. 115C-150.7 has been implemented appropriately with regard to the child.

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.

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*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Seek out additional funding sources for AIG programming, such as grants or support from local businesses
- Communicate and clarify to parents/guardians regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG plan revision presentation	
* OCS Instructional Framework	
* OCS Strategic Plan	
* AIG Plan	
* AIG budget summary	
* Annual AIG headcount analysis presentation	
* Procedures for Resolving Disagreements document	

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

Orange County Schools (680) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:

05/05/2025 

AIG Related Documents

Orange County Schools (680) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

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

Optional Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	

Phrase	
Definition	