

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Randolph County School System (760) 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)

The vision of the RCSS AIG Program is to provide a comprehensive K-12 gifted program that aligns with the total school community. Screening, referral, and identification processes afford all student equitable access to demonstrate potential giftedness. Gifted students receive differentiated instruction that is rigorous, challenging, and grounded in evidence-based AIG strategies, resources and practices that meet their unique academic and social-emotional learning needs. Personnel who work directly with AIG students demonstrate a deep understanding of the characteristics and unique needs (Academic, intellectual, social, and emotional learning) of gifted learners. Extra-curricular opportunities at the school and/or district level and experiences through partnerships with institutes of higher education, businesses/industries/ and community or faith-based organizations afford gifted students opportunities to explore in-depth their academic areas of expertise, personal interests, and potential adult careers. Future Ready Skills (Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Curiosity) are integrated into the instructional planning for gifted learners in order to prepare students for post-secondary education experiences and/or adult careers.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 917,810.00	* \$ 47,579.50	* \$ 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.

The Randolph County School System Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program universal screening and referral process for all grade levels is comprehensive, consistent, and equitable. RCSS is committed to a screening process that affords multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate potential giftedness and to be identified as Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted.

Formal Universal Screening

The district's formal universal screening process occurs at grades 3 and 5. RCSS annually administers the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), a nationally-normed aptitude test measuring learned reasoning abilities in specific areas linked to school success, to all third and fifth graders, with the only exemption being EC students who have extended content. Based on collaboration with the EC department, it has been recently decided to remove the exemption that allowed EC students with an IQ score to bypass the CogAT screening. Now, all EC students (except extended content students), regardless of previous testing, are included in the universal screening process to ensure equitable identification. For a detailed explanation of this change, please refer to Standard 1C.

Screening fifth graders is a point of pride for RCSS, as students are formally screened prior to entering middle school. Third and fifth graders who score at the 85th percentile or higher on any of the three CogAT batteries of tests - Verbal, Quantitative, and or Nonverbal - comprise what the district refers to as the pool of students who automatically participate in the next step of the formal screening process. Once identified for further screening, parents/guardians receive RCSS Permission to Test forms (Form 1) in either English or Spanish, which must be signed and returned to the school's AIG Specialist.

Achievement Testing

The second step of the universal screening process is the administration of an achievement test. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (IOWA), a nationally-normed achievement test on grade level, is administered to students in the identified pool, based on aptitude scores. Students scoring 90% or higher on the IOWA are recognized as demonstrating the potential for giftedness in one of three AIG pathways.

CogAT scores are valid for two years. End-of-Grade (EOG) Reading and Mathematics data are reviewed annually for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders listed on the RCSS AIG Nomination Log who did not meet district criteria for identification. Students who score 90% or above on EOG Reading and/or Mathematics tests may be considered for identification purposes. Additionally, if a student performs well in the Nonverbal section of the CogAT, the reading and math portions of the IOWA are administered to ensure that strengths are not overlooked.

Alternative Assessments:

When necessary, alternative screening assessments—such as the Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT), the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), WIDA Access test, and district-developed Performance Tasks are used for identification purposes. Performance Tasks in Reading and/or Mathematics are administered as alternative achievement assessments for students who meet aptitude criteria but score between 85% and 89% on the IOWA. These tasks allow students to demonstrate mastery through work samples, which are scored at the district level by AIG personnel from another school. Pre-established rubrics guide the decision-making process, and second evaluations may be requested on a case-by-case basis.

Continued partnerships with the Multilingual Learners (ML) Department ensure that assessments are equitable for ML students. A flow chart has been created to detail the process for locating gifted newcomers by considering students who have been enrolled in an United States school for less than 3 years, and who

score a 4.0 or higher on the composite score of the most recent ACCESS Test. More work is needed to identify these students in grades 6-12. Additionally, the CogAT and IOWA is provided in Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese to ensure that there are no missing ML students or newcomers to our county.

Use of Local Norms

To ensure more equitable identification, RCSS uses local norms in interpreting IOWA scores. These local norms allow for a more accurate understanding of student performance within the context of the specific student population in the district, helping to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds, including those from historically underrepresented groups, are not disadvantaged by national norms alone. This helps ensure that students with potential for giftedness, but who may not meet the 90% threshold using national norms, are still given an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. RCSS has been able to identify more students because of the use of local norms.

Note: All screening data is evaluated and recorded on the RCSS AIG Nomination Log utilized by individual AIG Specialists at their respective schools. Students who complete the initial screening process, but do not meet RCSS criteria for identification, may be considered for nurturing experiences provided by the AIG Specialist. AIG Specialists monitor the progress of all students who participate in the screening process, particularly those who do not meet identification criteria, in order to review academic progress from one grade to the next.

Referrals:

In addition to the annual screening windows for 3rd and 5th graders, screening for potential gifted identification may occur at any grade level, K-12, during designated times throughout the school year. Windows of time are designated in the fall and spring for additional screening opportunities for referred students. Referrals may be made by parents/guardians, teachers, or administrators. The district K-12 Alternative Screening/Identification form is utilized to collect multiple data sources to develop comprehensive student learner profiles to provide all students with opportunities to show their strengths and talents. Data sources included in the 2025–2028 forms assist in creating a comprehensive learner profile that is responsive to students' diverse needs and strengths including: Use of norm-referenced Exceptional Children core reading multiple measure assessments (phonological skills, decoding skills, comprehension skills, fluency skills), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), WIDA test data, Data Maps, universal screeners (e.g. mCLASS K-5, iReady K-8), NC Check-Ins, Common Formative Assessments. RCSS is committed to offering multiple pathways and opportunities for students to be referred and screened for AIG identification.

Streamlining Assessment:

RCSS has recently adopted the updated, electronic version of the IOWA Achievement Test, streamlining the testing process and improving efficiency for both students and teachers. One key benefit is the removal of the time-consuming task of bubbling in answers, allowing students to focus solely on the content. For teachers, the electronic format eliminates manual grading, with tests automatically scored and results available within 24 hours. This quick feedback helps teachers assess performance, identify strengths and weaknesses, and adjust instruction accordingly.

Additionally, this electronic testing format supports the LEA's commitment to clear, equitable, and comprehensive student identification procedures for AIG by providing timely, accurate data. The streamlined process ensures that all students, including those in need of advanced services, are accurately assessed and receive the appropriate educational support based on their needs.

* 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.

RCSS utilizes multiple data points including both quantitative and qualitative data to determine that a student's comprehensive learner profile shows a need beyond the regular education program. It is important to note that no single criterion should exclude a child from AIG identification. Instead, any one criterion, if superior, may indicate a need for gifted identification services, ensuring that all students have an equitable opportunity to be recognized for their potential. The following designations are used for K-12 students meeting RCSS criteria for identification:

- Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI): This designation is for students who demonstrate high intellectual (aptitude) and high achievement (academic) performance in the fields of Reading and Mathematics.
- Intellectually Gifted (IG): This designation is used for students who demonstrate high intellectual ability (aptitude), but have not yet demonstrated high academic performance.
- Academically Gifted (AG): This designation is for students who demonstrate high academic performance in one or both of the academic fields of Reading and/or Mathematics.
- AM: High academic performance in mathematics.
- AR: High academic performance in reading.

Quantitative Data Points Used in Identification

Quantitative data points provide objective measures of a student's aptitude and achievement, which are integral to the identification process for all grade levels, K-12. RCSS uses the following quantitative data to identify gifted students:

1. Standardized Aptitude Tests (CogAT): The CogAT is used to assess a student's intellectual potential across three areas: verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal reasoning. CogAT scores are one of the primary indicators for determining a student's intellectual giftedness (IG or AI). The cut-off score for AI or IG is typically set at the 97%-99% range, while students may still be considered for AG with scores in the 85%-99% range.
2. Standardized Achievement Tests (IOWA): The IOWA Assessments are used to assess a student's achievement in academic subjects, specifically reading and mathematics. The IOWA scores help identify students with exceptional academic performance in Reading (AR) and Mathematics (AM). For AI, students must show high achievement (97-99% on the IOWA) in both areas, while for AG, students must show high achievement (90-99%) in either reading or math.
3. End-of-Course and End of Course (EOC) Tests (Grades 3-12): End-of-Grade (3-8) and End of Course (9-12) achievement test performance in English and/or Mathematics (scores in the 90-99% range) may serve as additional quantitative evidence of academically gifted status.
4. mCLASS and DIBELS (Grades K-2): In addition to standardized tests, the mCLASS reading assessments and DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) provide quantitative measures of early literacy development. Students need to score above grade-level expectations in reading levels and achieve proficient results in DIBELS (the "blue" range) to be considered for identification in the early grades.

K-2 Criteria for Identification:

Criteria for Formal Testing:

- Recommendation: From parent/guardian, teacher, or administrator.
- Checklist Score: 85% or higher on the RCSS AIG K-2 Checklist (minimum 36 points).
- Reading Level: At least one grade level above the expected proficient level during screening using Lexile leveled text.
- Text Reading Comprehension: Using the RCSS District K-2 Comprehension Indicator.
- DIBELS Composite score: Scores in the "blue" range
- Math i-Ready Assessment: At least one grade level above the expected proficient level

Identification Criteria (Aptitude and Achievement):

- AI (Advanced Intellectual):
 - 97%-99% on standardized aptitude test (CogAT): Verbal, Quantitative, or Nonverbal and
 - 97%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading and Mathematics.
- IG (Intellectually Gifted):
 - 97%-99% on standardized aptitude test (CogAT): Verbal, Quantitative, or Nonverbal and
 - Below 97% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading and/or Mathematics.
- AG (Academically Gifted):
 - 85%-99% on standardized aptitude test (CogAT): Verbal, Quantitative, or Nonverbal and
 - 97%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading and Mathematics.
- AR (Reading Gifted):
 - 97%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading.
- AM (Mathematics Gifted):
 - 97%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Mathematics.

Grades 3-12 Criteria for Identification:

Identification Criteria (Aptitude and Achievement):

- AI (Advanced Intellectual):
 - 97%-99% on standardized aptitude test (CogAT): Verbal, Quantitative, or Nonverbal and
 - 97%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading and Mathematics.
- IG (Intellectually Gifted):
 - 97%-99% on standardized aptitude test (CogAT): Verbal, Quantitative, or Nonverbal and
 - Below 90% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading and/or Mathematics.

▪ **AG (Academically Gifted):**

- 85%-99% on standardized aptitude test (CogAT): Verbal, Quantitative, or Nonverbal and
- 90%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading and Mathematics.
 - AR (Reading Gifted):
 - 90%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Reading only.
 - AM (Mathematics Gifted):
 - 90%-99% on standardized achievement test (IOWA): Mathematics only.

Grades 3-6 Additional Note:

- End of Grade Test Performance: 90%-99% on End of Grade achievement tests in Reading and/or Mathematics may also be used for identification.

The AIG Program Specialist works collaboratively with the Director of Secondary Education, middle and high school counselors, career development coordinators, and other staff involved in the high school registration process. Students identified as gifted in grades 9-12 are strongly encouraged to enroll in rigorous courses of study that may include Honors/Advanced Placement courses across all subject areas including Career and Technical Education (CTE).

Qualitative Data Points Used in Identification:

While quantitative data forms a large portion of the identification process, qualitative data can be used to ensure that the identification process is fair and considers the full range of a student's abilities, not just their test scores. These include:

1. **Teacher Recommendations:** Teachers provide insights into a student's academic potential, behavior, and creative thinking that may not be captured in standardized testing. Teacher input, based on day-to-day interactions, can identify early signs of giftedness that are not immediately apparent in formal assessments.
2. **Parent Input:** Parents often observe students' strengths and talents in more informal settings and can provide valuable information about the child's curiosity, problem-solving abilities, and potential for advanced learning.
3. **Work Samples and Portfolios:** Portfolio assessments can showcase a student's best work across subjects and can be particularly useful for demonstrating critical thinking and problem-solving skills that go beyond what can be captured in standardized tests. For example, portfolios might include writing samples, project-based learning outputs, or math problem-solving examples that show advanced levels of thinking.
4. **Talent Development Work Samples:** Teachers may also collect non-traditional evidence of student potential, such as project work, creative assignments, or problem-solving tasks that demonstrate higher-level thinking and abilities. These are especially useful for identifying students who might not score highly on traditional tests but show potential in real-world applications.
5. **Behavioral Observations:** Students' classroom behaviors, such as initiative, independent thinking, and advanced reasoning, provide further qualitative evidence of their intellectual and academic strengths. These can be observed through behavior checklists or informal teacher notes.

Ensuring Equity and Excellence with Multiple Data Points:

To ensure equity and excellence in the identification process, RCSS integrates multiple data points that allow for a well-rounded understanding of a student's abilities. Importantly, no

single data point or criterion should exclude a student from consideration. Even a single exceptional measure, whether in aptitude or achievement, may indicate a need for gifted identification services. Using both quantitative and qualitative measures provide a more holistic view of a student's potential, especially for students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., students with disabilities, multilingual learners (ML), economically disadvantaged students, etc.). Additionally, it is essential to consider a student's unique circumstances when collecting data for their comprehensive learner profile, particularly when aligning services to meet their individual needs. Collaboration and communication with other instructional staff who have knowledge of the student (e.g., social workers, psychologists, counselors, ML teachers, EC teachers, etc.) is encouraged to gain a clear understanding of the learner and their potential.

- **Use of Local Norms and Contextual Understanding:** To ensure that giftedness is identified in a culturally and contextually appropriate manner, RCSS applies local norms when considering data for identification. This ensures that students who may be underrepresented in traditional standardized assessments are not overlooked. Local norms account for contextual factors, ensuring that all students, regardless of limited factors, are considered for identification using a locally appropriate benchmark.
- **Performance Tasks and Non-Traditional Measures:** Performance tasks and non-traditional assessments are components in capturing a student's potential, especially for students who may not excel on standardized tests but demonstrate creative thinking, problem-solving skills, or leadership qualities.
- **Equitable Access to Opportunities:** Screening windows, referral processes, and flexible pathways for identification (e.g., through performance tasks or teacher recommendations) are designed to ensure that all students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their giftedness, and no child is excluded due to lack of access to gifted opportunities.

Identification/Placement:

Once the screening process is complete, the next step in the identification process involves the AIG Specialists (K-8) or the AIG Program Specialist (9-12) convening a School-Based AIG Committee (SBC-AIG) Committee meeting. The purposes of the committee are to review initial screening data to determine potential gifted identification, complete required AIG identification paperwork, and initiate the development of the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). The DEP is a required document outlining gifted services, content modifications, and instructional programs or strategies to be implemented at the school level based on a student's area(s) of identification. The committee's goal at this conference should be to align identification practices with the service provided. Parents/guardians of any student not meeting RCSS criteria for identification receive a letter of notification.

Parents/guardians of any student meeting RCSS criteria for identification receive a letter of notification and are invited to a required SBC-AIG Committee meeting to review results of the screening/identification process and to develop a DEP for their identified student. Once required signatures are obtained, copies are shared with the parents/guardians and submitted to the district office of the AIG Program Specialist for review and approval. Upon review and approval of the required paperwork, data for identified students are entered into the North Carolina Infinite Campus database.

NOTE: AIG Specialists are available upon request to discuss screening results with parents/guardians for any student not meeting RCSS criteria for identification.

NOTE: All RCSS AIG Screening/Identification and DEP documents are available in English and Spanish. Translators are available for SBC-AIG committee meetings.

Transfer students:

RCSS honors gifted identifications from other North Carolina school districts, ensuring a smooth transition into designated gifted core classes for transferring students. The AIG Transfer form facilitates a 30-day review of academic records for students transferring from any educational setting (NC public, out-of-state, or alternative). This process allows for an understanding of the basis of the prior identification. While the aim is to honor these identifications, RCSS reserves the right to conduct its formal screening process in specific situations where further assessment may be beneficial or necessary based on the individual student's profile. If the SBC-AIG Committee confirms the student meets RCSS criteria based on the transferred data, the enrollment will be finalized with parents/guardians.


Early Admission to Kindergarten:

RCSS complies with the state legislation [G.S. 115C-364(d)] allowing a child to enter kindergarten early if he/she demonstrates an extraordinary level of

academic ability and maturity. When a parent/guardian of a student requests, the principal convenes a committee of professional educators that includes school staff, and may include the school level/ AIG Specialist and/or the AIG Program Specialist, and district staff to consider the required five factors as outlined in state policy to determine a student's eligibility to enter kindergarten as a four-year-old. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to present information required by state policy to the principals. Early admission to kindergarten does not automatically result in gifted identification.

Grade Acceleration/Skipping:

RCSS recognizes and uses the Iowa Acceleration Scale as a primary tool to guide educators in making important decisions regarding whether a student is a candidate for whole grade acceleration (grade skipping). The Iowa Acceleration Scale is administered to students by the school's AIG Specialist or other authorized staff. The principal convenes a committee of educators that includes school staff, and may include district staff and the school's AIG Specialist and/or the AIG Program Specialist, to review data from the Iowa Acceleration Scale and other relevant data to render a final decision regarding whole-grade acceleration. Grade acceleration/skipping does not automatically result in gifted identification.

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*** Practice C**

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

The percentage of identified students in RCSS is approximately 12.9%. Subgroup data of identified students are comparable to the percentages of subgroups within the total school population. Subgroup data indicates that African American males and females continue to be underrepresented in the AIG program. The district has noted an increase in identification within multi-racial groups, which has grown by 33 students since 2021, while the representation of other ethnicities remained relatively stable.

RCSS screening, referral, and identification procedures are responsive to under-represented populations of students. While formal screening procedures are in place for gifted identification, under-represented populations of students are afforded opportunities through alternative pathways to demonstrate potential giftedness. AIG Specialists work collaboratively with multiple district departments and school personnel to analyze, discuss, and review alternative sources of both quantitative and qualitative data for various subgroups of students.

When deemed appropriate, alternative cognitive assessments, such as the Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) and the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, are available for use during the screening process. While RCSS recognizes 85% and above on the nonverbal battery of the CogAT, research supports the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) as a valid assessment, particularly for multilingual students challenged by language acquisition or verbal skills. Currently, many multilingual students, especially those who are still developing their English language proficiency, may underperform on traditional verbal assessments due to language barriers. The Iowa Test in their native language would provide a more accessible and accurate measure of gifted potential for students, ensuring they are not overlooked due to language acquisition challenges. This would also help us to identify highly gifted students who may be from non-English speaking households and ensure they have the same opportunities for gifted services as their English-speaking peers.

District-developed alternative checklists and inventories such as the Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory, the William and Mary Classroom Observation Scale, the Gifted Rating Scale, and subgroup data from specific assessments such as the World-Class Instructional Design Assessment (WIDA ACCESS) test, may also be reviewed to identify students from under-represented populations for potential identification. Use of CogAT local norm data compares students who share similar characteristics, often from under-represented populations, to demonstrate potential giftedness. The use of alternative assessments ensures that under-represented populations of students such as English Learners (ELs), Students with Disabilities/ Twice-Exceptional (SWD), and Economically Disadvantaged (ED) students are treated equitably and are given access to the screening/identification process for gifted identification.

Efforts to Address Underrepresented Populations:

According to the 2024-2025 survey data, 38% of certified staff answered positively when asked about the appropriate services and access to gifted/advanced learning programs for underrepresented populations. Additionally, 52% were unsure while only 10% answered negatively. Among classroom teachers, 54% answered favorably, 35% were unsure, and 11% responded negatively. In contrast, 63% of parents answered favorably. This data highlights the need for improved communication regarding screening, identification, alternate pathways, and available services for underrepresented populations, especially among our staff members.

To address this issue, RCSS can take several proactive steps. In year 1 on this plan, the district will work to increase awareness of the initiatives and programs currently in place to ensure that staff are fully informed about available services. We will also address negative feedback by investigating the root causes behind these concerns and ensuring consistency in the delivery of services across the district. Providing professional development focused on culturally responsive practices will be a priority in year two of the plan to better equip staff to meet the diverse needs of all students, including those from underrepresented populations. Additionally, there will be enhanced support for twice-exceptional (2e) students to ensure their unique needs are met in the context of gifted education. Finally, we will analyze achievement and performance data for students receiving gifted support to assess program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. By implementing these strategies, we aim to address the concerns raised and strengthen the gifted services provided to all students.

Steps in the Right Direction:

Twice Exceptional (2e)

In the past, students in the Exceptional Children (EC) program who were given an IQ test as part of their identification process were exempt from the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), which serves as the universal screener for the AIG program. This exemption, while well-intentioned, created a gap in the identification process, as it excluded certain students who may have been twice-exceptional, students who have both exceptional abilities and disabilities, from the screening pool.

To address this, we partnered with the EC department and Director to revise the identification protocol, eliminating the CogAT exemption for EC students. This initiative includes professional development for both AIG and EC staff, focusing on recognizing the dual traits of 2e students and effective support strategies. Training will equip educators to identify strengths alongside challenges, ensuring a more inclusive identification process for 2e learners.

A protocol was implemented to review existing EC student IQ scores and proactively identify students who missed past CogAT screenings. Program facilitators worked with school PLC EC teams to ensure the removal of the exemption for all IEPs (except extended content) and created a monitoring spreadsheet for current EC students. These changes were communicated to school principals and psychologists.

Above all, these actions aim to dispel the misconception that students cannot be both EC and AIG, promoting a more equitable and accurate identification process. Regular AIG and EC team meetings and joint professional development will be crucial in ensuring 2e students are identified and their unique learning needs are met. Previously, RCSS had 22 identified 2e students, many with speech impairments. Through this revised process, we identified 23 additional students with IQs of 115 or higher. These students have been added to the AIG consideration pool for identification in the next testing window.

Multilingual Learners (ML):

We continue to collaborate with the ML Department to ensure assessments are fair for multilingual learners. In addition to the work we are doing to refine the identification process for gifted newcomers, we recognize that professional development for staff is essential to identify gifted potential in multilingual students more effectively. Our goal is to remove assumption that lack of English language proficiency automatically assumes lack of giftedness and the need for AIG services. We plan to provide professional development sessions focused on identifying gifted traits in MLs, with a special emphasis on those who may be overlooked due to language barriers. These sessions will provide educators with strategies to recognize the cognitive strengths of MLs beyond language proficiency, ensuring that educators are equipped to identify giftedness in students who may not perform highly in traditional verbal assessments. Furthermore, newly created flow chart outlines the process for identifying gifted newcomers, focusing on students who have been in U.S. schools for less than three years and scored 4.0 or higher on the latest ACCESS Test. Professional development will ensure that all staff, including general education teachers, ESL specialists, and school psychologists, understand how to appropriately identify potential giftedness in this group of students.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement:

To ensure that the screening, referral, and identification procedures continue to be effective and equitable across various student groups, the AIG department regularly analyzes demographic and performance data. This annual ongoing analysis helps identify trends in identification across different populations. If any subgroup is found to be under-identified or overlooked, adjustments to the procedures are made. The AIG department partners with EC, ML, and Title 1 teams to align our efforts in multiple areas. However, moving forward, we plan to review available district and statewide assessment data more deeply to ensure that students from underrepresented groups, including African American, MLs and SWD, are not overlooked in the identification process.

Integration with MTSS:

RCSS believes continued effort is necessary to ensure the district fully integrates AIG data into the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework. As part of this integration, we plan to ensure that data on gifted students will be used to inform decision-making across all levels of MTSS, particularly for students who are already performing above grade level or have demonstrated advanced cognitive abilities. As an initial step toward this work, the AIG Program Specialist introduced the diamond MTSS model with all stakeholders and focus groups to raise awareness of how all students may need extra challenge and advanced interventions, rather than solely remedial interventions. For gifted students, this will mean that at Tier 2 and Tier 3, the focus will shift to providing enrichment opportunities and advanced instruction rather than just remediation. Ongoing collaboration between the AIG and MTSS Coordinators, guided by the 'Call to Action' document, aims to equip staff to recognize under-challenged gifted students and provide appropriate enrichment and differentiation within the MTSS structure. This integration ensures instructional practices align with the needs of advanced learners, who can be overlooked in traditional, deficit-focused assessments.

Recognizing the need for comprehensive and equitable gifted identification, particularly for underrepresented populations, this MTSS integration adds a crucial layer of understanding. While schools address struggling learners, incorporating AIG data ensures advanced students are not overlooked. Our goal is for instructional teams to use data to enrich Tier 1 instruction and develop Tier 2 and 3 interventions focused on acceleration and high-level critical thinking for gifted learners. Professional development on equitable identification within the MTSS framework will be essential for data-driven decision-making, ensuring all students have an equitable opportunity for gifted identification and services, regardless of background or disability.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	12.78%	<5%	6.25%	---	10.21%	---	14.17%
Male	10.67%	<5%	8.45%	---	13.56%	---	16.98%
Total	11.73%	<5%	7.34%	---	11.87%	---	15.61%

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.

RCSS has developed a comprehensive system to monitor the consistent implementation of the screening, referral, and identification processes across all schools in the district. A key aspect of this system is the referral-based screening process in grades K-2 as well as annual screenings for all 3rd and 5th

graders. Additionally, the district has established fall and spring screening windows for any K-12 student, ensuring equity and consistency across grade levels and schools while minimizing disruptions to instructional time for AIG Specialists.

The AIG Specialist and School-Based AIG (SBC-AIG) Committees at each school are responsible for reviewing all screening data and determining whether students meet RCSS criteria for gifted identification. Once a decision is reached, the AIG Specialist notifies parents/guardians of the decision and schedules a meeting to discuss the data and process. If a student does not meet the criteria, the AIG Specialist is available to meet with parents/guardians upon request.

Once the screening, referral, and identification processes are complete, required documentation is submitted by the SBC-AIG Committee for district-level review by the AIG Program Specialist. After the review and approval of the documentation, student data is entered into the North Carolina Infinite Campus database. The AIG Program Specialist regularly monitors AIG Nomination Logs maintained by AIG Specialists at their respective schools during site visits and district AIG meetings. These logs serve as a key tool in tracking consistency across schools and ensuring all steps are followed correctly.

To ensure an equitable and consistent identification process, the district utilizes a monitoring tool that disaggregates student data by school, grade, gender, race, and identification area. The AIG Program Specialist's annual review of this data, shared with leadership, triggers follow-up and potential adjustments to address any emerging discrepancies or patterns.

Stakeholder feedback highlights the need for annual professional development (PD) for school and district committees to ensure consistent understanding and implementation of screening, referral, and identification procedures. Collaborating with the EC department, we are developing specialized training for our growing population of twice-exceptional (2e) students, many identified as AU and AIG. This training is crucial for AIG specialists and classroom teachers serving these students. Furthermore, readily available resources like forms, flowcharts, and checklists guide the identification process in all schools. Planned new resources for the 2025-2028 plan include a website PowerPoint, a podcast, and updated flowcharts clearly outlining AIG identification pathways and opportunities. Accessible online and distributed in print annually, schools are expected to utilize these resources to maintain consistent referral and identification practices.

RCSS is committed to equity and inclusivity in communication. All AIG forms and the AIG Parent/Guardian Handbook are available in both English and Spanish. Additionally, the district provides translation services for meetings and ensures that all families, regardless of their language proficiency, have access to the full AIG process and can participate in decision-making.

*** Practice E**

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

Survey data for the 2024-2025 school year shows that 70% of parents/guardians have a clear understanding of the screening, referral, and identification processes. Additionally, 68% of classroom teachers and 71% of students are aware of the identification process used for students.

To ensure broad and effective communication, the AIG Program Specialist actively networks with district departments, senior leadership, and community partners to share information about the screening, referral, and identification processes. Weekly updates are also posted on the Randolph County School System AIG Facebook page to engage the community further. Through the AIG department's efforts, the number of followers has increased from 59 to 290, ensuring more stakeholders are informed about happenings in RCSS. Acknowledging the need for improved communication based on stakeholder feedback, enhancing communication methods is a primary focus of the 2025-2028 plan's first year.

The district has improved communication about AIG resources by enhancing webpage accessibility and creating key resources, such as a K-12 pathway graphic, a standardized slide presentation on screening, referral, and identification, and an updated identification flowchart. These resources are prominently featured on district and school webpages, and distributed through various channels, including social media, newsletters, report cards, and meetings. To ensure ongoing effectiveness, the district will gather feedback from parents, guardians, and staff via surveys and focus groups and continue to monitor these communication strategies. Additionally, school-level AIG Specialists have created and send monthly newsletters to keep families informed about AIG programming. To promote inclusivity, the district will continue translating the RCSS AIG Parent/Guardian Handbook and offer interpreters for meetings.

AIG Specialists will provide ongoing staff training on screening, referral, and identification through in-person meetings, PLCs, and online learning tools. These training sessions will be designed to ensure staff are fully informed about AIG processes and are equipped to communicate these processes effectively to families. To engage the community, the district will host informational meetings for parents/guardians (in-person and virtual) to explain the AIG program and answer questions about identification procedures.

*** 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.

Documentation of a student's identification process, review of documentation with parents/guardians, and secured maintenance of this documentation are paramount to ensuring equity and access to all students who demonstrate the potential for gifted identification. Screening test results are collected and reviewed by the AIG Specialists at the school level and shared with the School-Based AIG Committees (SBC-AIG). A point of pride is AIG district/school staff access to Data Manager, an online tool through the district's CogAT vendor, which generates in-house, detailed reports for teachers and parents/guardians, including test results, individual/group learning profiles with specific research-based instructional strategies, and suggestions for flexible grouping of students within core/regular education classrooms. Online access to student scores and reports through Data Manager expedites the screening process across the district.

A primary identification tool used to document a student's identification process is the RCSS AIG Nomination Log. This log encourages transparency, consistency, and improved collaboration between the AIG Specialists and the AIG Program Specialist. The log serves as a tool for recording all data and information from the formal screening process, as well as data from students who are referred by teachers and/or administrators and transfer students. The log is a critical step during transition years from fifth to sixth and eighth to ninth grades. K-5 AIG Specialists share nomination logs with middle school specialists during a required end-of-year AIG Specialists meeting. Nomination logs are helpful for master scheduling and grouping of identified students at the next grade span. The log also serves as a monitoring tool for identified students and students who did not meet district criteria for identification. End-of-Grade scores for students listed on nomination logs who did not meet criteria during the initial screening process are reviewed at the end of the school year, often resulting in identification or further screening for potential identification based on students' academic progress. The nomination log includes additional columns to document other data sources that support more detailed learner profiles for all students to demonstrate potential giftedness.

Once the screening process is complete, the SBC-AIG committee meets to review all data on the nomination log. The committee makes identification decisions based on this data, as well as any alternative sources of data utilized throughout the process. Once decisions are made, district letters are distributed to parents/guardians. AIG Specialists are available, upon request, to meet with parents/guardians of students who did not meet district criteria for identification. Parents/guardians of students meeting district criteria for identification are invited to a SBC-AIG meeting to discuss and complete required RCSS AIG screening/identification/placement forms. Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) for identified students are developed during these committee meetings. DEPs are developed for identified third graders following the screening process during first semester, which allows for gifted services to begin second semester of the third grade year. DEPs for all other identified students are developed annually during the first 30 days of the school year. DEPs for K-12 students referred for screening during designated windows of time and transfer students are developed on a case-by-case basis. AIG specialists communicate with parents/guardians multiple times throughout the school year to discuss and update identified students' differentiated education plans as needed.

A district-developed RCSS AIG Checklist outlining specific forms and procedures for documentation purposes is available for use by the AIG Specialist at each school. School counselors annually send to the AIG Program Specialist purged records for AIG students no longer in RCSS. Records are retained until students are 21 years of age, and then are destroyed. Additional documentation such as checklists, and performance task work samples/rubrics may be included in the blue AIG folders within identified students' cumulative records. Screening, referral and identification paperwork and performance task work samples/rubrics for students not meeting the criteria for gifted identification are placed in a manila folder within the cumulative folder. Information included in manila folders is helpful in situations when students not meeting criteria for gifted identification are reviewed at later dates. A final expectation is that AIG Specialists maintain in secure locations internal rosters of identified students, as well as logs providing lists of names for students who receive nurturing services.

* Practice C

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.

At the K-5 level, once the screening process is complete, the AIG Specialist and/or the School-Based AIG committee (SBC-AIG) meet to review all data captured on the RCSS AIG Nomination Log. The committee makes identification decisions based on this data, as well as any alternative sources of data utilized throughout the process. Members of the SBC-AIG committee, which may include the AIG Specialists, general education teachers, counselors, EC, ML teachers and administrators, determine whether students meet district AIG criteria for each grade span based on data provided through the screening process. This data is also used to determine appropriate service matches.

Once decisions are made, letters from the district are sent to parents/guardians. The RCSS AIG Screening/Identification/Placement forms which are completed by the SBC-AIG committee require signatures of SBC-AIG Committee members and parents/guardians. Signed, original forms are placed in students' AIG blue folders located in students' cumulative record folders in secure locations at schools.

Parents/guardians of students that have met district criteria for identification are invited to a SBC-AIG committee meeting to discuss and complete required AIG forms and are an integral member of the SBC Team. DEPs for identified students are developed during SBC-AIG committee meetings. AIG Specialists gather feedback and input during the development process, and they share completed DEPs outlining a) Service Options, b) Content Modifications, and c) Programs/Instructional strategies with teachers of gifted students. DEPs include strategies for addressing SEL needs of identified students.

Throughout the DEP development process, special consideration is given to students with unique needs, such as twice-exceptional (2e), Multilingual Learner (ML), and Intellectually Gifted (IG) students. For IG students, DEP development requires a team approach to ensure appropriate service models based on their academic and social-emotional needs. The team carefully considers the student's giftedness, academic challenges, and specific needs (e.g., study skills, organizational skills) that may impact their performance, offering service models like advanced coursework or specialized enrichment. Recent DEP revisions include more service-learning environments, content modifications, and instructional strategies to better meet individual student needs.

For 2e, the DEP process includes additional steps to address both their giftedness and any learning disabilities or other exceptionalities. Collaboration with ESL personnel is integral to ensuring that the DEP for English Language Learners aligns with the EL Student Plan, meeting the specific language and academic needs of these students. The inclusion of EC and ML staff in the SBC-AIG committee is critical to the success of the planning process, ensuring that each student's unique needs are appropriately met within the broader service model.

An area for growth would be to use more sources of data to determine appropriate services for each student including screening results, academic performance data, and teacher recommendations. Tools like the Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory and the Gifted Rating Scale will help inform decisions about service options and instructional strategies as well as strengthen how RCSS matches services to students need. Including data such as teacher recommendations, observational data, and student portfolios would contribute to the overall decision. For example, teacher recommendations and observational data offer a more holistic view of the student's abilities in the classroom environment. Student portfolios, which may include examples of student work and projects, should provide valuable information regarding the student's creativity, problem-solving skills, and depth of understanding. The committee should consider all of these data points to determine the appropriate service matches for each student.

DEPs are developed for identified 3rd graders following first semester screening, which allows for gifted services to begin second semester. DEPs for all other identified students are developed annually during the first 30 days of the school year, with special attention given to transition points, such as moving from elementary to middle school or middle school to high school. Transition plans ensure continuity of services and curriculum adjustments as students advance. (See 2f) DEPs for K-12 students that have been referred for screening occur during designated windows of time and transfer students are developed on a case-by-case basis.

At the 6-8 grade span, DEPs are reviewed with parents during group meetings. Parents of previously identified students are invited prior to the start of the school year to learn about how AIG services differ in middle school. In middle school, these services primarily involve cluster grouping in classes with an AIG-certified teacher. During the meeting, the DEP is generally reviewed with the participants. Parents are also informed about the enrichment and extracurricular

opportunities available at each school, including those for talent development. Additionally, all parents are given the opportunity to request a one-on-one meeting with the AIG contact and/or principal. In cases where more individualized services are needed (e.g., for IG, 2e, or ML), parents are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the individual meeting. This ensures that their child's specific learning needs are addressed and that services are appropriately matched to those needs.

At the 9-12 grade span, some schools give DEPs to students and parents along with their course schedules, which they typically pick up during the open house meeting. This provides an opportunity for students and parents to ask questions about specific advanced offerings. Some schools also hold events such as Advanced Placement Nights, Rising Freshman Nights, or Orientation Day in the summer for incoming freshmen. These events are designed to explain the wide range of opportunities and pathways available to all high school students. RCSS will actively work on ensuring that all high schools offer these opportunities, with plans for improvement in this area moving forward.

DEPs are provided to all teachers of the identified student and should be reviewed annually by AIG Specialists and teachers of gifted students during the first weeks of school. Once the DEP process is complete, the SBC-AIG committee submits copies of the signed DEPs for identified students to the district office of the AIG Program Specialist for review and approval, where they are securely maintained.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Consider adding Self-Nomination/Student Reflection to the list of qualitative data points used in identification. In certain cases, older students (especially in middle and high school) may be given the opportunity to self-nominate or reflect on their own abilities through structured reflection forms. The goal will be to strengthen students' awareness of their abilities and encourage self-advocacy.
2. Consider looking at the top 10-20% of each student group for gathering additional data to support and identification decision.
3. Expand the use of Primary Education Thinking Skills (P.E.T.S.) across grades K-2 at all elementary schools.
4. Consider developing a process to follow up with students who have participated in the district's K-3 Talent Development program.
5. Investigate the possibility of creating and using a Future Ready Skills rating scale to help look for gifted factors such as Motivation, Leadership, Creative/Critical Thinking, and Talent Development.
6. Establish a process to identify and address potential barriers to the identification of giftedness in underrepresented student groups, with a specific focus on researching factors contributing to the underrepresentation of African American students in AIG and identifying evidence-based solutions.
7. Consider adding an AIG Progress Reports for K-5 students.
8. Work towards the best practice of DEPs being reviewed multiple times throughout the school year with parents/guardians through student conferences, parent nights, Title I Parent Nights, and upon request by SBC-AIG committee and/or parents/guardians.
9. Develop a system for documenting and monitoring each student's DEP. This system will help ensure that services are implemented as planned, track student progress, and allow for regular updates to be shared with relevant staff and parents.
10. Investigate the creation of an AIG Success Plan, developed collaboratively with the AIG contact and counselor, for use when an AIG student is struggling. This plan should include stakeholder input and an action plan with set and monitored goals.
11. Use EOC data each semester and collect additional data to make identification decisions of students not already identified.

12. Create/locate/integrate checklists to elicit observations of gifted behaviors including observations of creativity, leadership, and specific areas of interests.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Revised SBC-AIG Forms 2, 3, 7, 9, 10 (including RCSS K-2 and K-12 Alternative Screening/Identification forms)
* Internal (district) AIG student identification monitoring tool to monitor and disaggregate AIG students by school, grade, subgroup, gender, race, area(s) of identification
* Data Manager Reports (CogAT scores including local norms)
* AIG Program Specialists' Nomination Logs
* RCSS AIG Checklist (Procedures for AIG forms)
* RCSS AIG Program Identification Flow Chart
* Randolph County School System's Work Force Development Roadmap
* Guidelines for Native Language Assessment or AIG Flow Chart

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

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

Randolph County School System (760) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

*** Practice A**

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

Aligning services to students' advanced learning needs and AIG identification will be a primary focus in the 2025-2028 AIG plan. Several factors have highlighted the need to strengthen this standard. While our current services effectively address the academic and intellectual needs of AIG students, it is increasingly important to tailor our approach to each student's individual interests, talents, and abilities so that a "one size fits all" does not occur.

Students trying to withdraw from the AIG program have prompted us to reconsider how we can better meet their individual needs. As a result, we have developed a new protocol for exiting the program to ensure that all adjustments to service delivery are clearly communicated before a withdrawal decision is made. We do not "de-gift" students, we instead focus on adjusting services to reflect their evolving needs through Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs). This more formalized process involves the AIG program facilitator ensuring that all parties are informed and aligned in the decision-making process. This new process highlights our commitment to matching services to the specific needs of each student.

In collaboration with EC, we have expanded our universal screening process to identify a greater number of students who may qualify for AIG services, including those who are twice exceptional. Additionally, there has been a rise in students identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG), underachieving gifted students, students with disabilities, and highly gifted students. These trends underscore the importance of using comprehensive student profiles to guide the development of the DEPs that address the unique needs of each student.

RCSS offers a continuum of services to address the academic needs of K-12 gifted learners Academically and/or Intellectually: (AI, AG, IG) in the areas of Reading and/or Mathematics. Services are tailored to students' unique academic and social-emotional needs, with the child's DEP aligning with their achievement, performance, motivation, interests, strengths, and overall needs. Students identified as AI and AG are grouped together based on areas of identification in the areas of Reading/English Language Arts and/or Mathematics. Intellectually gifted (IG) students, who may not excel in reading or math, need access to enrichment opportunities that cater to their unique abilities and strengths in other areas. AIG specialists will look for ways to expand opportunities for these students. Some ideas to potentially offer are creative arts, STEM/STEAM exploration, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs, research projects, advanced PE, entrepreneurship, and debate.

RCSS provides a range of services that are designed by grade spans, aligning with district programs and initiatives. The local AIG plan for 2025-2028 offers a more focused approach, emphasizing specific strategies and services for each gifted pathway. Each AIG student receives a new DEP at the start of every year, which is developed by teachers and parents/guardians. Emphasis is placed on using comprehensive student profiles to best match the needs of students to the services they receive. These profiles should guide the selection of appropriate program service options which are categorized into learning environments, content area modifications, and instructional strategies/enrichment opportunities thereby ensuring services are tailored to meet individual student needs.

**Program Service Options:
Grades K-2:**

AIG Specialists and school administrators work collaboratively to utilize data and individual student needs to identify K-2 students for nurturing services. Based upon a referral process, K-2 students may be formally identified for gifted services. Identified students, as well as students identified for nurturing, may receive one or more of the following services provided by AIG Specialists: Resource class "pull out" direct instruction, core classroom "push in" clustered instruction, and consultative independent study (extension/enrichment) assignments developed collaboratively by AIG Specialists and regular education teachers. Regular meetings between AIG specialists and classroom teachers help ensure the most effective differentiation strategies are used based on student progress and needs.

Learning Environments Grades 3-5:

Resource Classroom: This accelerated service option provides students in grades 3-5 the opportunity to receive direct differentiated instruction that extends regular education core curriculum standards. This service is provided by the AIG Specialist in a separate classroom with peers of similar ability, addressing the specific needs of students identified as AG, IG, or AI. This model is referred to as "pull out" services for students in grades 3-5.

In-Class Cluster Grouping with Identified Students: This accelerated service option affords identified students to be grouped for differentiated extension opportunities within the regular education classroom through small group instruction. This model is referred to as "push in" services for grades 3-5. It is recommended that, if there are fewer than six identified AIG students in a grade, they should be clustered together in a single classroom.

Learning Environments Grades 6-8:

Core Classroom Cluster Grouping: This accelerated service option groups identified students having similar academic needs and abilities to a regular education, mixed ability English Language Arts and/or Mathematics classroom. This model allows for targeted instruction that addresses the specific needs of gifted students while ensuring that their intellectual and SEL needs are met in a collaborative environment. This model is the primary service model for identified students in grades 6-8.

Learning Environments Options Grades 9-12:

Honors Courses: Honors courses are advanced content courses that cover traditional content, but also focus on related issues, programs, themes, and concepts. These courses allow students to develop a specific knowledge base and apply it at an advanced level.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses: The AP program offers college level courses and examinations for high school students. AP course descriptions are carefully followed and are taught by teachers who have received specialized training. Courses and examinations are available in several curriculum areas. College credit is available at some colleges and universities for passing AP exams.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery: CDM allows students to demonstrate command of high school course material at a level that exemplifies a deep understanding of the content standards and the ability to apply their knowledge of the material. CDM is the process by which the district uses a body of evidence to award a student credit for a particular course without requiring the student to complete the class instruction.

NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS): NCVPS allows students to take online courses aligned with their advanced ability levels when certain criteria are met, based on course availability and the feasibility within the school day. Students have a wider variety of courses available to them.

iLearn Randolph: RCSS's virtual opportunity for students is iLearn Randolph. Various online courses, both core academic and elective, are offered through Canvas, our learning management system. iLearn Randolph offers students the flexibility to work as an apprentice or intern during part of their school day and access the online course outside of the school day. Additionally, students may need to earn more than four credits in one semester may utilize iLearn Randolph.

Dual Enrollment/College Career Promise: Students may enroll in high school classes and college level courses at the same time through Career and College Promise. Students have a wider variety of courses available to them. This affords them the opportunity to receive college credits while in high school.

Early Graduation: With the help of high school counselors, students can create schedules that enable them to graduate early. This allows them to begin job training or enter a higher institute of learning earlier.

Associate's Degree Pathway: Students have the opportunity to complete an associate's degree while in high school. Students focus on high school level courses in ninth and tenth grade before enrolling in college courses during the junior and senior year.

Workplace Ready Credentials: Students taking CTE courses have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials and college credit during high school. The following CTE programs are offered in RCSS: Animal Science, Automotive Services, Carpentry, Culinary Arts, Interior Design, Masonry, Audio/Visual Technology, Business Management and Administration, Health Sciences, Horticulture, Nursing Fundamentals, Hospitality and Tourism, Early Childhood Development, Drone Technology, Food and Nutrition, Computer Science, Information Technology, Law and Public Safety, Metals Manufacturing, and Marketing.

Grades K-12:

Core Classroom Flexible Grouping: This accelerated service option allows learners to be flexibly grouped on a regular basis. Teachers assign groups using a variety of data sources, including formative and summative assessments, diagnostic reading and math data, MTSS data, and other indicators related to student subgroups, readiness, learning styles, multiple intelligences, and interests. Flexible grouping is a fluid process allowing both identified and non-identified students the opportunity to interact academically, as well as socially and emotionally. This process is continuously reviewed to ensure that students receive opportunities to be challenged based on their individual intellectual needs.

Cross Grade Subject Acceleration: This accelerated service option provides students who need accelerated instruction in one more content areas to be placed in classes with older peers for part of the school day. Students remain with grade level peers for the majority of the school day. This service is used for students who have demonstrated readiness for advanced work in one or more academic areas, and decisions are based on ongoing assessments and collaborative meetings with educators.

Whole Grade Acceleration/Grade Skipping (K-8): Whole grade skipping is appropriate for a small percentage of gifted students whose academic and SEL needs are substantially more advanced than their age/grade peers. The RCSS recognizes and utilizes the IOWA Acceleration Scale (IAS) as a primary tool to guide educators in making important decisions regarding whether a particular student is a candidate for whole grade acceleration. The IOWA Acceleration Scale is administered to students by the school's AIG Specialist or other authorized staff. The principal gathers a committee of school staff, including the AIG Specialist, and may include the AIG Program Specialist and other district staff, to review data from the IOWA Acceleration Scale and other relevant data to make a final decision regarding whole grade acceleration.

School-wide Extension/Enrichment: This accelerated service option provides opportunities for all students, particularly identified students, to participate in small group settings offered during the school day. These opportunities are designed to foster creativity, problem-solving, and leadership skills, particularly in areas such as STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math). All schools have Intervention/Enrichment time built into their school master schedule. RCSS offers a variety of enrichment opportunities that vary from school to school, such as Robotics, Advanced Art, 3D Print Club, Theatre Club, Jazz Band, Chess Club, AVID, Yearbook, FFA, and Battle of the Books.

Other activities and ideas for content modifications and enrichment include:

K-8:



- TicTacToe & Menus: Structured options for students to choose from, allowing them to engage in a range of activities and projects. Students must complete specific activities (e.g., 3 in a row on a TicTacToe grid).
- Socratic Seminars: Students analyze and discuss challenging texts, engaging in critical thinking and formal discussions.
- Differentiated Units/Projects: These activities are designed to integrate curriculum standards while catering to individual learning needs and abilities.
- Pre-testing students: Assessments are given to students before they begin a new topic. These are designed to gauge existing knowledge and understanding of the subject matter so that teachers can tailor instruction and build upon prior learning rather than start from scratch.
- Open ended assignments: Tasks are given that have no single correct answer allowing students to demonstrate their understanding and creativity.

- Tiered Assignments: Tasks are modified based on the student's readiness, with varying levels of difficulty ensuring each student is appropriately challenged.
 - Research Papers & Independent Study: Students choose or are given a research topic to explore in-depth, presenting their findings in an expanded essay or project.
 - Learning Contracts: Agreements between teachers and students for independent work on specific topics, often as part of an independent study.
 - Battle of the Books (4-5): Battle of the Books is a reading comprehension competition in which students answer questions about the books they read by stating the title and author. Competitions progress through local, regional, and state levels.
 - Local Competitions: Game 24 and the Spelling Bee.
- 6-8:**
- National Competitions: American Math Competitions, WordMasters, Math League: Students participate in competitions that enhance their vocabulary, math skills, and reading comprehension.
 - Beta Club: Students who demonstrate academic excellence and good character are invited to join, encouraging civic involvement and leadership.
 - Community Service & After-School Clubs: Opportunities to engage in leadership roles and community projects, fostering a sense of responsibility.
 - Exploratory Activities: Students may explore various interests outside traditional academic subjects, potentially discovering new passions.
 - Battle of the Books: Battle of the Books is a reading comprehension competition in which students answer questions about the books they read by stating the title and author.
- 9-12:**
- Beta Club and After-School Clubs: Students can participate in extracurricular Academic/Interest-Based Clubs and/or competitions and join the Beta Club, a prestigious honor society recognizing academic and personal achievement.
 - Governor's School: A selective, multi-week summer program offering advanced learning opportunities in a specific area of interest (e.g., science, literature).
 - Mentorship & Internships: Students can work with adult mentors in fields of interest, as well as participate in internships to gain real-world experience in their chosen disciplines.
 - Technology Enhanced (Remote) Instruction: NCVPS, iLearn Randolph, NC School of Science and Math, Dual Enrollment
- Extra-Curricular Opportunities:** This service option varies at schools across the district. These services are not exclusive to identified students. Extra-curricular opportunities may be aligned with academics, visual and performing arts, and/or various areas based on student academic strengths and potential adult careers. These activities are also structured to develop leadership, critical thinking, and collaborative skills, with an emphasis on enriching the academic experience of gifted students.
- Independent Study:** This service option is available for identified students who demonstrate exceptional need for accelerated enrichment or extension on a case-by-case basis based upon the unique, individual needs of academically and/or intellectually gifted students. Independent study opportunities are developed collaboratively by the AIG Specialist and regular education teachers. These independent studies are tailored to the individual interests and needs of students, providing them with opportunities to explore topics in-depth and develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and research skills.

Key Factors for Implementation:

Collaboration: Collaboration between AIG Specialists, regular education teachers, and other staff (i.e. EC, ML, counselors, etc.) is essential to ensure the academic, intellectual, and SEL needs of gifted students are met consistently across the K-12 continuum. AIG Specialists should engage in regular, ongoing communication with classroom teachers to plan, implement, and refine differentiated instruction strategies that cater to the unique needs of gifted learners. This collaborative effort ensures that the AIG services provided are not only aligned with the student's individual learning needs but also integrated effectively within the broader educational framework of the classroom.

Professional Development: Survey data from parents and teachers alike indicates a strong need for regular professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in differentiation techniques, such as using tiered assignments, modifying content complexity, and adjusting instructional strategies. These sessions are needed to focus on building teachers' capacity to recognize the varied learning profiles of gifted students, including those who may be twice-exceptional or multilingual learners, ensuring all students receive the appropriate support.

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*** Practice B**

Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the social and emotional needs of AIG students, across all grade levels, K-12, and learning environments, through collaboration with a variety of personnel based on student needs.

The RCSS AIG Program is committed to supporting the SEL needs of gifted students. Addressing SEL needs is crucial to ensuring equity and access for all gifted learners. Gifted students often experience unique social-emotional needs due to their advanced cognitive abilities. To address these needs, AIG services include a focus on nurturing the emotional well-being and social skills of gifted learners.

RCSS mandates annual SEL training for all certified staff members, teacher assistants, nurses, and interventionists, to ensure a unified approach to supporting students' social-emotional growth. Participants are trained to identify and address the special needs of students. Based on feedback from stakeholder focus groups, we believe the strength of our SEL program lies in its community-centered approach. RCSS recognizes that building meaningful relationships is at the heart of student success. When students form a connection with a specific adult, that relationship often proves more impactful than a scripted program. The team approach fosters a sense of collective responsibility, where all staff members play a vital role in the SEL journey. It is understood that it takes all hands-on deck to provide the consistent, personalized support that students need to thrive. This collaborative model ensures that SEL is not just a program, but a shared responsibility woven into the fabric of the school community.

RCSS currently uses a variety of resources depending on the school and grade level. Second Step, Everyday Speech, Restorative Practices, community circles, Olweus Bullying Prevention, Everfi, and the S.T.E.P. Program are programs and resources in our schools. Mental and emotional/mental health units are taught in middle and high school and similar units are taught in elementary as well.

The district trained all principals, assistant principals, MTSS coaches, lead teachers, guidance counselors, social workers, student advocates, and both the District MTSS Leadership and Implementation Teams (K-12) on how to use the Panorama Playbook resource. This professional learning library provides access to hundreds of research-based instructional resources and interventions across academic, behavioral, and life skills domains, supporting a holistic approach within the MTSS framework. It also offers SEL strategies and interventions for all students, including those in AIG programs, promoting their academic and personal development. The goal is to ensure interventions are tailored to individual student needs. To foster collaboration, training was focused on district and school leaders involved in PLCs or teaming structures, ensuring the Panorama Playbook is used in a group, data-driven problem-solving context rather than in isolation. During PLCs, attendance or behavior subcommittees, and Student Problem Solving team meetings, trained leaders can encourage staff to log in and explore resources for selecting core strategies or interventions.

AIG specialists collaborate with school counselors, social workers, and other support staff to implement strategies that promote the social-emotional development of gifted students. In grades 3-5, Jacob's Ladder Affective Lessons are conducted with AIG students. These lessons focus on developing

emotional intelligence and empathy, often using scenarios involving animals or relatable situations to encourage understanding and responsible decision-making. The lessons build upon the core critical thinking skills taught in Jacob's Ladder by incorporating emotional aspects into the learning process. Key components of the program include empathy-based scenarios, moral dilemmas, and exercises in active listening and communication. This approach helps students develop empathy, improve social skills, and strengthen their critical thinking abilities.

In addition to the Jacob Ladder lessons for K-5 students, group counseling sessions are also implemented as needed across K-12 to help gifted students manage common challenges such as perfectionism, anxiety, or frustration. These sessions focus on building communication skills, fostering healthy peer relationships, and teaching coping strategies to ensure students feel supported both academically and emotionally. Small groups are also conducted with students who need help with transitions focusing on self-esteem and motivation. Many counselors teach Zones of Regulation and some of our schools use it school wide. Furthermore, DEPs may include specific SEL strategies or supports, such as consultative services with the school counselor, to provide tailored emotional and social support for each student. This integrated approach ensures that AIG students, from elementary through high school, receive comprehensive support that address both their academic and SEL needs.

The district truly believes a primary approach to building the capacity of all stakeholders to meet SEL needs of identified students is through targeted professional development that includes high quality training, as well as equips them with resources and materials.

K-12 Professional development and areas of focus include:

- Revision of district SBC-AIG Form 5 Differentiated Education Plan to more specifically address the SEL needs of gifted students.
- Focus on the SEL characteristics and needs of gifted learners through the local professional development offerings.
- Utilizing collaborative team structures (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, Multi-Tiered Supports of System meetings, Counselor meetings, Exceptional Children/English as Second Language meetings) to analyze specific SEL data collected through MTSS.
- SEL lessons provided by elementary counselors include a focus on growth mindset strategies, specific SEL characteristics of AIG students (e.g., perfectionism, gender differences, underachievement, peer relationships, bullying, and creativity) and other topics such as empathy, conflict/resolution and goal setting.
- Utilizing the Panorama Playbook resource to address needs through intervention.

  [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.

RCSS is committed to continuous improvement, with a focus on equity and excellence for all students. Conversations at all levels, from senior leadership meetings to school-level professional learning communities (PLCs), emphasize this commitment. This focus creates opportunities for the AIG Program Specialist, AIG Specialists, and other stakeholders to regularly review how policies, programs, and instructional practices align with best practices and meet the unique needs of gifted students. It also allows them to serve as an advocate for the consistent representation and needs of gifted students across district meetings.

The AIG Program Specialist participates in district leadership meetings on a monthly basis, where current and new policies are reviewed, and feedback is exchanged among stakeholders. These meetings also provide opportunities for the AIG Program Specialist to explain the implications of district policies and programs for gifted learners.

In addition to leadership meetings, the AIG Program Specialist is an active member of a district professional learning team (PLT) that meets quarterly. These meetings foster rich collaboration across all instructional departments, including English as a Second Language (ESL), Exceptional Children (EC), Media and

Technology, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). These meetings ensure that AIG services are integrated across all programs, with shared resources and aligned decisions that support equity and access for all student populations, including gifted students. The collaboration fosters alignment between AIG and other district initiatives.

Additionally, the AIG Program Specialist is a member of the MTSS District Implementation Team and District Leadership Team, ensuring that AIG services are seamlessly integrated into the MTSS framework. Strong partnerships are developed across departments, including CTE, ESL, and EC, to align efforts and break down silos. This collaborative approach has led to the development of new protocols for identifying twice-exceptional (2e) students, those who are both gifted and have disabilities, ensuring that these students receive the tailored supports and services they need.

Through collaboration with CTE, we are working to provide more streamline communication to parents and the community about the many options students have in RCSS. Additionally, in partnership with the testing and EL departments, we have aligned modifications for EL and EC students when testing for AIG services. We have also developed a new protocol and policy for handling students who request to withdraw from the AIG program, ensuring a consistent and thoughtful process for addressing such requests.

In alignment with the district's priorities, the AIG Program Specialist collaborates with school and district administrative teams to ensure that the needs of AIG students are consistently addressed in both practice and policy. This includes reviewing all school-wide and district-level policies related to AIG to ensure they reflect current best practices and making recommendations for new policies as needed. Through this process, the district ensures that AIG students are not only represented but also have equitable access to the services and resources they need to succeed.

The AIG Program Specialist conducts an annual inventory of AIG resources in middle and elementary schools to ensure that every school in the district has access to the necessary resources for implementing the AIG program. This systematic approach ensures that resources are distributed equitably across the district, supporting the needs of gifted learners in all schools. Informal needs assessments are conducted to determine types of resources (e.g., materials, technology, professional development) that will most effectively support learning.

Overall, the integration of AIG services within the broader district framework is a collaborative and ongoing process. Through strategic partnerships, resource allocation, and continuous policy review, RCSS ensures that the AIG program is aligned with district priorities and effectively addresses the needs of gifted students across the system.

A continued effort to include AIG specialists into teaming structures and the broader MTSS framework is essential to ensuring that gifted students are consistently represented and advocated for within this system. Creative solutions to removing barriers, such as scheduling conflicts, should be explored and addressed. Efforts to facilitate this shift are already underway, including the introduction of the new MTSS diamond infographic at all stakeholder and focus group meetings. Educating all stakeholders about the "other side of the diamond" is crucial in building a foundational understanding of how to include gifted students in the planning process, ensuring they are not overlooked.

As the district moves forward with the implementation of this AIG plan, it is intended to incorporate several strategies, such as including AIG specialists in data meetings, sharing data from CFA (Common Formative Assessment) results with AIG teachers, and providing professional development opportunities for AIG staff to strengthen their collaboration within MTSS. Additionally, the plan is to develop a more systematic approach for monitoring the academic progress of gifted students and integrating their needs into school-wide interventions. Another step will involve ensuring AIG students are included in decision-making processes related to instructional practices and interventions for all student groups, promoting a more inclusive and holistic approach to supporting diverse learners. Finally, the district will include the diamond infographic in all communication with teachers and administrators to reinforce the importance of including gifted students in the planning process and ensure consistency in understanding across all levels.

*** Practice D**

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

The RCSS Board of Education Policy 3130 outlines expectations for grouping students and provides a framework for implementing flexible grouping practices. The district requires all principals to complete an Equity Plan Assurance Statement requiring them to detail the procedures they use to place students in classrooms. At the beginning of the year, student grouping and classroom placement are determined using a variety of data sources, including mCLASS assessments, iReady diagnostic results, End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) scores, as well as behavioral data, attendance records, and grades. The Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) is also a valuable resource for identifying students' strengths and needs, which helps to guide the development of initial groupings. Additionally, data from the Multi-Tiered System of MTSS provides a holistic view of each student's academic and non-academic needs. These combined data points ensure that students are strategically placed in mixed ability classrooms where they can receive appropriate support and challenge, fostering their academic growth and development by targeting areas where they are most likely to benefit from enrichment or additional support.

Throughout the year, flexible grouping practices are supported by ongoing analysis of multiple data sources. Diagnostic assessments—such as K-2 math, mCLASS assessments (grades 3-5), and iReady Reading and Math assessments (grades 3-8)—provide teachers with valuable insights to inform instructional planning. These assessments allow teachers to make data-driven decisions about re-grouping students based on their progress, ensuring that groupings remain fluid and responsive. Teachers also analyze formative assessments, classroom performance, and social-emotional data to adjust groupings and instructional practices. This ensures all students receive the appropriate support, whether they need enrichment or intervention.

Collaboration among educators is key to ensuring the effectiveness of flexible grouping. Administrators and teachers collaborate to adjust groupings as needed during the school year. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are a key component in this process, providing teachers with regular opportunities to analyze student data together, share strategies for differentiation, and adjust groupings to meet students' evolving needs. Flexible grouping practices are intentionally linked with instructional planning, ensuring that both gifted and non-gifted students receive appropriate instruction tailored to their needs. PLCs work closely with the MTSS team to review data related to achievement, behavior, and SEL needs, adjusting groupings based on the whole child approach.

A critical part of supporting flexible grouping is the inclusion of enrichment/intervention time in the school's master schedule. This dedicated "I/E Block" allows for targeted instruction, further supporting groupings based on student needs beyond the core gifted services outlined in the DEP. During this time, students receive additional enrichment or intervention, as appropriate, based on the data-driven groupings and the support they require. The AIG Program Facilitator and the MTSS Specialist are working together to strengthen the I/E block across the district.

Securly Flex (formerly known as Flex Time Manager) is an online portal available to schools that helps organize flex periods. While it is accessible to all schools, it is currently used by several middle and high schools to address learning loss and provide enrichment opportunities. The program prioritizes students in need of remediation while also offering options for those who are ready for enrichment. Through the portal, students can check their assignments or select which enrichment activity they would like to attend, giving them more voice and choice in their education.

*** 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.

Annual district AIG survey data responses indicate that 42% of parents/guardians and 39% of certified staff feel adequately informed about differentiated instruction services, instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan. Survey responses indicate that 70% of parents/guardians have a clear understanding of the screening, referral, and identification processes. An area of focus for the RCSS AIG Plan 2025-2028 is to implement specific strategies for improved communication with all staff regarding differentiated services and instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan. These strategies will also include increasing the opportunities to educate parents/guardians on the screening, referral, and identification processes.

The following strategies are in place for informing district stakeholders:

- RCSS AIG Plan is posted to district website (www.randolph.k12.nc.us); copies of the plan are provided to each school; copies of plan are provided to district staff.
- RCSS AIG Parent/Guardian Handbook (English/Spanish) is accessible on the website; printed copies are distributed to AIG Specialists to share with staff.
- Focus groups have been formed, and relevant components of the AIG Local plan were shared with each group. This allows stakeholders to provide feedback while also establishing expectations for their specific area of responsibility.
- Information regarding suggested courses for AIG students is published in the RCSS Program of Studies.
- AIG Informational meetings have been planned for the beginning of the year at each middle school for parents and students. These meetings will be face to face. Access to the presentations will be on the school's website for parent and community access.
- Brochures, Flowcharts, Pathway maps, Podcasts and other media will be distributed in print and accessible online. AIG specialists will collaborate to develop clear, concise, and high-quality materials that are consistent and tailored to the needs of their audience. These resources will include all essential elements and reflect diverse perspectives. These items will be available in August of 2025.
- AIG Specialists provide training/professional development on the components of the DEP to core teachers during professional learning team meetings.
- AIG Specialists present the RCSS AIG plan and regulations related to gifted education at back-to-school faculty meetings and professional learning communities (PLCs) using our slide presentation, ensuring that all schools receive the same information. Additionally, the RCSS AIG presentation is available to all school and district personnel via email at the beginning of the school year for further reference.
- An AIG Handbook is given to all AIG Specialists containing flow charts, program fliers, our AIG Pathway Map, and Flow Chart for Identification as well as the Local AIG Plan at the beginning of the year. The Gifted Guidebook: Snapshot of Success guide is also included.
- The RCSS AIG webpage will be revamped to include all the materials. New sections will feature resources for parents, links to CTE and Talent Development opportunities, lists of enrichment programs, and videos highlighting students engaging in these activities. Additional updates will include success stories, gifted education resources, and more parent resources. This will be available in August of 2025.
- AIG Specialists convene School-Based AIG Committee meetings to discuss development and distribution procedures for Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs).
- AIG Program Specialist meets annually with counselors and lead teachers to provide professional development on specific services, content modifications, and program/instructional strategies that comprise the DEP.
- AIG Program Specialist delivers a copy of the AIG local plan, including flow charts and other key charts, to principals during a one-on-one/small group meeting in the summer. Additionally, they are given our 'Gifted Guidebook: Snapshot of Success™' that highlights the major elements of the plan that can be used as a quick reference.
- Principals or designees are expected to monitor the development and implementation of DEPs.
- Principals are committed to providing opportunities during professional learning team (PLT) meetings during or after the school day for AIG Specialists to meet with core teachers to discuss differentiated services and instruction outlined in identified students' DEPs.

NOTE: All communication tools listed above will be made available in languages represented in our area.

*** Practice F**

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

AIG specialists utilize school-level PLCs and other required meetings to communicate K-12 AIG services to all staff. They also provide information about gifted students at key transition points within grade spans (e.g., from 3rd to 4th grade). Critical transitions, such as from 5th to 6th grade and from 8th to 9th grade, are planned collaboratively between district and school personnel.

When 5th graders are preparing to transition to middle school, AIG specialists send nomination logs and nurtured lists to middle schools AIG contact to ensure continuity of services. AIG specialists are available to meet with middle school teachers as needed to discuss individual student needs. Additionally, all 5th grade students participate in a tour of the middle school they will attend.

To further support the transition process, all elementary schools host a Transition Night focused on helping families prepare for the next grade level. Middle school teachers attend these events to answer questions and provide valuable information about the upcoming transition. Middle School teachers also visit elementary schools in their feeder patterns to review schedules, explain class options based on student choice, and discuss opportunities available during the school day.

Middle school teachers and counselors compile a list of AIG students and send it to the high school, along with recommendations for student placements based on data from grades 6-8. High school counselors then meet with all 8th grade students, by class, to explain the available course options, requirements, and the process for selecting classes as incoming freshmen.

Additionally, Career Development Plans are conducted one-on-one in both middle and high school to help students understand the educational and career choices available to them based on their areas of interest.

As we work towards aligning services more closely with students' needs, a key goal will be to ensure that all staff who directly interact with the students, such as counselors, ESL teachers, EC teachers, and others, are involved in the process.

*** 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.

RCSS complies with state-mandated policies and also develops local policies and procedures to support opportunities for acceleration for all students. Identification of students for acceleration include aptitude and achievement data, and student demonstration of mastery of grade level standards. In addition to aptitude and achievement, students are exposed to acceleration opportunities such as enrichment experiences that foster the growth and development of specific academic domains that support creativity and productivity as students advance from kindergarten to high school. Teams of RCSS educators including AIG Specialists, the AIG Program Specialist, school counselors, regular education teachers, administrators, and parents work collaboratively to identify acceleration options that best meet the needs of qualifying students.

Local Board of Education policies and procedures provide guidance, as well as remove barriers, for accelerated opportunities for students. Policies include:
*Policy 3:130 - Encourages and offers guidance for both heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping of students. This policy supports scheduling gifted students into core classroom clusters, as well as making decisions for flexible grouping, grade/subject acceleration, and high school Honors and Advanced Placement courses.

*Policy 3460 - Provides guidance for high school graduation requirements and outlines plans, such as the Future Ready Core plan for students.

*Policy 3420 - Student Accountability and Promotion directly addresses and supports acceleration for students who demonstrate need for extension beyond grade level standards and curriculum.

*Policy 3101 - Dual Enrollment provides opportunities for students to enroll in rigorous, expanded classes taught by a college, university, community college or other approved entity that will adequately prepare students for future educational and workplace endeavors.

*Policy 3620 - Extra-curricular activities include opportunities through: clubs and societies, vocational organizations, student government, student publications, student social events, student performances and competitions, and interscholastic and intramural athletics.

Grades K-2

Early Admission to Kindergarten:

RCSS complies with the state legislation [G.S. 115C-364(d)] allowing a child to enter kindergarten early if he/she demonstrates an extraordinary level of academic ability and maturity. When a parent/guardian of student requests, the principal convenes a committee of professional educators that includes school staff, and may include school level AIG Specialists and/or the AIG Program Specialist, and district staff to consider the required five factors as outlined in state policy to determine a student's eligibility to enter kindergarten as a four-year-old. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to present information required by state policy to the principals. Early admission to kindergarten does not automatically result in gifted identification.

Grades 3-12 AIG Program Services:

- * K-5 Resource (Pull Out)/Core Classroom Cluster Grouping (Push In)
- * Core Classroom Cluster Grouping (Grades 6-12)
- * Math 1 (Grade 8); Advanced Mathematics Courses – for students grades 3-12 scoring Level 5 on End-of-Grade/End-of-Course Mathematics Tests
- * Core Classroom Flexible Grouping
- * Cross Grade/Subject Acceleration (Grades K-8)
- * Extension/Enrichment - regular education classrooms/designated time in master schedule

Grade Acceleration/Skipping:

Randolph County School System recognizes and uses the Iowa Acceleration Scale as a primary tool to guide educators in making important decisions regarding whether a particular student is a candidate for whole grade acceleration (grade skipping). The Iowa Acceleration Scale is administered to students by the school's AIG Specialist or other authorized staff. The principal convenes a committee of educators that includes school and district staff, and may include school-level AIG Specialists and/or the AIG Program Specialist, to review data from the Iowa Acceleration Scale and other relevant data to render a final decision regarding whole-grade acceleration.

Independent Study:

Independent Study opportunities are available for identified students who demonstrate an exceptional need for accelerated enrichment or extension on a case-by-case basis based on the unique, individual needs of academically and/or intellectually gifted students. Independent study opportunities are developed collaboratively by the AIG Specialist and regular education teacher.

Grades 6-12 AIG Program Services:

Credit By Demonstrated Mastery (CDM):

Students who can demonstrate mastery of content based on a body of evidence can be rewarded credit for the course without being required to complete classroom instruction. North Carolina State BOE policy GCS- M-001 Section 8 Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is the process by which each school district shall, based upon a body of evidence, award a student credit for a high school course without requiring the student to complete the classroom instruction or enroll in the course for a certain amount of seat time. Mastery is defined as a student's command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and the ability to apply his or her knowledge of the material. In other words, CDM allows students with deep understanding of the content prior to taking the course, to receive a high school course credit. The intention of this policy is to enable students to access more advanced content to meet their academic needs.

CDM is a multi-phase assessment process can only be earned for standard level courses. The CDM program provides an opportunity for students to learn new content, to challenge themselves with the next level of rigor in a subject, and even graduate early. This option is not designed to replace existing accelerated pathways, such as Honors, Advanced Placement or Career and College Promise Courses, but is intended to allow select students the opportunity to bypass a course in which they already excel.

Career and Technical Education (CTE):

North Carolina has made a significant investment in developing students and programs to meet the needs of the future workforce. Through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, public schools offer opportunities for students to develop career awareness in 5th grade, explore careers in grades 6-8, and experience leadership, career development, and career-aligned content in grades 9-12.

In grades 6-12, each student participates in the Career Development Planning process and the work-based learning opportunities associated with the CTE Department's College and Career Continuum.

In grades 9-12, RCSS students have the opportunity to engage in leadership, career development, and career-aligned content. Each student participates in the Career Development Planning process and works with the CTE Department's College and Career Continuum to explore work-based learning opportunities. The RCSS CTE Department offers 26 pathways, allowing students to earn industry-recognized credentials where applicable.

Grade 9-12

Honors Level Courses:

RCSS students have access to a variety of honors-level courses in high school. These courses are identified in the RCSS Program of Studies. Honors-level courses typically have a faster pace than standard-level courses. They offer additional rigor, complexity, and creativity compared to standard-level courses.

Career and College Promise (CCP):

RCSS partners with Randolph Community College to offer dual enrollment opportunities through the CCP program. If the high school student qualifies, they may earn high school credit by completing community college coursework. CCP courses may be taken in the College Transfer pathway or the Career and Technical Education pathway. These courses count for both high school and college credit. Tuition is free for families.

Randolph Early College High School:

RCSS also partners with Randolph Community College to offer the Randolph Early College High School. Randolph Early College High School is a choice school for students and families. It is an opportunity for the students to earn both a high school diploma and an associate's degree and/or CTE credentials at the same time.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses:

Advanced Placement (AP) is a program developed by the College Board to offer college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. RCSS offers 22 Advanced Placement courses in traditional high schools.

Several AP courses satisfy graduation requirements for North Carolina students as outlined in State Board policy. AP exams are free for North Carolina public high school students enrolled in these courses. Colleges and universities may likely offer college credit for these courses if the student scores a 3 or above on the exam. All of the 16 colleges in the UNC System offer this credit.

Accelerated Graduation Path

RCSS highly recommends the completion of a four-year, 28-credit graduation path. However, students meeting graduation requirements by successfully completing 22 credits may be eligible for graduation at the end of the third school year. To be eligible for early graduation, a student must be sixteen years of age with three years of high school completed. The student must have parent/guardian permission (if under 18/not emancipated). The student should have a plan for higher education, employment, or enlistment after graduation.

Upon graduation, students who elect to complete the Accelerated Graduation Path are no longer eligible for school support and services (such as athletics, social events, and child nutrition). Families who are interested in pursuing the Accelerated Graduation Path for their student should contact the school counselor for a meeting. Students who plan to participate are encouraged to share their intent prior to entering ninth grade.

NCVPS

North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) is North Carolina's state supplemental program and leader in online education, providing inclusive learning opportunities for students across the state. RCSS offers a variety of courses through NCVPS. Parents may check with the student's school counselor for a listing of courses offered through NCVPS.

iLearn Randolph: RCSS's virtual opportunity for students is iLearn Randolph. Various online courses, both core academic and elective, are offered through Canvas, our learning management system. iLearn Randolph offers students the flexibility to work as an apprentice or intern during part of their school day and access the online course outside of the school day. Additionally, students may need to earn more than four credits in one semester may utilize iLearn Randolph.

Governor's School:

Each summer, the North Carolina Governor's School offers a unique opportunity for high-achieving rising juniors and seniors to learn with their peers from across the state in a four-week residential program at two college campus sites. Parents can receive more information on eligibility and the application process by contacting your student's school counselor or visit the Governor's School website.

*** Practice H**

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

RCSS is committed to cultivating and developing the potential of young (K-3) students. RCSS uses P.E.T.S. (Primary Education Thinking Skills) lessons at each elementary school. The K-5 AIG Specialists lead this effort in their respective schools. P.E.T.S. lessons focusing on convergent and divergent thinking occur during the first semester, and lessons focusing on evaluative and visual/spatial thinking skills occur in the second semester. All third grade students participate in P.E.T.S. lessons and CogAT test preparation activities. P.E.T.S. helps create personalized portfolios for talented learners, supporting a flexible approach to their education. Additionally, we have recently purchased the book, *Seeds: Episodes for Enrichment and Diagnosis* by Brian Housand for every K-5 AIG Specialist to be used as another resource for our Talent Development efforts. This resource helps build both thinking and feeling skills, convergent and divergent thinking, cooperative skills, and reflective skills strengthening resilient habits of mind. Both resources fit easily into any primary curriculum and gives students with different strengths a chance to shine.

At the elementary level, students are provided with opportunities for enrichment beyond the standard curriculum. This includes advanced math and reading groups that allow students to delve deeper into mathematical concepts and challenge their cognitive skills. Enrichment clubs and book clubs engage students in activities that stimulate intellectual curiosity, develop critical thinking skills, and foster a love for learning.

Strategies to grow the potential of all K-2 students are in place across all elementary schools. Classroom teachers should be fostering creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking through intentional opportunities to strengthen communication, collaboration, and leadership.

AIG Specialists may nurture individual and/or small groups of K-2 students through resource class "pull out" and/or core classroom "push in" instruction. AIG Specialists also consult with regular education core teachers to provide input on differentiated extension/enrichment opportunities for all students that include talent development strategies within the regular education class.

All K-5 students have Art, Music, and PE classes, which expose them to creative and physical activities that build their talents. Many of the elementary schools have STEAM labs where all students engage in hands-on activities learning across science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. The goal is to foster curiosity and critical thinking, helping students connect ideas across disciplines while developing problem-solving and creative skills. Additionally, RCSS media specialists have makerspace labs (including a 3D printer, a Cameo, and Lego sets) and incorporate many talent development opportunities in their instruction. School counselors incorporate critical thinking skills, problem solving, goal setting, and conflict/resolution in their lessons. This school-wide approach to talent development allows all students to be reached, providing multiple adults the opportunity to recognize and observe the unique talents and strengths each student possesses.

An area for improvement in the 2025-2028 plan is strengthening collaboration between AIG specialists and other instructional staff (art, music, media, PE, counselors) to better identify and support talent development. Special consideration should be given to multilingual (ML) students with exceptional potential, especially those whose talents may be harder to recognize due to language barriers. Effective communication structures will be key to this collaboration, and we may need to explore instructional strategies and evidence-based resources to support this work. While our foundation in growth mindset, early identification, enrichment, and SEL is strong, professional development in areas like differentiation, collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, and metacognitive strategies could further enhance our approach.

To expand talent development opportunities, particularly in schools with historically lower student identification rates, a pilot program will be launched. In year one, selected schools will receive training for K-2 teachers on implementing the P.E.T.S. weekly in their classrooms. Data will be collected to ensure fidelity of instruction. AIG Specialist will work with classroom teachers to develop portfolios for students who demonstrate strong potential in a variety of thinking skills. In years two and three, we will track these student cohorts, implementing further activities and data collection, to assess the program's effectiveness and determine its feasibility for district-wide expansion.

*** Practice 1**

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.

Equitable Access to Advanced Learning Opportunities: Mindsets, Policies, and Practices

Equitable access to advanced learning opportunities is dependent upon the mindsets, policies, and practices of the district. Revised AIG identification criteria outlined in the 2019-2022 local AIG plan afforded more students across all subgroups opportunities to be identified as gifted and talented. AIG identification criteria and placement include aptitude and achievement testing data as primary indicators of potential academic and intellectual giftedness. The Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT) assesses students' academic and reasoning skills. A point of pride for RCSS is the universal screening process at third and fifth grades. RCSS includes the recognition and use of CogAT nonverbal (NV) partial composite aptitude scores when screening all students for potential giftedness. This practice has been in place since 2013. Building upon this practice, the district uses alternative aptitude tests such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) to assess nonverbal strengths of students.

Recognizing and Addressing Under-Represented Populations

Recognizing nonverbal (NV) aptitude scores often results in under-represented populations of students demonstrating potential giftedness, resulting in formal identification and/or nurturing services. The use of local norms for under-represented multi-lingual subgroups, along with the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA Access) data, norm-referenced EC core reading multiple measure assessments (phonological skills, decoding skills, comprehension skills, fluency skills), MTSS Data Maps, universal screeners, and common formative assessments (CFAs) provide more in-depth student learner profiles, ultimately casting a wider net for gifted identifications. These efforts directly impact mindsets, policies, and practices to promote more equitable access to advanced learning opportunities. The K-12 Alternative Identification (Form 3) captures multiple data sources beyond formal identification data sources to create more in-depth student learner profiles, which will afford more students opportunities to demonstrate their strengths, talents, and potential giftedness.

Advanced Learning Opportunities in Mathematics: Legislative Support

North Carolina Senate Bill 500 (2019) mandates that advanced math opportunities be offered to students in grades 3-5 who score at the highest level on the end-of-grade (EOG) math test. AIG specialists provide gifted services to these students at each elementary school. In middle school, students in grades 6 and 7 who score at the highest level on the EOG math test are clustered with gifted math students. Eighth-grade students scoring at the highest level on the seventh-grade math EOG test are enrolled in Math 1. High school students scoring at the highest level on any end-of-course (EOC) math test are placed in the next advanced math course. We identify gifted students through data pulls of those who score Level 5 on EOG/EOC tests. We are proud to highlight the fact that our AIG Specialist in K-5 currently pull all students who scored a Level 5 in math and in reading.

To ensure appropriate Math 1 placement, all 8th graders scoring Level 3, 4, or 5 on the 7th-grade EOG complete a Math Placement Rubric. This comprehensive approach considers multiple data points beyond the EOG, including grades, teacher recommendations, iReady MOY diagnostic data, EVAAS probability, and EOG cut scores. This multifaceted evaluation serves as a crucial method to identify and challenge both students formally identified as AIG and

those who demonstrate advanced potential but may not yet meet AIG criteria. By looking beyond a single test score, the rubric acts as a safety net, ensuring that students with strong mathematical aptitude, regardless of their AIG status, are appropriately placed in Math 1 to foster their growth and provide them with challenging coursework. This proactive strategy helps us avoid overlooking high-achieving students and provides opportunities for advanced learners to excel.

Intentional Talent Development 4-12

To cultivate and nurture student potential, the district has implemented a variety of intentional and tailored talent development practices across the K-12 continuum. These practices are designed not only to identify and support advanced learners but also to ensure that each student's unique strengths and interests are fully developed. (Please see Practice 2A, G, and J for a comprehensive list of opportunities.)

In middle and high school, the district offers mentorship programs and job shadowing initiatives through the work of CTE. These programs provide students with opportunities to connect with professionals and community members in various fields, broadening their exposure to potential careers and areas of interest. Interest-based exploration activities, such as specialized workshops and projects, encourage students to explore topics they are passionate about, building skills in critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

The district also emphasizes personalized learning through career exploration and pathway programs. All students in grade 6-12 have Career Development Plans (CDP) that evolve over time moving from self-exploration and goals, to career pathway alignment. Our CTE department provides a multitude of opportunities for students beginning in 5th grade and continuing until 12th grade. One example is that fifth-grade students are given the opportunity to visit local high schools within their feeder patterns. These visits provide them with a firsthand look at the diverse opportunities available at the secondary level, inspiring them to stay engaged in their educational journey and motivating them to explore their passions further. This structured exposure to future possibilities also helps students develop a growth mindset, recognizing that they have the potential to excel in various fields if they continue to apply themselves.

The RCSS CTE department has also created a "Workforce Roadmap" aimed at developing employability skills starting in 5th grade, with a focus on building work-based competencies that progress into apprenticeships for the next level. As part of this effort, CTE is expanding internships and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for 11th and 12th graders through a new initiative called 'Work Ready Randolph'. This initiative will provide students with valuable work experience, allowing them to earn high school credit while gaining essential on-the-job training. It benefits both students and employers, especially as Randolph County is experiencing unprecedented economic growth.

Support for Middle and High School Students: AVID and Frontloading Strategies

A point of pride from the RCSS AIG Plan 2022-2025 was the implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) across six schools (two feeder patterns) in the district. AVID provides strategic, intentional support to students in the academic middle who demonstrate determination and potential if given the appropriate academic, social, and emotional support tools to succeed academically. AVID opens doors for students to be successful in advanced learning courses and opportunities. The district is seeing much success and are working to continue growing the program.

Randolph County School System remains dedicated to sustaining and expanding this impactful program within the participating schools. Demonstrating this commitment, an additional 16 staff members received comprehensive training this year. This cohort includes a diverse range of stakeholders: administrators, central office personnel, teachers, Career and Technical Education (CTE) professionals, and site coordinators. Over the past three years, we have strategically grown the program's reach to include 9th, 10th, and, as of this year, 11th-grade students. This phased expansion will culminate in the 2025-2026 school year with the inclusion of 12th grade, ensuring a comprehensive program offering across the entire high school experience.

The majority of training on frontloading has been conducted through collaboration with the ML and EC departments. Teachers integrate vocabulary introduction, activation of prior knowledge, and provide background information as key components of their lessons. Emphasis is also placed on using visual supports, multimodal approaches, and fostering active engagement. These strategies not only help students more easily access complex material but also prepare them for deeper understanding as the lesson unfolds. These practices are crucial in promoting equity and access for all students. By implementing frontloading strategies, teachers create an inclusive learning environment where all students, regardless of their background or learning needs, can engage with and succeed in the content. Particularly for students from marginalized or underserved backgrounds, these strategies ensure they receive the support needed to thrive. Ultimately, frontloading fosters an equitable learning space by addressing diverse needs and providing multiple pathways for understanding.

Promoting Mindset and Equity in Education

A critical component in promoting equitable access to advanced learning opportunities is ensuring that all stakeholders share a commitment to fostering a

proper mindset. It is essential to shift perceptions about who can be gifted and who can excel in advanced learning environments, particularly for students from underrepresented populations. To this end, the district is implementing several strategies to change mindsets and promote equity in learning.

Professional Development and Educator Support

Professional development plays a vital role in this process. During the next three years, RCSS will look at planning ongoing training focused on identifying and challenging biases, recognizing potential where it may not be immediately obvious, and fostering an inclusive classroom culture. Equipping educators with strategies for recognizing and addressing their own biases, should help the district ensure that they are better prepared to see the strengths and talents of all students, regardless of background. Recent efforts have been initiated as the district has refined its practices to more effectively identify twice-exceptional students, leading to greater awareness that giftedness can also exist among EC students.

Next Steps for Mindset Shifts and Data Transparency

To effectively shift mindsets and promote equity and excellence, the district will be implementing a more intentional process for examining and presenting data to stakeholders. By using data to identify the strengths and potential of students who may have previously been overlooked, the district can work to reframe perceptions about who can excel in advanced opportunities.

A data-driven approach is essential for ensuring that students from underrepresented groups, such as culturally and ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, multilingual learners, and those identified as highly gifted or twice exceptional, have access to these opportunities. Data plays a central role in guiding intentional talent development practices, allowing the district to identify students who may benefit from targeted interventions, including additional support in advanced classes or enrichment activities.

While new data has been gathered from recent surveys, focus groups, and Advisory Board meetings, it is important to ensure that data is shared consistently with all stakeholders through professional development, stakeholder meetings, and parent workshops. These efforts will help educate and empower stakeholders to support the district's commitment to equity and excellence in education. Regular data discussions will be crucial in informing the development of policies and practices that foster the right mindset, ensuring that all students—regardless of background—have equal access to opportunities for success.

Ongoing efforts will also be made to remind PLC teams of this core objective, reinforcing the importance of using data to guide decision-making and support all students' growth.

*** Practice J**

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

RCSS supports and provides all students K-12 extra-curricular activities. Feedback from online surveys across stakeholder groups, as well as feedback from administrators, counselors, and teachers during face-to-face meetings throughout the planning stage of the next generation AIG plan validates that extra-curricular opportunities occur on a regular basis across the district. The challenge is to ensure that the extra-curricular activities offered address the interests and unique needs of gifted students and extend their academic learning experiences outside of the core classes. To achieve this, surveys, interest inventories, and anecdotal data from conversations with students are invaluable tools. Some schools conduct these assessments through formal surveys, student conferences, or informal discussions with teachers, ensuring that the data collected is comprehensive and reflective of students' true interests. These insights help in the creation of tailored extra-curricular programming that aligns with students' passions, encourages intellectual growth, and complements their academic pursuits.

Survey data indicate 73% of elementary students, 63% of secondary students, 53% of parents, 30% of certified staff, and 41.8% of classroom teachers indicate that opportunities for extra-curricular programs that further enhance and develop the interests of gifted students are in place across the district. Elementary and secondary gifted students expressed interest in more activities that are math and/or science related. Students indicate interest in clubs

focusing on technology, robotics, coding, and gaming. Opportunities to participate in field trips and hands-on learning, including competitions, were noted across survey data. K-12 students are interested in service-learning projects to help others and their community as well as extra-curricular activities that further

develop their artistic and musical talent. When consolidating all stakeholder input, STEM/STEAM and Robotics was the most frequent response. An area of focus for the RCSS AIG Plan 2025-2028 is to utilize stakeholder survey data to increase extra-curricular activities across the district/schools, and to be intentional and strategic in connecting extra-curricular activities to the unique needs of gifted learners. To address these concerns, the district will enhance communication about the availability and impact of these programs to increase awareness and understanding among parents and staff. Inclusion of extracurricular opportunities will be added to the website, informational sessions, DEP group meetings, newsletters, and in person meetings.

Enrichment opportunities play a crucial role in addressing the needs and fostering the talents and interests of the AIG population. These opportunities are available both during the school day and after school, offering students more chances to explore their passions. Information about after-school programs is shared through newsletters, websites, and phone calls. To encourage participation, students complete interest inventories that help guide them toward relevant enrichment activities.

Current extra-curricular activities include:

- STEM experiences
- Computer Coding (6-12)
- National Honors Society/Beta Club
- Pre-AP English I
- Battle of the Books
- Project/Problem-Based Learning
- North Carolina Governor's School for rising seniors
- College field trips
- Pre-SAT (PSAT)/Advanced Placement potential support opportunities
- Newspaper/Journalism/Yearbook
- Various clubs in the area of visual and performing arts (FBLA, FFA, HOSA, DECA, Skills USA),
- Robotics
- Advanced Art
- 3D Print Club
- Theatre Club
- Jazz Band
- Chess Club
- AVID
- Cooking Club
- Hunter Safety
- Service Club
- Student Council
- GoFar (running club)
- eSports
- Jr. Civitans
- Safety Patrol
- Pre AP Biology
- Senior Student Advisory Team
- Student Ambassadors (Elementary Tutoring Program
- AVID Team Tutoring
- Lego Club

CTE provides a talent development initiative that focuses on middle school career data notebooks for each student beginning in grade 5 and continuing through grade 12. The activities and experiences that align with students' interests and areas of academic expertise challenge students to be innovative, critical thinkers, with future ready skills (College and Career Ready).

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Clarify not only by grade span, but identification pathways, differentiated experiences for identified students.
2. Develop a K-12 plan for revisiting mindset research and strategies.
3. Provide professional development through K-12 PD offerings that addresses the SEL needs of gifted students and how to integrate instructional strategies into core classrooms that support SEL.
4. Continue to implement and support Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) across six schools (two feeder patterns).
5. Utilize annual stakeholder survey data to reflect on current extra-curricular opportunities and to provide additional extra-curricular experiences that further enhance the interests and areas of academic and non-academic expertise of students.
6. Continue to explore frontloading opportunities especially at key transition points.
7. Consider using the Teacher Observation of Potential Students (TOPS) as a qualitative measure for Talent Development.
8. Develop and implement recruitment practices that encourage enrollment in advanced coursework that reflects the demographic characteristics of each school site.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* *RCSS AIG Plan 2025-2028
* *Process for Withdrawal from the AIG Program
* *District and school plans for the delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of professional development opportunities for all staff
* *District and school formative and summative data sources
* *RCSS Program of Studies - accelerated/advanced course offerings
* *RCSS extra-curricular offerings (district/school websites and other social media platforms)

Type

Documents

Document Template

Document/Link

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

Randolph County School System (760) 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.

Overview of Differentiation in RCSS

The North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) defines the appropriate content standards for each grade or proficiency level and each high school course to provide a uniform set of learning standards for every public school in North Carolina. These standards define what students should know and be able to do. They also provide the foundation for curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The NCSCOS is used as the entry point for differentiation. Teachers of gifted learners are expected to demonstrate the ability to differentiate standards in order to meet the academic and social-emotional learning (SEL) needs, and to extend and/or enrich learning experiences for advanced learners.

Differentiation Practices in RCSS

Challenging advanced learners requires teachers to have a strong understanding of content standards and to assess students' mastery of grade-level standards. Understanding and responding to the academic, as well as social-emotional learning (SEL) needs of their learners is crucial for teachers. This informs the development and delivery of differentiated lessons designed to extend and enrich their learning. Differentiation is encouraged as an essential approach for teachers, using research-based best practices to meet students' academic and social-emotional needs. Effective differentiation results in lessons that are rigorous and challenging and lessons that afford students opportunities to extend their learning beyond grade level standards.

A district English Language Arts (ELA) Collaborative Planning Team has been meeting quarterly to create units centered around more complex texts. In this "train the trainer" model, teachers will return to schools and share these units for each grade level (K-5). These units incorporate the Literacy Instructional Standards with a special focus on integrating writing. Planning for K-5 math at the district level occurs through collaborative sessions organized by grade. During these sessions, teachers not only map out lesson sequences but also strategically plan for both remediation and enrichment. These meetings serve as a blend of planning and professional development, where educators dive deep into mathematical concepts and explore effective methods. This collaborative effort brings together teachers from across the county, ensuring that best practices are shared and implemented for the benefit of all students. It also fosters connections between teachers who might otherwise work in isolation, such as those who departmentalize. Additionally, the RCSS math team is now in its second year of holding 5th-6th grade vertical planning meetings by quadrant. The success of these sessions has been so impactful that plans are already in place to continue them next year. Teachers for grades 6-8 met in June of 2024 to create unit plans including sections for remediation and enrichment with resources provided for each. Middle school teams collaborate three times a year to analyze data from district unit assessments and problem-solving tasks.

AIG Program Service Models

To enhance learning for all K-12 students, including advanced learners, RCSS offers many opportunities that enrich, extend, and accelerate the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. These opportunities are delivered through a range of AIG Program Service Models, such as resource classes, in-class and core classroom grouping (including flexible grouping based on student needs), acceleration, school-wide enrichment, extracurriculars, and independent study.

Supporting Advanced Learners with Differentiated Instruction

AIG program service options provide students multiple opportunities both in and outside the regular classroom to receive differentiated instructional

experiences. Identified students receive differentiated services based on their areas of identification. For example, K-5 identified students primarily receive differentiated services through resource classes with AIG peers and core classroom cluster grouping. Middle and high school identified students receive differentiated services primarily through core classroom cluster grouping with AIG identified peers.

RCSS is committed to all teachers working collaboratively through professional learning communities (PLCs) to develop differentiated curriculum and instruction for gifted, as well as all learners. The district focuses on the work of Dufour & Dufour (1998) that is grounded in four essential questions:

1. What do students need to know and be able to do?
2. How will we know when they have learned it?
3. What will we do when they haven't learned it?
4. What will we do when they have learned it?

PLC teams use these Guiding Questions as they analyze data, including pre-assessment data, to determine student needs. Teachers who consider how they will respond when the child already knows the material can implement strategies that challenge the student at a higher level of complexity. For example, when students demonstrate mastery of core content, teachers might offer opportunities for extension activities that require deeper exploration or more sophisticated application of the material. These activities could include independent projects, mentorships, advanced problem-solving tasks, or interdisciplinary connections that encourage students to explore beyond the standard curriculum.

Additionally, PLC teams collaborate to design tiered lessons or differentiated products that allow gifted learners to engage with content in a more profound way. For instance, students who have already mastered the foundational content might be provided with opportunities to explore related, more complex topics or to develop original projects that showcase their ability to apply learned concepts in new and creative ways. This approach ensures that even students who have mastered the content are continually challenged and can continue to grow intellectually.

RCSS uses I-Ready (K-8), a personalized learning platform that accelerates students' learning by adapting pathways based on their progress.

Clustering and Acceleration Strategies

RCSS groups gifted learners based on their identified strengths in reading, math, or nonverbal reasoning (AI, AG, IG). Clustering recommendations are:

K-5:

- Fewer than 6 students in a grade level: Group all students together in one classroom.
- 6 or more students in a grade level: Aim for clusters of 4-6 gifted students per classroom.
- Minimum of 45 minutes twice weekly

6-12:

- 8-12 students per classroom
- Minimum of 45 minutes daily

For students demonstrating readiness, RCSS offers:

- Cross-Grade Subject Acceleration: Advanced learners join older peers for specific subjects while remaining in their grade-level classes for the majority of the day.
- Whole-Grade Acceleration/Grade Skipping: In select cases, students who demonstrate academic, social, and emotional readiness may advance to the next grade level.

RCSS also provides opportunities for advanced learners to pursue their interests and deepen their expertise through:

- Extension/Enrichment and Independent Study: These options allow students to work with like-minded peers or independently on personalized projects, potentially exploring future career paths.
- Extra-curricular Activities: Further opportunities for enrichment and peer interaction.
- Flexible Grouping within Core Classrooms: Tailored instruction within regular classes.
- Blended Learning: 1:1 technology integration across all grade levels.

Furthermore, RCSS offers accelerated math pathways in middle and high school. For example, 8th-grade students meeting specific criteria (identified gifted, top performance on state math tests, or demonstrating local readiness) can enroll in Math 1 with parent approval.

AIG specialists in elementary facilitate whole-day enrichment programs incorporating STEAM and problem-based learning. These experiences promote deeper learning and encourage students to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios.

Professional Development for Teachers of Advanced Learners

This year, progress has been made in professional development, with a strong focus on the Advanced Learning Indicators for Honors classes. Quarterly training sessions on Advanced Learner Strategies for the Honors Classroom have addressed the indicators: enrichment, acceleration, differentiation, extension, and depth and complexity. Through four instructional strategies (hexagonal thinking, advanced questioning, tiered assignments, and Socratic seminars), RCSS aims to ensure that Honors classes deliver the necessary rigor to support our advanced learners and AIG students.

The local AIG Praxis Study Program—also known as the RCSS AIG-enius Squad—offers intensive, hands-on professional learning for cohorts of regular education teachers. The academy covers key topics in gifted education, including foundations and exceptionalities, identification and assessment, student characteristics and development, curriculum planning, instructional strategies, learning environments, guidance and support, student performance, data interpretation, and professional standards. Participants also engage in extended learning on how to effectively differentiate the learning environment, as well as content, process, and product.

Building Capacity and Supporting Consistency

RCSS is committed to building the capacity of teachers of advanced learners in how to accelerate NCSCOS standards across all grades and subjects. Acceleration opportunities are aligned with and support the work of the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), district-wide professional development, and the RCSS AIG-enius Squad. MTSS provides a platform for students' individual academic and social-emotional needs to be identified and served using research-based best practices and instructional strategies.

To support consistency in differentiation across all grade levels and content areas, the district regularly monitors the implementation of these strategies through classroom observations, student progress reviews, and feedback from both teachers and students. More than half of our AIG teachers lead professional development sessions on differentiation during district PD days, focusing on strategies to support diverse learners. They collaborate with staff, including beginning teachers, and work with PLC teams to create differentiated lesson plans, including strategies for engaging early finishers. Additionally, teachers are supported through coaching, collaborative planning time, and co-teaching opportunities with AIG specialists to ensure effective and consistent differentiation practices.

*** Practice B**

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

Instructional Practices for Gifted Learners

RCSS supports teachers in employing diverse and effective instructional practices according to students' identified abilities, readiness, interests, and learning profiles, in order to address a wide range of academic learning needs across all grade levels. Knowledge of students' multiple intelligences, individual learning styles, and learning profiles is beneficial when planning flexible groups, cooperative learning groups, and student learning tasks that afford students choices (e.g., RAFT, Choice Boards, Jigsaw/Reciprocal Teaching) and personalized learning experiences. By continuously assessing student needs and progress, teachers strive to adapt instruction to support mastery and meet the personalized learning goals of every gifted learner.

Differentiation Through Tiered Lessons and Formative Assessments

Tiered lessons, which are designed to extend learning through deeper and more complex experiences, ensure that advanced learners are provided with content and tasks that match their levels of readiness. This approach allows for personalized learning pathways that support the individual growth of each student. Teachers utilize formative assessments (such as pre-assessments, K-W-L charts, and Anticipation Guides), to determine the appropriate level of challenge for each student, ensuring that instruction is matched to their current readiness and abilities. Additionally, data from district NC Check-Ins, mClass, iReady, and Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) give teachers the insights they need to make informed decisions and offer learning experiences that address the academic needs of all students, including gifted learners, ensuring that every student's learning needs are met.

Utilizing Research-Based Practices and Frameworks

RCSS promotes the use of evidence-based instructional strategies to meet diverse learner needs. Tiered instruction adjusts the complexity of content to meet varying student needs. Inquiry-based learning promotes critical thinking, making both effective strategies for differentiation and supporting advanced learners. Ongoing professional development supports teachers in implementing these strategies.

To enhance the learning experiences of gifted students, the district aims for all teachers to skillfully assess student interests and abilities using a variety of methods. The intention is that interest surveys will guide the development of independent projects and enrichment activities. Furthermore, the district strives to ensure that frameworks like Gardner's Multiple Intelligences and Bloom's Taxonomy are consistently applied to tailor curriculum to gifted students' strengths and preferences, thereby fostering deeper engagement. For instance, the goal is for Gardner's model to effectively identify logical-mathematical strengths, leading to complex problem-solving tasks, and for Bloom's Taxonomy to guarantee challenges at higher cognitive levels (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

Student portfolios and performance tasks are intended to reveal strengths and growth areas, which helps to guide instructional choices. For example, students excelling in critical thinking may benefit from independent inquiry projects. Prior student work within a unit informs readiness for extension activities. Consistent proficiency on formative assessments can lead to complex problem-solving or independent projects.

Differentiating Content, Process and Product

The goal of tiered lesson implementation is to ensure that content, process, and products are differentiated to match the diverse readiness levels, interests, and strengths of students. The aim is for instruction to be tailored to meet the unique needs of individual students. For example, in Language Arts, students might be tiered based on their readiness to analyze complex texts. One tier focuses on foundational comprehension, another on deeper analysis of literary devices, and the advanced tier encourages exploration of thematic connections across multiple texts. In mathematics, tiered lessons may involve varying levels of problem complexity to ensure that each student is engaged with content at an appropriate challenge level. Additionally, teachers provide varied product options, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding in ways that best match their strengths and learning preferences, further ensuring that instruction is tailored to their individual needs.

Building Teacher Capacity Through Professional Development

Support for building teachers' capacity to employ diverse and effective instructional practices occurs on a regular basis. A primary support for teachers is direct feedback provided by district instructional staff based on classroom walkthroughs. District instructional staff include school administrators in classroom walkthroughs as an opportunity to build the administrators' capacity to recognize diverse and effective instructional practices. Another layer of support for all teachers is professional development provided during monthly lead teacher meetings. A lead teacher is assigned to each school in RCSS. These accomplished teachers provide coaching and feedback through professional development and informal observations, co-teaching, and modeling in their respective schools. These lead teachers also facilitate discussions during PLC meetings on how to best incorporate differentiated strategies and student data into lesson planning, helping teachers refine their approach to diverse learning needs. School-level lead teachers are supported by district lead teachers and curriculum specialists who provide high quality professional development on research-based best practices that align with the overall instructional framework of the district. School-based lead teachers provide differentiated professional development to support and meet the unique needs of their respective schools.

District lead teachers and instructional specialists provide professional development for support teachers certified in English as Second Language (ESL), Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG), and Exceptional Children (EC) through monthly meetings. Support specialists are trained in evidence-based practices and resources specific to their respective areas of expertise, as well as practices and resources relevant for all students. Professional development is also provided by district lead teachers and instructional specialists for all certified staff in specific instructional strategies and practices that are applicable for meeting the needs of all learners.

Acknowledging Varied Implementation

While RCSS works to provide support and professional development focused on utilizing student abilities, readiness, and interests to differentiate instruction, the district recognizes that educators are at varying stages in their implementation of these complex practices. Continuous growth and refinement are ongoing goals, and RCSS remains committed to providing the necessary resources and support to ensure all teachers are equipped to effectively meet the diverse learning needs of every student.

*** 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 RCSS AIG Program integrates a variety of evidence-based resources designed to meet the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted and advanced learners. These resources are implemented through a collaborative effort between AIG Specialists, regular education teachers, counselors, and administrators to support the holistic development of AIG students.

Addressing Academic and Intellectual Needs

To enhance the academic and intellectual development of AIG students, the district utilizes a range of evidence-based curricular resources. These resources, implemented across various instructional settings, such as resource classes, cluster classes, and enrichment/extension opportunities, are designed to extend core standards and deepen students' learning experiences. The following resources are used for fostering academic growth:

- Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences and Learning Styles (Silver/Strong/Hanson, Kolb, McCarthy, Gregorc): These frameworks help teachers differentiate instruction based on students' individual strengths and learning preferences.
- Revised Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge: These tools are used to plan lessons that extend beyond basic comprehension, encouraging higher-order thinking and complex problem-solving.
- Kaplan's Depth and Complexity: This resource promote deeper exploration of content, challenging students to engage at higher levels of abstraction.
- Junior Great Books (available K-8) and Jacob's Ladder: Used by AIG Specialists in resource or cluster group settings, these texts facilitate critical thinking and provide opportunities for rich discussion.
- Socratic Seminars and Literature Circles: These strategies are implemented across classrooms to foster discussion, collaboration, and deeper engagement with text.
- Problem/Project-Based Learning (PBL): Resources such as Defined STEM, The PBL Project, and NCDPI K-12 Advanced Learning Labs (K-12) are used to encourage real-world problem-solving and student-driven inquiry.
- Brydseed.tv: This resource provides a comprehensive collection of structured lesson plans and open-ended videos, designed to support differentiated instruction and challenge activities. Teachers can utilize these materials to tailor lessons to meet the diverse needs of their students, offering opportunities for deeper exploration and engagement.

- AIG Specialist Library of Created Lessons: AIG specialists collaboratively and independently design lessons that are both rigorous and differentiated, promoting high levels of engagement and enrichment. Many of these lessons are developed through professional development opportunities, including insights gained at the NCAGT conference. The lessons are shared among AIG specialists and stored in a Google folder, providing teachers with access to approximately 500+ lessons and units for instructional use.

- AIG Specialists at each school maintain AIG classroom libraries. Materials are also accessible through online resources on the district website, the district learning management system (Canvas) courses/sites, Google sites, and online subscriptions/memberships purchased through gifted and/or other curriculum departments.

These resources are aligned with the district's curriculum and pacing guides, and they integrate with the instructional planning process of AIG Specialists and regular education teachers. For example, Socratic Seminars and PBL Projects are used to design lessons that incorporate higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge. AIG specialists and teachers also collaborate to plan lessons that challenge students' intellectual abilities while maintaining alignment with state standards.

Addressing Social and Emotional Needs

Gifted students, like all learners, have unique social and emotional learning (SEL) needs. Research shows that these needs can sometimes differ from those of their peers, particularly in areas such as perfectionism, underachievement, peer relationships, and emotional regulation. To meet these needs, the district uses evidence-based SEL resources and strategies. Some of the key resources include:

- **Growth Mindset (Dweck):** (K-12) These resources help students develop resilience, persistence, and adaptability in the face of challenges. They are also used to address perfectionism and the fear of failure, which can be prevalent among gifted learners.
- **Bibliotherapy:** (K-12) This approach uses literature and stories to help students process their emotions, develop empathy, and better understand their own social and emotional development. It is particularly effective in addressing issues like isolation, anxiety, and perfectionism.
- **The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL):** (K-12) Resources from CASEL are used to develop competencies in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
- **Panorama Education Playbook:** (K-12) This tool integrates SEL into classrooms, fostering positive climates and student competencies. It helps teachers personalize support for gifted students, addressing anxiety, perfectionism, and peer issues while building resilience.
- **Jacob's Ladder Affective Lessons for SEL:** (K-5) These lessons help gifted students manage emotions like perfectionism, isolation, and anxiety. They build emotional intelligence through self-reflection and understanding unique needs, supporting social-emotional well-being.
- **AIG Specialist Library of Created Lessons:** (K-5) AIG specialists collaboratively and independently design lessons that promote high levels of engagement and enrichment. Specialists create and share rigorous, differentiated lessons, informed by professional development (e.g., NCAGT). Over 400 lessons and units are accessible to teachers via Google Drive.

These SEL resources are integrated into the classroom environment through structured lessons, individual counseling, and group activities. School counselors are encouraged to provide both classroom lessons and individual sessions to address specific emotional concerns. For example, students may engage in discussions about managing stress, peer relationships, and developing self-efficacy.

Implementation of Resources to Support Holistic Growth

The successful implementation of these resources is key to supporting the holistic growth and development of AIG students. To ensure that these resources are accessible and effectively used, the district has established systems for ongoing support:

- Resource Accessibility: AIG Specialists maintain classroom libraries stocked with SEL and academic resources. Additionally, these materials are accessible via online platforms such as the district's learning management system (Canvas), Google Sites, and online subscriptions.
- Collaboration Among Stakeholders: AIG Specialists, regular education teachers, counselors, and school administrators collaborate to discuss the social-emotional and academic progress of AIG students. This collaboration helps ensure that resources are used effectively and that students receive the support they need across all areas of development.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Resources

The district utilizes various feedback mechanisms to ensure that these resources have a meaningful impact on AIG students' academic and social-emotional development. These include:

- Student Surveys: Data from student surveys are used to gauge students' comfort levels in discussing their academic and emotional needs. For example, in recent surveys, 72% of elementary students and 67% of secondary students reported feeling comfortable speaking to a teacher or adult about their needs.
- Teacher and Parent Feedback: Survey data from certified staff and parents indicate strong support for the district's efforts to address the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted students. In particular, 74% of certified staff felt that the district provides a range of services to meet these needs, and 59% felt supported in adapting the NCSCOS to accommodate advanced levels in all content areas.
- Data Monitoring: The district tracks SEL data, including attendance, behavior screening results, and discipline referrals, to monitor students' progress through the MTSS process. This data helps identify areas where additional support is needed and inform the development of targeted interventions.

*** 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.

RCSS is committed to graduating students prepared for post-secondary education and/or careers. Essential to being future-ready are specific skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, curiosity, leadership, empathy, learner's mindset, and personal responsibility. These skills are fundamental to developing well-rounded individuals who can succeed in the ever-evolving digital world. To create a rigorous and challenging curriculum, beyond mastery of grade-level standards, these future-ready skills should be seamlessly integrated into both units and lessons.

According to Gregory, Kaufeldt, & Mattos (2016), the benefits of incorporating future-ready skills exceed simply introducing students to basic concepts. Future-ready skills equip students to think critically, adapt to change, collaborate effectively, and thrive in the workforce and everyday life. By embedding these skills into curriculum planning and delivery, we will increase cognitive depth and build the problem-solving abilities that our students will need to navigate the world beyond school.

AIG Specialists and Future-Ready Skills

AIG Specialists incorporate future-ready skills into daily instruction for identified students. These skills are explicitly embedded into the curriculum, with opportunities for students to develop these essential competencies across content areas. This year, we've introduced a poster showcasing durable skills and 21st-century life skills, including adaptability, to provide a clear visual reference for both students and teachers. By connecting curriculum content, problem-solving activities, and skill application directly to the poster, our goal was to provide a multi-sensory approach to learning and reinforcement, making these crucial competencies more accessible, memorable, and actionable for both students and teachers. It moves beyond simply stating the skills to providing a concrete, ongoing point of reference that can significantly impact how these skills are understood and developed within the school environment.

Examples of Future-Ready Skills Include:

- **Critical Thinking:** Problem/Project-based learning, real-world experiences, and authentic tasks help students analyze, evaluate, and solve complex problems in meaningful contexts.
- **Communication:** Strategies like close reading, blogging, oral presentations, debates, Socratic Seminars, and RAFT writing offer diverse opportunities for students to express ideas clearly and engage in productive dialogue with others.
- **Creativity:** Through problem/project-based learning experiences, such as economic and social entrepreneurship, service-learning projects, and artistic or musical tasks, students explore innovative solutions and think outside the box.
- **Collaboration:** Cooperative learning activities like Think-Pair-Share, Jigsaws, and Clock Buddies encourage students to collaborate, exchange ideas, and develop social-emotional learning skills.
- **Curiosity:** Opportunities beyond core instructional time, such as K-12 talent development enrichment/extension opportunities allow students to pursue their unique academic interests and potential future careers. This includes problem/project-based learning, internships/mentorships, and extracurricular activities that help students explore various fields.
- **Empathy:** Students engage in activities that involve empathy with classroom teachers and counselors. Some schools have service-learning projects and perspective-taking exercises to build emotional intelligence, develop empathy for others, and understand diverse viewpoints. These opportunities foster social responsibility and encourage students to consider the broader impact of their actions.
- **Learner's Mindset:** Activities that promote growth mindset, such as goal setting, self-reflection, and strategies for overcoming challenges, encourage students to embrace learning as a continuous process. Encouraging students to reflect on their progress and identify areas for improvement cultivates a mindset focused on resilience and self-efficacy.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning through self-assessment activities, setting personal academic goals, and engaging in Project-Based Learning (PBL) experiences where they manage timelines, collaborate with peers, and deliver results. This helps them develop skills such as time management and self-regulation.

Supporting Post-Secondary Success:

RCSS believes in providing students with the resources and opportunities to succeed beyond high school. As part of this effort, the district has implemented AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) across six feeder schools, utilizing strategies such as Socratic Seminars, Philosophical Chairs, Learning Logs, Investigations, and Critical Thinking processes. These AVID strategies help cultivate essential future-ready skills such as critical thinking, curiosity, leadership, and communication, providing students with a strong foundation for post-secondary education and careers.

Additionally, the district's approach emphasizes collaboration with community organizations, businesses, and institutes of higher education to provide internships and mentorships that prepare students for real-world success. Enrichment programs, Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways, and career exploration activities allow students to gain exposure to various professional fields, helping them explore and refine their career aspirations.

* Practice E

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

RCSS is committed to ensuring educators utilize a comprehensive array of assessment data to support gifted students effectively. Analysis of the 2024 NC Report Card data demonstrates strong academic performance among gifted students: 86% of 3-8 grade math students, 69% of 3-8 grade reading students, and over 94% of 5th and 8th grade science students are College and Career Ready (CCR). ACT, ACT WorkKeys, and SAT data indicate over 95% college readiness among gifted students, with a 95% graduation rate. Additionally, 498 students enrolled in AP courses and 965 in College Career Promise courses, reflecting increases of 92 and 150 students over three years ago.

Data-Driven Instruction: Flexible Grouping and Formative Assessments

State-administered tests provide valuable data for differentiating instruction, initial student grouping, and flexible grouping throughout the year. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate formative assessments in their daily instructional planning and delivery to ensure instructional decisions are continuously aligned with students' needs. Data from quizzes, observations, exit tickets, and ongoing formative assessments across classrooms are key components in informing flexible grouping practices for all students. Pre/post assessments are highly beneficial for adjusting instruction to differentiate curriculum and instruction, often providing opportunities for fluid, flexible grouping.

Collaborative Data Analysis and Targeted Support

Through Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, RCSS teachers are developing their capacity to analyze data and make informed decisions about flexible grouping for differentiated instruction. This approach allows teachers to group students based on their mastery of core standards, providing gifted learners with opportunities for accelerated instruction. Data from assessments, like mCLASS and i-Ready, offer detailed insights into students' academic strengths and areas for improvement, which teachers use to tailor their instruction.

Principals ensure that AIG Specialists have opportunities to collaborate during or after school, to focus on data analysis and flexible grouping. AIG Specialists share valuable data from multiple sources, including Cognitive Aptitude Tests (CogAT), available through Data Manager, and K-2 data for student referrals for formal AIG identification screening. These reports help AIG Specialists and classroom teachers develop comprehensive profiles of students' strengths, guiding the selection of appropriate instructional strategies.

The PLC process is designed to support teachers in regularly using CFAs to gather real-time data on student understanding. CFAs provide immediate feedback on specific learning objectives, which informs PLC discussions, refines flexible grouping strategies, and supports targeted interventions. This continuous cycle of assessment and adjustment allows teachers to personalize instruction, address learning gaps promptly, and create a dynamic classroom environment where instruction is continually tailored to maximize student progress.

Diagnostic Tools for Personalized Learning

i-Ready and mCLASS provide educators with detailed, adaptive assessments in mathematics and early literacy. These offer critical data for ongoing evaluation, differentiated instruction, and flexible grouping. Both platforms pinpoint specific student strengths and weaknesses, supporting teachers in tailoring curriculum and instruction to individual needs. Ongoing assessments offer formative insights, allowing for immediate adjustments to address learning gaps and support teachers in creating more responsive learning environments. Progress monitoring tools track student growth over time, informing formative and summative evaluations, and facilitating data-driven instructional decisions. By integrating i-Ready and mCLASS data into their assessment cycles, teachers can create responsive learning environments that maximize student achievement in foundational skills and mathematics.

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for Gifted Students

MTSS provides a structured, data-driven framework to enhance differentiated instruction and flexible grouping for all students, including gifted learners, and the district is continually refining its implementation. Analysis of all assessment data supports targeted interventions, such as 'push-in' services by K-5 AIG Specialists for accelerated guided reading, and clustered instruction in grades 6-12 based on identification areas. Flexible grouping, informed by ongoing progress monitoring, allows for fluid movement between instructional groups, maximizing collaboration and potential. Within clusters, RCSS is working to ensure careful analysis of readiness and mastery levels to challenge all students appropriately. A collaborative team approach, involving teachers, administrators, and specialists, ensures targeted support and continuous evaluation of interventions. The district is actively working to optimize this process, aiming for a more responsive learning environment that maximizes academic growth for gifted students.

*** Practice F**

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

A collaborative network of personnel, including AIG Specialists, regular education teachers, ESL teachers, counselors, and special education staff, should work together to implement differentiated curriculum and instruction tailored to the diverse needs of advanced learners. This collaboration should be driven by the understanding that meeting the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted students often requires a multi-faceted approach, drawing on the expertise of various professionals. RCSS is currently working to enhance collaboration of this type.

Several AIG specialists provide professional development to general education teachers in their individual schools on differentiation strategies, helping them develop extensions for lessons that challenge all students in the class. Some teachers take it a step further with coaching, teaching model lessons, and co-teaching. This ensures that differentiated practices benefit not only gifted students but also extend to all learners, whether the student is in pull-out services or not. This collaborative approach supports the goal of enhancing learning outcomes for all students by making the curriculum more flexible and responsive to the diverse needs of the classroom. To further support effective differentiation, AIG Specialists curate a variety of resources, including curriculum examples featuring rigorous questions and scenarios, models of exemplary differentiated lessons, and supplementary materials designed to engage and challenge gifted learners, including those who are multilingual. They might share resources from organizations like the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and adapt them for local use.

Collaborative structures are in place at the school level to support advanced learners. For example, high school Honors teachers utilize their weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) time to analyze Common Formative Assessment (CFA) data, aiming to inform instruction and identify students who may benefit from increased challenge or support. Similarly, middle schools also have PLC times that allow for teacher collaboration, though the specific focus on advanced learner data may vary. In elementary schools, communication channels are available between general education and AIG teachers. We are working to have all schools share data regarding student performance on NC Check-in data, with the goal of sharing insights into student progress and potential as well as provide rigorous extensions for the regular classroom teachers to use. This communication intends to support a more comprehensive and responsive approach to meeting the needs of advanced learners across all settings, from the general classroom to specialized AIG services. Dedicated after-school planning provides additional opportunities for collaboration and the development of differentiated strategies for these students. While the implementation and specific focus may differ across levels and schools, these collaborative structures are in place to allow time to work towards ensuring they receive appropriate levels of academic rigor and resources.

Lead teachers play a key role in collaborating with grade-level teams each quarter to plan instruction that meets the needs of all learners. These planning sessions focus on developing lessons that align with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) while being flexible enough to support students at various levels. The goal is to create inclusive, differentiated lessons that engage students across a range of academic abilities.

At the district level, quarterly planning sessions bring together lead teachers and grade-level representatives from each school to design lessons based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, particularly in math. UDL ensures lessons are accessible and challenging for all students by providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression. These sessions emphasize differentiation, ensuring that teachers can address the needs of students who require support while also challenging those who are ready for advanced work.

After the district sessions, grade-level representatives return to their schools to share strategies, lesson plans, and insights with their teams. Lead teachers at both the school and district levels support this process by offering guidance and ensuring alignment with the NCSCOS. This collaborative approach ensures that all schools work from a unified set of best practices, tailored to the needs of their students.

This year, progress has been made in professional development on differentiation with a strong focus on the Advanced Learning Indicators for Honors classes. As a result, high school teachers collaborate on how the advanced learning indicators could be met across different honors courses. Teachers worked together to explore instructional strategies such as tiered assignments and Socratic seminar, and how these instructional strategies could enhance differentiation. District collaboration will be done with high schools to provide guidance for each honors implementation for each course.

An area for growth is the need to designate more PLC time for AIG Specialists to collaborate with regular education teachers, both within their schools and across the district. This would help create a more unified approach to addressing the essential question: *What will we do when students have mastered the content?* By working together, AIG and general education teachers can adapt the curriculum to better meet the advanced needs of gifted students. Utilizing student data and profiles, they can create tiered instruction and develop assignments and learning stations that allow all students to engage with the core curriculum at their appropriate level.

Additionally, as PLCs work with data results to group students, AIG teachers should be included in conversations about students who have demonstrated mastery of a standard or skill. This would allow AIG specialists to track high-performing students and provide enrichment opportunities for those who have already mastered the content. By ensuring AIG specialists are part of these discussions, the school can offer targeted extensions and keep high achievers challenged, while also supporting the needs of all learners. While this collaboration is a goal, it is an area we are working toward strengthening in order to better support all students.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Analyze annual survey data to brainstorm extra-curricular activities for K-12 students as part of the district K-12 Talent Development Initiative.
2. Identify and implement K-12 strategies that support leadership skills.
3. Revisit the research on effective PLCs and identify questions and protocols needed to assist with planning differentiated curriculum and instruction for academic, intellectual, social and emotional learning.
4. Have principals work with their schools to hold teachers accountable for the Life Skills instruction in the NC Teacher Evaluation Instrument, which explicitly states these skills and aligns with the Portrait of a Graduate. Create posters of the skills for each school to provide a visual that connects these skills to the student's future.

Planned Sources of Evidence

- * *Professional development rosters, agendas, presentations (e.g., SEL, Future-ready skills)
- * *District AIG internal checklist monitoring the number of P.E.T.S. lessons taught each semester
- * *Master schedules/lessons: Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading- AVID
- * *District professional learning communities: protocols and guiding questions utilized to plan differentiated instruction for academic, intellectual, social, and emotional learning needs

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

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

Randolph County School System (760) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

*** Practice A**

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

The Randolph County School System employs an AIG-licensed educator as the Program Specialist who guides, plans, develops, implements, revises, and monitors the local AIG program. The AIG Program Specialists meets and demonstrates requirements as outlined in the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System.

The AIG Program Specialist in RCSS has the following responsibilities:

- Serves as the lead coordinator to guide the development, implementation, revision, and monitoring of the local AIG Plan.
- Leads gifted and advanced programming, goals, and initiatives that support the AIG Plan.
- Collaborates and coordinates the screening, referral, identification, and placement of gifted students.
- Reviews and audits for compliance purposes all AIG paperwork submitted by AIG Specialists and other designated personnel (e.g., high school counselors serving as AIG contacts) to ensure compliance.
- Provides comprehensive support to AIG Specialists including answering inquiries on various topics, providing necessary testing materials and other resources, assisting with plan implementation and testing procedures, and addressing and helping resolve parent and school related issues.
- Designs and implements communication tools to enhance stakeholder awareness.
- Advocates for gifted learners and serves as a liaison across all stakeholders: district departments, schools, parents, and the community.
- Serves as a member of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) District Leadership Team and the MTSS Implementation Team to ensure the needs of gifted students are addressed within the borders of MTSS.
- Communicates with and seeks partnerships between the district and institutes of higher education and other community businesses and organizations.
- Collaborates with other areas within the district (e.g., CTE, MTSS, EC) to align efforts for the benefit of AIG students.
- Analyzes AIG data, including identification rates across subgroups and student progress, to identify trends and ensure equitable access and outcomes.
- Monitors test data, identification data, trends, and the progress of AIG-identified students to identify patterns, ensure equitable access, and assess fidelity to the AIG plan.

- Advocates for enhanced resources and programming to support gifted students, including SEL, engaging curriculum, expanded talent development, and advanced competitions.
- Participates in the annual NCDPI state meeting, quarterly regional meetings, and the NCAGT conference to stay current on best practices in gifted education
- Participates in the development and monitoring of the AIG budget and funds, which includes allotments for professional development, purchasing of materials for district and schools, and AIG testing supplies for the district
- Develops, maintains, and updates the AIG website and district forms
- Creates and disseminates the AIG Parent Handbook and brochures
- Coordinates the NC Governor's School selection process.
- Coordinates the district's annual K-8 Spelling Bee.
- Plans and facilitates monthly K-5 AIG Specialist Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings to develop capacity and leadership potential among AIG Specialists and to ensure the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners are being met.
- Provides time at each monthly AIG Specialist meeting for collaboration on lesson planning and integration of new resources.
- Provides AIG Handbook and AIG Overview to all staff, communicating the goals of the AIG plan.
- Facilitates professional development district-wide, including Praxis study groups, counselor meetings, curriculum departments, administrative teams, lead teacher meetings, and K-12 professional development.
- Communicates and provides PD on evidence-based curriculum strategies and practices for gifted learners to all stakeholders.
- Aligns communication and PD on gifted curriculum and practices with district programs and initiatives.
- Observes and provides feedback across all grade spans (K-12) to teachers of gifted students
- Participates in classroom walkthroughs and provides constructive feedback to teachers and administrators.
- Conducts model lessons for new teachers or new programs to support implementation of best practices.
- Demonstrates ongoing review of current research and evidence-based curriculum strategies, resources, and practices (e.g., NCDPI AIG Advanced Learning Labs, NCAGT, and NAGT websites/conference materials, and online resources such as www.pblproject.com; www.byrdseed.com). Staying updated with current research and resources ensures that the district's AIG program remains innovative and reflective of best practices in gifted education. This commitment to ongoing professional learning enhances the effectiveness of the services provided to gifted students.
- Participates in DEP meetings at schools as needed.

*** 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.

RCSS AIG Specialists roles and responsibilities include:

- Must hold a valid North Carolina teaching license. A valid teaching license is fundamental to maintaining the integrity and quality of instruction in the AIG program.
- Must hold a North Carolina add-on license for Academically Gifted (License Area Number 88087). The add-on license specifically certifies that the educator is trained to meet the unique needs of gifted students, ensuring they are equipped with the specialized knowledge and skills necessary for supporting their academic, intellectual, and social-emotional growth.
- Must demonstrate and meet required expectations through the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (professional growth plan evaluation)
- Coordinates the screening/referral/identification/placement process for gifted students. This role is crucial for ensuring that gifted students are accurately identified based on a thorough fair process. It helps to ensure that all students who qualify for gifted services have equal access to these opportunities.
- Coordinates and facilitates school-based AIG Committee meetings that include parents/guardians throughout the school year. Involving parents and guardians in the decision-making process helps to ensure that the needs of gifted students are holistically understood and addressed. This collaborative approach promotes transparency, inclusion, and a partnership between home and school.
- Develops and monitors required AIG paperwork: Screening/referral/identification/placement paperwork; Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs); Performance Task work samples; RCSS AIG Nomination Log; Nurturing Logs; NC AIG Headcount reports.
- Reviews DEPs with regular education teachers of gifted students on an annual and as needed basis. Regular review of DEPs ensures that the differentiation strategies in place are effectively meeting the students' needs. It allows teachers to make necessary adjustments and interventions to ensure continuous academic and intellectual growth for gifted learners.
- Reviews identified student summative/formative data with regular education teachers of gifted students through Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings both during and/or after school.
- Collaborates with regular education teachers of gifted students to provide training and professional development for the AIG screening/referral/identification/placement process; AIG service models; AIG content modifications; AIG curriculum strategies, resources, and practices.
- Collaborates with regular education teachers of gifted students to analyze district subgroup data for under-represented populations of students who may demonstrate potential gifted identification.
- Collaborates with Exceptional Children (EC) personnel, English as a Second Language (ESL) specialists, and school counselors to develop and implement strategies that effectively address the diverse needs of students, including the specific learning profiles of Twice-Exceptional (2e) individuals, Multilingual Learners (ML), and those in need of social and emotional supports.
- Collaborates with other K-5 AIG Specialists on a monthly basis to build capacity through ongoing professional development and collaboratively plan differentiated lessons.
- Communicates with parents/guardians through a variety of methods: in-person, newsletters, digital platforms: email, Canvas learning management system, Class Dojo, school website, and social media (AIG Facebook). Effective communication with parents/guardians is vital for fostering a transparent and collaborative relationship between the school and home.
- Supports the vision and mission of the Local AIG Plan by ensuring that all AIG specialists' roles directly contribute to fostering academic growth, addressing the social-emotional needs of gifted learners, and meeting the diverse intellectual needs of all AIG students. For example, specialists are responsible for implementing acceleration, enrichment, and flexible grouping strategies that promote academic excellence, while also advocating for and providing support for underrepresented populations to ensure equitable access to gifted services.

- K-5 AIG Specialists provide direct services to identified students through resource, core classroom cluster grouping, core classroom flexible grouping, extension/enrichment opportunities, Subject/Grade Acceleration, Whole Grade Acceleration/Grade Skipping, and/or Independent Study.
- 6-12 AIG Specialists provide direct services through core classroom cluster grouping, core classroom flexible grouping, extension/enrichment, and accelerated courses (e.g., 8th Grade Math 1, Honors/Advanced Placement courses, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, College Career Promise Pathway Courses, Dual Enrollment courses, online course support, independent study.) The range of services offered at the middle and high school levels ensures that students continue to be challenged and engaged in ways that are appropriate for their developmental stage. These opportunities foster both academic excellence and the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- AIG specialists collaborate regularly across schools and departments to enhance the quality of services provided to gifted students. AIG specialists share resources, strategies, and best practices for differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration. These collaborative sessions also provide an opportunity to discuss new research, review instructional strategies, and create a unified approach to supporting students' academic and social-emotional needs across the district.
- Models/Demonstrates evidence-based curriculum strategies, resources, and practices in their instructional planning and delivery.
- Demonstrates ongoing review of current research and evidence-based curriculum strategies, resources, and practices (e.g., NCDPI AIG Advanced Learning Labs, NCAGT, and NAGT websites/conference materials, and online resources such as www.pbjproject.com; www.byrdseed.com). Staying updated with current research and resources ensures that the district's AIG program remains innovative and reflective of best practices in gifted education. This commitment to ongoing professional learning enhances the effectiveness of the services provided to gifted students.

*** 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 2025 certified staff survey indicated the following:

41.8% indicate that professional development requirements for all personnel involved in implementing the local AIG program and services are specific and appropriate. To address this, our approach for the AIG Plan 2025-2028 includes comprehensive professional learning opportunities for all personnel serving gifted students: AIG Specialists, regular classroom teachers, support staff (e.g., ESL, EC, school-level lead teachers), counselors, and school administrators.

Certified staff requested professional development in the following areas in order to strengthen their capacity to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted students:

- Differentiated Instruction: This was the most frequently mentioned need, with requests for general differentiation strategies, enrichment ideas within general education, and how to differentiate in honors classes.
- Project-Based Learning (PBL) & Inquiry-Based Learning
- Understanding and Supporting Gifted Students: This included understanding the social-emotional needs of gifted students, how to grow AIG students, keeping them engaged during whole group instruction, and addressing boredom.
- Rigor and Honors Classes: Teachers sought guidance on how to approach more rigor in the classroom and how to make courses truly honors level.
- Integration of SEL strategies into daily instruction.
- Collaboration and Resources: Teachers desired more opportunities to collaborate with AIG teachers, more resources for classroom teachers to use (both online and hands-on), and clarity on available AIG program offerings and details.

- Practical Classroom Strategies and Activities: Teachers asked for concrete activities for small group time, lesson ideas for regular classrooms, and ways to provide better quality work (not just quantity) for AIG students.
- Addressing Specific Concerns: Some feedback highlighted the need for strategies to encourage good work habits, manage test anxiety in high-achieving students, and provide supplemental materials in math and reading.

Specific Professional Development Requirements and Competencies:

- Classroom Teachers of AIG students: Expected to successfully complete one of two pathways demonstrating preparedness to teach gifted students (as outlined in Standard 4, Practice D). Competencies include understanding the characteristics and social-emotional needs of gifted learners, implementing differentiated instruction (particularly within Tier 1 MTSS), integrating SEL strategies, and providing extension/enrichment opportunities.
- Classroom Teachers and Support Staff: Will have opportunities for professional development in accessible formats, tailored to their needs, focusing on understanding the characteristics and social-emotional needs of gifted learners, implementing differentiated instruction (particularly within Tier 1 MTSS), integrating SEL strategies, and providing extension/enrichment opportunities.
- Instructional Specialists: Will have access to professional development in accessible formats, designed to enhance their expertise in evidence-based curriculum strategies (e.g., Depth and Complexity, Revised Bloom's Taxonomy) and build their capacity for coaching and modeling differentiation techniques, utilizing student data for gifted learners, and supporting the Local AIG Plan implementation.
- Student Services Personnel (e.g., Counselors, Psychologists): Will have opportunities for professional development in accessible formats, focusing on the identification processes for gifted students, the social-emotional needs of gifted learners (including 2E students), and strategies for supporting their academic and social-emotional well-being.
- School Administrators: Will be provided the Local AIG plan, the "Gifted Guidebook: A Snapshot of Success", flow charts and other graphics to aid in their understanding of the Local AIG plan. They will have access to professional development opportunities in accessible formats focusing on the knowledge of gifted identification and service models, and skills to support the implementation of AIG services and ensure equitable access within their schools.

Strategies for Implementation:

- Targeted Professional Development Modules: The district will provide targeted professional development modules in various formats (in-person, virtual, asynchronous) specifically designed for each stakeholder group. These modules will address the unique competencies outlined above and the specific needs of AIG students, the staff feedback, and the local AIG program.
- NCDPI Resources and Tools: NCDPI Advanced Learning and Gifted Education resources and tools will be intentionally integrated into professional development modules and made readily accessible to all staff through Canvas and the district website. These resources will directly support the outlined expectations.
- Gifted Education within MTSS: Professional learning will be available to all educators on the role of gifted education within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), focusing on differentiation within core instruction and providing advanced learning opportunities at all tiers.
- Gifted Multilingual Learners (ML) and Twice Exceptional Students (2e): Professional learning opportunities will be provided for all educators specifically addressing the characteristics, identification, and effective instructional strategies for gifted multilingual learners and 2e students.
- Creative Resource Utilization: The district will explore creative resource utilization when designing and delivering professional development, including collaboration with neighboring school districts on shared training opportunities, regional partnerships for specialized workshops, and the strategic use of "AIG Booster Shots" for ongoing learning.

- Support for AIG Add-on: The district will provide information, mentorship opportunities, and potential financial support (where feasible) through AIG-enius Squad for teachers and/or other instructional support personnel interested in earning an AIG add-on license via successful completion of the Praxis exam.
- Comprehensive Resource Provision: The district will continue to provide accessible resources and tools for all stakeholders through the district's learning management system (Canvas), website, and digital resources such as Google Drive, directly aligning with outlined expectations.
- Systematic Staff Surveys: The district will conduct annual surveys of all certified staff and administrators to specifically determine additional AIG in-service training topics and gather feedback on existing professional development.
- Data-Driven Training Direction: Data from these surveys will be used to determine the direction and content of future staff development training with an AIG emphasis.
- Internal and External Expertise: AIG Specialists and those who have earned an AIG add-on license will lead professional development sessions, and the district will also explore partnerships with external providers for specialized topics.
- Modeling and Coaching for Differentiation: AIG Specialists and other support staff will provide opportunities to collaborate with classroom teachers and support differentiation by modeling effective strategies in classrooms and providing individualized coaching on implementing these techniques.
- Book Clubs: Book clubs will be held for interested teachers. These will be hosted by AIG Specialists and the Program Facilitator.
- K-5 AIG Specialists: These individuals will provide informal PD utilizing a variety of platforms that may include: staff meetings, 30-minute virtual sessions ("snippets") that may be accessed either through live virtual sessions or recordings, etc. Specialists will analyze the annual AIG program survey data of their respective school, and they will also conduct polls to determine areas of need to determine what professional development to plan and provide. Monthly AIG meetings, as well as a summer work session, will be utilized to plan and create professional development offerings for all staff. RCSS hopes to increase the amount of classroom support and differentiation by modeling and coaching teachers on implementing these strategies.

*** 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.

RCSS requires teachers of gifted learners, both AIG Specialists and regular education teachers, particularly Mathematics and English/Language Arts teachers, to successfully complete one or more of the following preparation paths:

- 1) AIG add-on license through an institute of higher education
- 2) AIG add-on license by earning required score on Praxis test
- 3) Successful completion of the RCSS Local AIG Endorsement Program (AIG-enius Squad)

To further support teachers' professional growth and enlarge the number of AIG certified teachers, the district has established a study group for the Praxis Exam to help those interested in adding AIG certification to their teaching license. The local AIG Praxis Study Program (aka RCSS AIG-enius Squad) provides intensive, hands-on learning for cohorts of regular education teachers. The academy focuses on foundations of gifted education, exceptionalities and gifted education, identification and assessment of gifted students, characteristics and development of gifted students, curriculum planning for gifted students, instructional strategies for gifted students, learning environments for gifted instruction, guidance strategies for gifted education, student performance and assessment, interpreting assessment data for gifted students, and professionalism for gifted educators. Participants spend extended time learning how to differentiate the affective/learning environment domain, as well as content, process, and product. This opportunity is available to all teachers working with gifted students, and the district strongly encourages teachers to take advantage of this opportunity to deepen their knowledge and formalize their expertise in gifted education. The study group will meet regularly and provide targeted resources, practice exams, and peer support to help teachers prepare for the Praxis exam

required for AIG certification. This support is provided to increase the number of AIG-licensed teachers and ensure that all educators working with gifted students are appropriately credentialed and well-prepared to meet their students' needs.

Students identified as academically and/or intellectually gifted are clustered in core classrooms at grades 3-5, grades 6-8, and grades 6-12. Identified students are served by teachers who have successfully completed at least one of the two preparation paths for teaching AIG students. Services vary based on grade spans. For example, clusters of gifted students in grades 3-5 receive direct services from a district-funded AIG Specialist assigned to the school. Middle grades students identified in the areas of Mathematics and/or Reading are strategically clustered for Math and English/Language Arts courses. The AIG Program Specialist works with administrators to ensure effective AIG student groupings with an AIG-licensed teacher or one who has met local requirements. Identified students in grades 9-12 are encouraged and counseled during the annual registration process to enroll in challenging, rigorous high school courses. Identified students are clustered in high school courses based on enrollment.

*** Practice E**

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

The AIG Program Specialist collaborates with school administrators to provide oversight, guidance, and monitoring of both the scheduling of identified students, and the delivery of program services for identified students. The AIG Program Specialist monitors through reports generated by the RCSS Human Resource department the number of AIG licensed teachers. The AIG Program Specialist monitors through North Carolina's Student Information System classroom enrollment of identified students. K-5 and 6-8 AIG Specialists collaborate with administrators and scheduling teams to ensure that identified students are clustered according to the district's AIG plan. Specialists also monitor the academic progress of AIG students in all classes. Designated high school counselors work with all counselors and teachers of identified students to ensure students are scheduled and clustered according to AIG plan. High school counselors monitor the academic progress of AIG students.

The following strategies are utilized for the recruitment and retention of AIG-licensed professionals, including those of diverse backgrounds:

- Provide financial support (as available) to teachers interested in earning AIG add-on licensure through the AIG-enius Squad or a local endorsement program.
- Provide support/coaching to teachers who register to take Praxis exam for gifted education licensure.
- Complete annual reviews of staffing needs at all schools with Human Resources and school administrators.
- Attend university career fairs and maintain relationships with institutions that offer AIG licensure programs.
- Publicize AIG programming, local endorsement (AIG-enius Squad), and professional learning opportunities on the district website and in recruitment materials.
- Work with principals to identify high-potential internal candidates (e.g., classroom teachers or instructional coaches) and support them through licensure programs.
- Provide a collaborative learning community for our AIG specialists to engage in ongoing professional growth and shared learning.
- Provide specialized continued education and training at monthly AIG Specialist meetings focused on best practices and enhancing their ability to support gifted learners.
- Provide mentors for new AIG Specialist

*** Practice F**

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

Based on stakeholder feedback data sources, professional development needs have emerged as a primary concern across multiple areas, evidenced by its frequent mention in almost every standard. Furthermore, during our recent District MTSS FAM-D meeting, the necessity of a unified, district-level professional development plan became a clear priority. This unified approach aims to move away from departmental silos and ensure a cohesive and strategically planned delivery of PD. As a result, our district is committed to realizing equity and excellence in gifted education through a focused professional learning plan that comprehensively addresses mindsets, policies, and practices. Recognizing that achieving this requires an ongoing, data-informed approach aligned with state and local initiatives, we are actively developing and implementing this plan. A key element of this partnership will be the intentional integration of equity and excellence in gifted education through the lenses of mindsets, policies, and practices throughout all professional development offerings. It is also vital that this PD plan directly addresses the understanding of giftedness and common misconceptions about various student groups.

The district goal is for all teachers to utilize evidence-based strategies and best practices that are equitable for all students. Analysis of the NCDPI Call to Action: Critical Actions to Realize Equity and Excellence in Gifted Education will provide valuable insight for how to strengthen current and future professional learning opportunities for all teachers, with an emphasis on teachers of gifted learners (Standard 4, Practice G).

The Randolph County School System is a NC Advanced Placement Partner with the College Board. Pre-AP English 1 opportunities for 9th graders continues to expand across RCSS's high schools. Expansion of Advanced Placement Courses, increased access to virtual learning opportunities, and the implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) requires teachers to participate in professional development in order to provide high quality instruction that promotes equity and excellence for all students. AVID is offered to students in two feeder patterns across the district. Both College Board and AVID provide high quality professional learning opportunities for teachers and administrators.

Resources that support equity and excellence incorporated into professional learning opportunities for all teachers include:

- NCDPI Call to Action Guidebook: Critical Actions to Realize Equity and Excellence in Gifted Education, February 2021
- Excellence Gaps in Education: Expanding Opportunities for Talented Students, Plucker & Peters (2017)
- Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium: Equity Audits: Criteria for an Equitable School, Criteria for an Equitable Classroom, Teacher Behaviors that Encourage Student Persistence
- Equitable Classroom Practices Observation Checklist (Adapted from "A Resource for Equitable Classroom Practice" 2010)

*** 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 RCSS AIG department is committed to elevating learning for all students by providing challenging and tailored instruction, directly aligning with the district's overarching commitment to utilizing student data, addressing individual learning needs, and implementing the MTSS. Our local AIG Program goals, as outlined in the RCSS AIG Plan 2022-2025, provide a clear framework for our work and drive our professional development initiatives. These goals include:

- Implementing a consistent screening, referral, and identification process to ensure equity and excellence across all grade levels.
- Utilizing multiple sources of data for all students, particularly under-represented populations, to create learner profiles that reflect strengths, talents, and potential giftedness.
- Providing a variety of program services that meet the unique academic, intellectual, and social-emotional learning needs of gifted learners.

- Utilizing multiple sources of assessment data to cluster and flexibly group students for instruction.
- Implementing evidence-based curriculum strategies, resources, and practices that are equitable, rigorous, and challenging for all students.
- Building the capacity of all teachers to differentiate instruction to accelerate and extend learning for gifted students.
- Building the capacity of all certified personnel working with gifted learners to meet their diverse needs through targeted professional learning.
- Promoting enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities aligned with the needs of gifted learners and the AIG plan goals.
- Increasing K-12 Talent Development for all students.
- Increasing opportunities for AIG Specialists to participate in collaborative teams to advocate for gifted learners.
- Increasing the number of certified staff with AIG licensure or endorsement.
- Growing partnerships with higher education and community organizations to enhance the AIG program.
- Implementing the RCSS AIG Plan 2025-2028 with fidelity.
- Eliciting regular feedback from stakeholders.
- Safeguarding the rights of AIG students and their families.

To achieve these goals, the AIG department strategically aligns professional development opportunities:

Alignment with AIG Program Goals: Professional development is intentionally designed to address specific AIG goals. For example, training on utilizing multiple data sources for identification directly supports the second goal. Professional learning focused on differentiation strategies, including the use of Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, Webb's Depth of Knowledge, and Kaplan's Depth and Complexity Icons, directly addresses the sixth and seventh goals related to building teacher capacity for differentiation and implementing rigorous practices. Furthermore, professional development on the social and emotional needs of gifted learners directly supports the third and seventh goals.

Integration with Other District Initiatives: The AIG department actively integrates its work with broader district initiatives. The AIG Program Specialist is a member of the district MTSS Leadership team and the MTSS Implementation Team, ensuring that the needs of gifted learners are considered within this framework. Partnerships with Elementary, Secondary, CTE, and Exceptional Children departments facilitate the infusion of AIG best practices across all content areas and student populations. For instance, collaborative professional development sessions may explore how differentiation strategies for gifted learners can benefit all students within an MTSS framework.

Following Gifted Education Best Practices: All professional development opportunities are planned and implemented with a focus on evidence-based best practices in gifted education. This includes incorporating current research on the characteristics of gifted learners, effective differentiation strategies, acceleration techniques, and social-emotional support. For example, "AIG Booster Shots" from NCDPI and resources from national gifted education organizations are utilized to inform professional learning content. We are also committed to providing an "AIG 101" professional learning opportunity for all staff, covering the characteristics of gifted learners, instructional practices that support their needs (including differentiation, acceleration, and enrichment), and their unique social and emotional considerations, drawing upon current research and models in the field.

Structures for Collaboration and Capacity Building: Multiple structures facilitate collaboration among AIG specialists and other teachers:

- District and School-Level PLCs: Regular PLC meetings at both levels serve as critical platforms for AIG specialists and general education teachers to collaboratively plan differentiated lessons, share effective strategies learned through professional development, and refine their practice.

- MTSS Teams: Collaboration of AIG Coordinators and Specialists in school and district MTSS teams ensures ongoing dialogue, alignment of AIG goals with school-wide improvement efforts, and collaborative planning of professional learning that integrates the perspective of gifted education within the MTSS framework.
- Central Service and Lead Teacher Meetings: AIG Program Specialists actively participate in district curriculum leadership meetings, including representation from all departments, to ensure the AIG perspective is considered in all district-wide initiatives and professional development planning.
- Personalized Support: The AIG coordinator and school AIG specialists provide individualized support through modeling, co-teaching, and coaching, offering targeted opportunities for teachers to refine their implementation of strategies for gifted learners.
- Monthly AIG Meetings: These dedicated meetings allow AIG specialists to collaborate on developing evidence-based curriculum, resources, and practices, including differentiated units, extension activities utilizing frameworks like Kaplan's Depth and Complexity, and strategies such as Socratic Seminars and Project/Problem-Based Learning.

Strategies for Implementation:

- Clear Inclusion of AIG Perspective: The AIG perspective can be intentionally integrated into various district professional development initiatives through the active participation of AIG specialists in planning meetings and district-wide professional learning opportunities.
- Alignment of Goals and PD: The goals outlined in the Local AIG Plan should directly inform the focus and content of AIG-related professional development.
- Leadership Collaboration: The AIG department actively works with district leadership committees to ensure the needs of AIG students and teachers are heard and considered.
- Dedicated AIG Professional Development: The district plans and implements professional development specifically focused on best practices in gifted education, including characteristics, instructional strategies, and social-emotional needs.
- "Gifted Guidebook: A Snapshot for Success" and "AIG 101": We will develop and provide an overview of the Local AIG Plan ("Gifted Guidebook) for all schools and implement a comprehensive "AIG 101" professional learning opportunity.
- Creative Resource Use: The AIG department will continue to explore collaborative professional development opportunities with neighboring districts and universities and utilize resources like the NCDPI "AIG Booster Shots."
- Time for Implementation and Reflection: Professional development opportunities will incorporate time for coaching, planning for implementation, and reflection on practice to ensure deeper understanding and program improvement.
- Post-PD Sharing Sessions: Following professional development, the AIG department will facilitate best practice sharing sessions among AIG staff and between AIG staff and classroom teachers through PLCs and other collaborative settings.
- Technology for Resource Sharing: Technology tools and shared digital folders will be utilized to share new ideas, grade-appropriate resources, and materials from professional development experiences.
- Exemplar Lessons: The AIG department will develop and share exemplar lessons that illustrate the theory and concepts learned during professional development, specifically focusing on differentiation and co-teaching strategies relevant to AIG learners.
- Leveraging Existing Structures: Existing structures like Early Release Days, district-wide professional development days, and monthly PLCs can be strategically utilized to deliver AIG-focused professional learning.

- MTSS Professional Development: Professional development prioritizes understanding the MTSS framework, the role of collaborative teams within it, and the necessity of high-quality differentiated instruction for all learners, including the gifted.

- Reaching Educators with AIG Professional Learning: AIG specialists utilize a variety of platforms and technology tools (e.g., in-person faculty/professional learning communities' meetings, virtual meetings, pre-recorded virtual meetings, 30-minute "snippets", digital tools to collect and share new ideas, grade level appropriate resources and materials, exemplar lessons, designated district and school teacher workdays) to focus on evidence-based best practices in gifted education, as outlined in the local AIG plan and that specifically align with other district initiatives.

Through these comprehensive and aligned efforts, the RCSS AIG department strives to build the capacity of all educators to effectively meet the unique needs of gifted learners, ensuring equity and excellence in gifted education across the district.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Biannual reviews of staffing needs at all schools with Human Resources and school principals.
2. Develop a process to monitor the effective assignment of students to an AIG licensed teacher who has met the requirements. Share this data with principals and district leadership.
3. Track the number of AIG certified teachers and work to increase it.
4. Investigate partnerships with an institute of higher education (IHE) to support a cohort of teachers to complete AIG add-on licensure.
5. Utilize resources provided by NCDPI - Call to Actions and Guidebook 2.0 to plan and implement focused professional learning opportunities to support equity and excellence in gifted education and to change mindsets, policies, and practices.
6. Work to find places to connect the needs of AIG students with the School Improvement Plan goals and align professional development accordingly.
7. Continue to find ways to build time for coaching, implementation, and reflection based on professional development experiences to support participants understanding and program improvement.
8. Consider having administrators attend biannual professional development on data driven best practices for cluster grouping and educating gifted students using the 10% of each school setting for Talent Development.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Local AIG Endorsement course

* Baseline and annual data reflecting number of AIG licensed/locally endorsed teachers

* RCSS AIG Survey Data; School-specific informal needs assessment data

* Agendas/Rosters/Presentations - Professional development offerings that align with the AIG program goals and plan for all staff

* Monthly AIG Specialists' Meetings agendas (reflecting analysis of needs assessment data, planning for professional development)

* Rosters/agendas/resources - district professional learning team ("task force") to examine current mindset, policies, and practices to support equity and excellence in gifted education

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

Standard 5: Partnerships

Randolph County School System (760) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

*** Practice A**

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

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

RCSS is committed to the continued development of two-way partnerships with parents/guardians to support the needs of gifted learners. An area of focus for the RCSS AIG Plan 2025-2028 is to move beyond communication and develop intentional, meaningful partnerships with parents/guardians. Data from the 2025 parent/guardian and certified staff surveys indicate that significant improvement is needed in this area. In addition to the annual RCSS AIG surveys, stakeholder focus groups and one-on-one conversations with parents were held to gather further insights. The feedback collected from these sources, along with the AIG program survey data, provided specific examples of how communication with and direct involvement of parents/guardians can be enhanced.

Strategies for strengthening two-way partnerships with parents/guardians

We have:

- Increased diverse representation of parents/guardians on the district AIG Advisory Committee
- Created of a “Gifted Guardians” Steering Committee to meet 3 times a year to allow stakeholders input in the monitoring, implementation and fidelity of the plan. This fosters joint responsibility and ownership between parents and the school/district.
- Developed relationships with parents to gain insight to their AIG child’s experience at various stages throughout the K-12 span.
- Made phone calls to parents that listed their name and number on the 2025 survey to discuss their concerns, explain misconceptions, elicit feedback, and build relationships.
- Created partnerships with parents which resulted in monetary donations for specific competitions for schools in our district.
- Held in person Differentiated Education Plans (DEP) meetings for all initially placed third graders.

We will:

- Provide more frequent opportunities to provide feedback on the AIG program and goals, including a yearly spring parent survey to gather input on topics such as: enrichment, whether their child is being challenged, the most beneficial services for their child, how technology is used, the DEP, their comfort level with communicating with the school, how their child has used real-world problem solving, the strengths of the program, areas for improvement, ideas for fostering two-way relationships, feedback on efforts to improve communication, and their knowledge of extracurricular opportunities.

- Include more opportunities for parents to provide feedback during in person DEP meetings.
- Expand opportunities for parents to participate in activities during school events (e.g., Open Houses, Title 1 Family Nights) that focus on experiencing evidence-based best practices for gifted students, understanding the characteristics of gifted students (academic, intellectual, social, and emotional), and learning more about the screening, referral, and identification process.
- Engage parents/guardians in understanding more clearly the components of their students' DEP. Utilize monthly AIG specialists' meetings to collaboratively plan activities, sessions, and experiences to develop two-way partnerships with parents/guardians.
- Host book club opportunities for parents centered around books relevant to the unique needs and development of gifted children.
- Work with CTE to increase partnerships with businesses and organizations to extend/enrich core instruction during and after school.

*** 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.

RCSS is committed to establishing partnerships with community stakeholders, such as institutions of higher education, local business and industry partners, and other organizations, to enhance and support local AIG programs and services. Annual AIG Program Survey data from all stakeholders indicate a strong desire for gifted learners to participate in opportunities both during and beyond the school day that will challenge and extend their learning experiences. These partnerships provide students with opportunities to engage in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) experiences, supporting not only the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners but also addressing their social and emotional needs. Through these partnerships, students are also given opportunities to showcase their work.

The Public Information Officer maintains an up-to-date list of community partners, which is regularly used by the AIG department to identify potential sponsors for student programs such as Science Olympiad and Destination Imagination, as well as local professionals who can serve as mentors for gifted students. Partnerships range from long-standing and highly effective collaborations with Randolph Community College, which offers extension opportunities through summer programming, dual-enrollment options, and the Early College Program, to local businesses, industries, and other organizations that provide valuable support for students, staff, and families. Notable partners include the Randolph County Arts Guild, which offers enrichment in the arts through an annual art show, Junior Achievement, Randolph County Community in Schools, and various faith-based organizations that provide human resource support in the form of mentors, tutors, and student buddies.

Through our partnership with Randolph Community College, AIG students have the opportunity to take college-level courses in fields such as engineering and computer science, enabling them to accelerate their academic progression. We also have a partnership with the University of Mt. Olive offers a dual-enrollment program for further academic acceleration. Additionally, the AIG department collaborates with other district departments to ensure gifted students are included in a broad range of district partnerships, such as working with the Career Technical Education department to explore mentorships, internships, job shadowing experiences, and other out-of-school programs. These partnerships allow gifted learners to engage in extension and enrichment opportunities tailored to their academic strengths, personal interests, and potential future careers.

The district covers the annual membership fees for the North Carolina Association for Gifted and Talented (NCAGT), providing the AIG team with valuable professional development opportunities and a network to collaborate with gifted educators and potential partners statewide. The AIG team has attended professional development workshops organized by NCAGT, where they collaborated with experts in gifted education to enhance their differentiation strategies, which directly benefits AIG students in the classroom. Membership includes digital and printed materials (e.g., newsletters), professional development opportunities, digital networks for collaboration, and registration fees for the annual conference. The AIG team utilizes these opportunities to seek partnerships with institutes of higher education, local business and industry partners, and others to enhance and support the local AIG program and services. A specific example of how these professional development opportunities lead to new partnerships is a recent collaboration between one of our AIG specialists and Dr.

Brian Housand, an educational consultant with a PHD in Gifted Education. Together, they developed enrichment lessons for our district, aimed at further advancing the academic experiences of our gifted learners.

*** Practice C**

Establishes and utilizes an advisory group to develop, implement, monitor, and revise the local AIG program and plan. This advisory group is representative of the diverse populations of the district and is at least comprised of community members, AIG parents/guardians, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff.

Annual gifted survey data indicates that 21% of parents/guardians are aware that the district has an established advisory group. During the 2024-2025 school year, the AIG Program Specialist has initiated an intentional focus on expanding parent/guardian participation on the local advisory committee. Efforts to include stakeholders from all ethnicities represented in the AIG student population were made as well as business members, parents of 2e students, and representation from each quadrant of our large county where cultural differences exist. A good variety of school and district personnel was invited including classroom and AIG teachers, counselors, principals at all three levels (elementary, middle and high), directors of Curriculum and Instruction, CTE, ESL, and testing. Another area of focus to further the expansion of participation is to include community members, particularly local business/industry leaders, and representatives from local and/or nearby institutes of higher education (e.g., Randolph Community College). Collaboration with district leadership and departments, such as Career Technical Education and MLs, has been beneficial in terms of potential community, business, and industry partners who are willing to serve on the AIG advisory committee. The AIG Program Specialist has worked with principals to invite parents of AIG students across grade spans. Parents of high school students who have been in the AIG program since elementary were a valuable resource as they have witnessed the program over the course of time.

In preparation for this year's plan revision, various stakeholder groups were invited to contribute feedback on the progress of goals relevant to their specific areas of service. Focus groups were conducted with principals and lead teachers across all grade spans, district-level leaders, counselors, ESL teachers, K-5 AIG specialists, and AIG contacts from middle and high schools. Anecdotal notes form one on one conversations with community members, parents and RCSS employees also served as a wealth of information and feedback from a more personal level. Participants had the opportunity to discuss the standards, sharing which ones they felt were strengths in their schools and identifying areas where improvement was needed.

The advisory group plays a central role in reviewing survey data, discussing progress toward goals, and providing input on needed revisions to the AIG plan. This collaborative feedback process directly informs the development and continuous refinement of the AIG plan. Specifically, the input from the advisory group was used to create priorities for the program. For example, one key piece of feedback from multiple stakeholder groups, including parents, highlighted a lack of communication as an area for improvement. In response to this, new communication strategies were incorporated throughout the AIG plan, ensuring more effective and transparent communication between schools, families, and the district. This input-driven approach ensures that the AIG plan remains responsive to the evolving needs of the district's diverse student population, and that areas for improvement are addressed in a timely and meaningful way.

To continue fostering stakeholder involvement and ensure ongoing feedback, a new stakeholder group called Gifted Guardians has been created as a steering committee. Inspired by the theme from the movie series, this group symbolically represents working together to 'protect' and enhance the AIG program, ensuring it serves the needs of gifted students and fosters their growth. This group will meet three times a year to provide input on the monitoring, implementation, and fidelity of the AIG plan. Their role in regularly reviewing the plan's progress will help ensure that it remains aligned with the needs of AIG students and the broader school community.

*** 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.

The district is committed to creating and implementing multiple forms of media to ensure that all stakeholders are well informed. The Randolph County School System AIG Plan 2025-2028 and RCSS AIG Parent Handbook, outlining program goals and services, are posted and accessible to parents/guardians under the 'Academics' section on the district website under 'Menu', and printed copies are distributed to schools. The following methods are utilized to inform all students, parents/guardians, and the community about the local plan, program services, policies related to advanced learning opportunities, and ways to access these opportunities:

- In-person district/school sponsored events: Annual AIG information sessions during parent-teacher conferences and school curriculum nights where AIG showcases student work.
- Automated phone messages/text/email: Automated phone messages through our Aptegy System are sent out to inform AIG families about accessing the Local AIG plan, upcoming AIG meetings, AIG plan updates, and detailing upcoming events, opportunities, and deadlines.
- Pamphlets/brochures: Digital pamphlets and brochures, created in collaboration with the CTE department, highlight AIG opportunities, program information, and overviews.
- Social Media: The Randolph County School System AIG Facebook page has been established and marketed. (We have increased from 59 followers to 287) These social media platforms provide immediate communication, showcase student work, student awards, opportunities for students K-12, and share real-time updates.
- Podcasts: The district has begun creating and posting podcasts that explain AIG program information by standard and answer frequently asked questions.
- Website updates: The AIG section of the district website is continually updated with current information regarding the AIG plan, services, and upcoming events. Included here are the newly created flow maps for identification, podcasts, videos and PowerPoints, parent resources, and opportunities for enrichment.

The top six languages spoken are: English, Spanish, Hindi, Urdu, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Approximately 12.5% of the total population of gifted students in RCSS are Hispanic. Continued expansion of providing ongoing communications in students' and parents'/guardians' native languages is an area of focus for the 2025-2028 local AIG plan. Written communication can be translated into the languages spoken in our district. Translators are available at the school level for parent/guardian meetings and school-sponsored events. State and local policies regarding advanced learners, such as the state AIG standards, and local identification procedures, are explained in the AIG handbook, and during AIG information sessions.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

1. Explore the possibility of district/school sponsored opportunities (e.g., "Lunch and Learn" sessions) during the day for parents to provide feedback. These sessions could occur at the district and/or school level.
2. Utilize school parent nights/ Title I nights/ events to provide opportunities for parents/guardians to learn more about the gifted program, academic/intellectual, and social and emotional needs of gifted learners, AIG best practices, to provide feedback, and to serve as guest speakers.
3. Continue to fund memberships to NCAGT for AIG Specialists, which includes access to the annual NCAGT conference.

4. Work collaboratively to identify institutes of higher education, local business/community and industry partners to enhance the local AIG program and services.
5. Collaborate with district leadership to connect the AIG program specialists and teachers with district partnerships that have been established to develop the talent of all students and to enhance the local AIG program. (e.g., district partnership with an institute of higher education focusing on STEM activities for teachers of mathematics).
6. Identify and seek opportunities for students to showcase their work for parents/guardians and local community partners.
7. Expand participation on the district AIG advisory committee to include institutes of higher education/community/business/local industry partners.
8. Collaborate with Career Technical Education director and staff, as well as district leadership to identify potential partners.
9. Provide multiple platforms for members of the local AIG advisory committee to provide input and feedback on the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the local AIG plan (e.g., continued use of Google forms, small group in-person/virtual meetings)
10. Expand use of social media to include district and school Twitter and/or Instagram pages at all sites to communicate with students, parents/guardians.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Annual RCSS Survey Data	
* Annual RCSS Parent/Guardian Google Form Data	
* Documentation from school events: agendas, presentations, rosters, social media posts	
* RCSS AIG Budget reflecting funding for NCAGT memberships	
* RCSS AIG Advisory Committee rosters, agendas, presentations	
* Translations of RCSS AIG Program documents and communications	
* Documented evidence of RCSS AIG district and school social media pages	

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

Standard 6: Program Accountability

Randolph County School System (760) 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.

RCSS developed a written AIG plan to describe the local AIG program, in accordance with state legislation and State Board of Education policy (N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-9 {Article 9B}), which was approved by the Randolph County School System Board of Education on June 26, 2025 and was submitted to the State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction for review and comment. RCSS is committed to continuous improvement, and the district focuses on establishing a culture of data-rich discussions with all stakeholders to guide practices and program improvements across all programs and initiatives, including the AIG program. The development of the AIG plan was led by the RCSS Program Facilitator and composed of a team of representatives from a variety of stakeholders: students, parents/guardians, educators, administrators and district leaders. The process to evaluate the local AIG program and plan includes multiple perspectives using an array of data points. A comprehensive process emphasizing continuous improvement and using input and feedback from multiple data points, including AIG program surveys, collaboration with EC, ML, testing and accountability, curriculum specialists and the RCSS AIG Advisory Committee, was utilized to develop specific strategies and ideas for strengthening the next generation AIG plan. The RCSS AIG Advisory met twice during the 2024-2025 school year. The first meeting was held December 16, 2024 and the second meeting was held on March 10, 2025. A final draft of the plan was shared with stakeholders prior to submitting the plan in its entirety to the Board for approval.

The following strategies are utilized to facilitate a comprehensive evaluation of the local AIG program and local AIG plan:

- Utilize a three-year progress monitoring tool, designed to track implementation and measure the effectiveness of the local AIG plan, developed by the AIG Program Specialist and AIG team
- Utilize existing collaborative structures (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, district curriculum department meetings/Professional Learning Teams (e.g., Directors' Meetings, District Lead Teachers' Meetings), and RCSS AIG Advisory Committee as key venues for monitoring plan implementation and evaluating its effectiveness by:
 - Conduct data-rich conversations
 - Focus on successes and challenges of program implementation and effectiveness
 - Discuss data regularly with appropriate stakeholders to inform evidence-based adjustments
 - Review feedback from parents/guardians, students, and certified staff to gauge impact

The AIG Program Facilitator held monthly meetings with AIG Specialists. An AIG local plan self-assessment, a critical component of our monitoring and evaluation efforts, was completed by the district AIG team during the fall of 2024 to analyze and prioritize the strengthening of the standards for the next generation AIG plan, reflecting the district's commitment to continuous improvement. During each meeting, AIG program standards were addressed to monitor implementation. Strategies and ideas for strengthening each standard were identified based on ongoing evaluation. Survey data were analyzed, and drafts were developed and revised in response to monitoring and evaluation findings.

The AIG Specialists also assisted with facilitating the AIG Advisory Committee meetings. In addition to these committee meetings, the AIG Program Facilitator met with focus groups such as K-12 support staff, district and school administrators, counselors, ESL teachers, and school and district lead teachers to solicit input and feedback. RCSS AIG Plan 2025-2028 Focal Points document, capturing the highlights of the new plan, was created and distributed to groups of stakeholders and available for the RCSS Board of Education prior to approving the plan. The AIG Program Facilitator attended state and regional meetings and participated in webinars focusing on the development of the local plan, as well as collaborating with other program facilitators across the state.

*** 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.

RCSS is committed to monitoring the implementation of the local AIG program and plan in accordance with current legislation and state policies. The AIG Program Specialist oversees this process. The AIG Program Specialist utilizes AIG Specialists meetings to identify specific action steps and to progress monitor the AIG program and plan. In the 2022-2023 school year, the AIG Program Specialist and school-level AIG specialists developed and implemented a three-year progress monitoring tool that include multiple data sources based on AIG program goals and the contents of the local AIG plan. Monthly AIG meetings address specific areas of focus identified in the local AIG plan. The monitoring tool is shared biannually with district and school leadership, as well as the RCSS AIG Advisory Committee.

To ensure fidelity of implementation across all AIG program components outlined in the Local AIG Plan, a multi-faceted approach to ongoing monitoring is employed.

The AIG Program Specialist facilitates monthly meetings with school-level AIG Specialists. These meetings serve as key venues for:

- Identifying specific action steps required for the implementation of various aspects of the Local AIG Plan (e.g., timelines for universal screening, rollout of a new service model at a specific school).
- Progress monitoring the AIG program and plan by reviewing data and discussing implementation successes and challenges at individual schools.
- Analyzing data related to key performance indicators tied to the Local AIG Plan goals (e.g., the number of identified students from underrepresented populations, the frequency of differentiated instruction observed in classrooms, student growth data for AIG learners).

The roles of district personnel in program implementation and monitoring are clearly defined:

- AIG Program Specialist: Oversee the entire monitoring process, lead the development and analysis of the three-year progress monitoring tool, facilitate monthly AIG Specialist meetings focused on monitoring, and serve as the central point of district contact for data and reporting.
- School-Level AIG Specialists: Play a crucial role in implementing the AIG program at their schools, contributing to the development and implementation of the monitoring tool, collecting school-level data, and providing insights into implementation successes and challenges during monthly meetings. They also conduct informal observations and provide feedback to teachers on differentiation practices.
- School Principals: Are responsible for ensuring the fidelity of AIG program implementation at their school sites. They support the work of the AIG Specialist, participate in discussions regarding AIG implementation, and may conduct walkthroughs or observations to monitor the use of differentiation strategies.
- Curriculum Directors/Coordinators: Collaborate with the AIG Program Specialist to ensure alignment between the AIG program and the general curriculum. They may participate in data discussions and support the integration of advanced content and differentiation strategies within their subject areas.

▪ RCSS AIG Advisory Committee: Review biannual reports on the progress of AIG program implementation, provide feedback from the community and parent perspectives, and advise on adjustments to ensure fidelity to the Local AIG Plan.

To ensure that what is documented as practice and policy in the Local AIG Plan is being implemented, the following mechanisms are in place:

- Alignment of Monitoring Tool to Plan: Data sources are selected to provide concrete evidence of the implementation of strategies described in the plan.
- Data Collection Methods Tied to Practices: Data sources are selected to provide concrete evidence of the implementation of strategies described in the plan.
- Biannual Reporting and Review: The findings from the three-year progress monitoring tool are shared annually with district and school leadership, as well as the RCSS AIG Advisory Committee. These reports highlight areas of successful implementation and areas needing further attention, prompting discussions and the development of action plans to address any inconsistencies.
- Action Planning and Follow-Up: When data reveals implementation gaps, the AIG Program Specialist collaborates with school-level teams and principals to develop and review targeted action plans during monthly meetings.

*** 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.

RCSS utilizes all allotted state funds (O34) for salaries, benefits, professional development, screening and identification assessments and tools, and the AIG endorsement program. The development of the AIG district budget is a collaborative process led by the AIG Specialist in conjunction with the district finance officer and district leadership. This process begins with a review of the Local AIG Plan goals and identified student and stakeholder needs, gathered through avenues such as feedback from the AIG Advisory Committee, AIG Specialists, student surveys, and program evaluations. Based on these needs and goals, the AIG Specialist, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, prioritizes budgetary requests to support key areas of plan implementation, including equitable testing practices, Talent Development resources and support for teacher licensure. These requests are then aligned with available state funds (O34) and potential local funds during the budget development meetings with the finance officer and district leadership.

Expenditures are diligently monitored to ensure alignment with the Local AIG Plan. Necessary adjustments are made to ensure that every dollar spent directly supports the comprehensive implementation of the Local AIG Plan, as demonstrated by our support for the AIG-enius Squad and the purchase of resources like Brian Housand's 'Seeds' book.

*** 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.

RCSS continues to look for and analyze multiple data sources to drive our efforts for continual improvement. RCSS believes that data should not be simply collected but should be used to shape programming decisions, drive practices and respond to students. RCSS maintains, analyzes, and shares student achievement, student growth, and annual drop-out data for AIG students. The AIG Specialist collaborates bi-annually with district leadership—including the Curriculum and Instruction Department, Testing & Accountability Department, Student Support Services Department, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) district and school teams to disaggregate multiple sources of data by school, grade, gender, and race. These data reviews are conducted to recognize patterns and trends over time that inform mindsets, instructional practices, identification procedures, and service models for equity and excellence.

A district-developed three-year progress monitoring tool is used to analyze these data sources consistently. The 2025–2028 local AIG plan reflects an intentional expansion of data sources used to evaluate program effectiveness and meet the holistic needs of gifted learners. Data sources include:

- North Carolina End-of-Grade/End-of-Course (EOG/EOC) English Language Arts and Mathematics grades 3–12, and End-of-Grade Science in grades 5 and 8
- North Carolina Final Exams
- WIDA ACCESS 2.0 (for English Learners)
- North Carolina Dropout Report
- Local Database Warehouse to generate subgroup-specific reports, including analysis using Normal Curve Equivalents (NCEs) for individual student growth
- Educator Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) subgroup growth data
- Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Testing (ACT), and CTE WorkKeys
- North Carolina School Report Card data
- Participation in Dual Enrollment, Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), College and Career Promise (CCP) courses; number of AVID high school graduates; and successful completion of AP and CCP coursework
- AIG student growth and achievement data including formative and summative assessments (NC Check-ins, CFA's, etc.)

One example of how RCSS uses this data to drive decision-making occurred when the AIG teachers examined the outcomes of students who did not initially qualify for AIG but participated in our Talent Development (TD) and tutoring programs. It was found that 64% of these students did qualify for AIG identification before the end of 5th grade. This powerful insight led to a district-wide expansion of TD efforts, particularly in early grades (K–2) and in schools with historically low AIG identification rates. As a result, pilot projects were launched in which Kindergarten, 1st grade and/or STEAM lab teachers implement P.E.T.S. (Primary Education Thinking Skills) lessons to support early development of critical and creative thinking skills.

Data analysis has also been instrumental in shifting perspectives. For instance, an examination of 2e student identification data revealed that a prior practice inadvertently led to overlooking some high-IQ students. Removing this practice resulted in the identification of 23 additional students meeting the criteria for further evaluation. Furthermore, feedback from focus groups and anecdotal notes gathered through individual conversations served as valuable data sources. AI summarization of comments from multiple focus groups consistently highlighted communication as a top priority for future improvement. Student data is confidential, and all RCSS staff adhere strictly to the rules and regulations of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when accessing or sharing data.

To strengthen dropout prevention and support students, dropout data is reviewed annually to identify trends or early warning signs among AIG students. The AIG team collaborates with Student Services and school-based MTSS teams to monitor factors such as attendance, academic decline, and engagement. As needed, students flagged by these data points are referred for intervention or additional support.

RCSS is working to strengthen the use of trend data by intentionally disaggregating it over time to more effectively refine service delivery, expand supports for underrepresented populations, and guide recommendations for improving identification and programming. A key area of focus is ensuring annual reviews of identification patterns are used to proactively address disproportionality. RCSS aims to make targeted adjustments to screening tools, referral practices, and enrichment opportunities in response to equity gaps.

We are also working toward deeper integration of data discussions into the district's continuous improvement cycle. A goal is to more consistently share these findings with school and district-level MTSS teams to build shared accountability and drive planning. These ongoing analyses will inform professional development, instructional strategies, and policy decisions to ensure equitable access to AIG services for all students across the district.

*** 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.

Monitoring the representation, performance, and retention of gifted learners is critical to the overall success of the AIG program. RCSS maintains a systematic approach to collecting and analyzing referral, identification, services, and retention data to ensure that students from diverse racial, ethnic, economic, and linguistic backgrounds, as well as those with exceptionalities or who are twice-exceptional, are equitably represented in the gifted program.

The district's AIG monitoring tool, used for standardized data collection and analysis, plays a central role in identifying patterns and trends related to underrepresented populations. Specifically, the data is broken down by various demographic factors, including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, and disability status. This allows us to carefully track performance and retention of underrepresented groups in comparison to the overall gifted student population, ensuring that no factors reduce their likelihood of access to or participation in gifted education.

Through annual analysis, RCSS found that students who were twice-exceptional (2e) (those who are both gifted and have disabilities) were under-identified for AIG services due to a well-intentioned testing accommodation. This discovery led to the development of new district protocols for identifying and supporting 2e students. These protocols ensure that identification procedures are flexible and inclusive of students whose exceptionalities may mask their giftedness. This change resulted locating 23 additional students and an increase in the number of identified 2e students across the district.

As part of the RCSS AIG Plan 2025–2028, a key area of focus is to utilize this data to identify and address disproportionality in all aspects of the AIG program - referral, identification, services, and retention. This involves:

- Regularly reviewing referral, identification, and retention trends to identify any disproportionate patterns. For example, analysis will be conducted to track the representation of historically underrepresented groups in AIG services and make adjustments to screening practices and referral criteria when necessary.
- Collaborative data discussions with school and district leadership, as well as other departments monitoring disproportionality (e.g., Special Education, ML), will help ensure that our approaches are aligned and evidence-based. These collaborative efforts allow for the creation of action plans aimed at increasing equitable access and ensuring that students from all backgrounds benefit from AIG services.

In addition to these systems, the AIG monitoring tool will include qualitative data from teacher observations, surveys, and feedback, which will be incorporated into our decision-making process. This will help ensure that students are not only being referred and identified but also provided with nurturing and talent development opportunities that meet their specific needs.

Furthermore, RCSS continuously examines the policies related to referral, identification, and retention to uncover any systemic barriers that may contribute to disproportionality. Regular collaboration with other district departments, such as MTSS and Student Services, will ensure that cross-departmental insights inform the overall strategy for enhancing equity within the gifted program.

Based on disaggregated referral and identification data, RCSS identified an underrepresentation of Multilingual (ML) students in the AIG program. In response, RCSS has developed a targeted process to ensure that language differences do not limit access to gifted identification. A flowchart was created to guide schools in locating and evaluating gifted potential among ML students, with a particular focus on newcomers, students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for fewer than three years. This process prioritizes students who demonstrate advanced English language acquisition, such as those who score a composite

4.0 or higher on the WIDA ACCESS assessment, as part of a holistic review of potential. This structured approach reflects our ongoing commitment to removing systemic barriers and ensuring equitable identification for all learners.

By maintaining and analyzing these data sources, RCSS strives to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, have equitable access to advanced learning opportunities, such as internships, AP, IB, CIE courses, dual enrollment, and honors courses.

*** 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.

RCSS requires teachers of gifted learners (both AIG Specialists and regular education teachers, particularly in Mathematics and English/Language Arts) to complete one or more of the following pathways to prepare for effective service:

1. Earning an AIG add-on license through an accredited institution of higher education,
2. Passing the Praxis exam specific to gifted education, or
3. Joining the AIG-enius Squad (RCSS Praxis Study Program) or other local endorsement program

To ensure accurate and current records of AIG licensure, the AIG Program Specialist collaborates closely with the district's Human Resources department. An annual licensure report is requested from Human Resources, detailing the number of AIG-certified staff by school and at the district level. In addition, biannual reports are requested to provide mid-year updates, allowing the AIG Program Specialist to monitor changes and trends in staffing qualifications.

This credential data is stored and managed in partnership with Human Resources, by using centralized personnel databases. The AIG Program Specialist conducts bi-annual reviews of the licensure data to ensure alignment with staffing goals outlined in the Local AIG Plan, specifically Goal 2, ensuring equitable access to appropriately trained personnel. These reviews help identify schools with lower percentages of AIG-certified staff and guide targeted support and professional development planning.

The AIG Program Specialist shares the analysis with principals and AIG Specialists to inform staffing decisions, promote equitable placement of gifted students, and encourage the strategic use of AIG-certified educators. Certified staff are spotlighted to share best practices during faculty meetings, PLCs, and on required workdays, supporting a culture of professional learning and instructional excellence for AIG students.

Human Resources data indicates that approximately 7.5% of RCSS certified staff currently hold an AIG add-on license. This includes 96 licensed educators across the district: 3 at central services, 41 at the elementary level, 35 at the middle grades level, and 17 at the high school level. This data not only informs staffing but also helps guide recruitment and retention strategies in alignment with the goals and strategies of the Local AIG Plan.

*** Practice G**

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

RCSS administers annual AIG program surveys to all certified staff, identified students in grades 3–12, and parents/guardians of identified students in grades 3–12. These surveys are developed and administered by grade span using NCDPI AIG program survey questions aligned to the NC AIG Program Standards. Each survey includes a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended response items and is completed electronically. Survey links are accessible through the district's website.

District letters, developed by the AIG Program Specialist with instructions for accessing and completing the surveys, are sent home to parents/guardians of identified students in grades 3–12. High school counselors serving as AIG contacts send these letters to students in grades 9–12. To support student participation, AIG Specialists and regular education teachers provide access to computers during the school day for students in grades 3–5. Middle grades AIG Specialists, who are full-time classroom teachers, facilitate survey completion during 6–8 gifted cluster classes. High school students are encouraged to complete the surveys either at school or at home.

The AIG Program Specialist also sends detailed emails to all schools with parent/student letters attached and includes direct links to the surveys. All certified staff, including counselors, lead teachers, support teachers, and administrators involved with gifted learners, are encouraged to complete the surveys. Schools are requested to make computers available in the office or student services areas for use by students, parents/guardians, and staff. Additionally, schools are asked to offer computer access during school-wide meetings and events held within the survey window.

In addition to annual surveys, a digital feedback form is shared each year with parents/guardians who participate in the RCSS AIG Advisory Committee. This tool provides an opportunity for more detailed and specific input related to the local AIG program and plan. Feedback from this group is valuable not only during the formal three-year plan review and revision process, but also for making timely adjustments during ongoing implementation of the current plan.

To further foster stakeholder involvement and ensure continuous feedback, RCSS recently launched a new stakeholder group called Gifted Guardians, a steering committee designed to symbolically and practically 'protect' and strengthen the AIG program. This group meets three times a year to provide input on the monitoring, implementation, and fidelity of the AIG plan. Their role in reviewing the plan's progress helps ensure it remains aligned with both the needs of gifted students and the broader school community.

Feedback collected annually is used to inform both district-level decisions and school-based adjustments. Survey themes are reviewed during district AIG leadership meetings and shared with school teams to support consistency and equity across sites. In addition to formal surveys, informal feedback is gathered throughout the year via PLCs, MTSS meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and observations conducted by AIG Specialists. These insights are documented and used to make responsive changes to programming and support continuous improvement.

School-level and district-level feedback are reviewed together to monitor alignment and consistency with the Local AIG Plan. This process is supported through documentation of stakeholder input, site visits, and annual school-level implementation summaries, ensuring fidelity and equity in AIG service delivery across all schools.

*** Practice H**

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

In order to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and involved in the evaluation of the AIG program, RCSS employs a comprehensive approach to sharing program evaluation data. This includes a variety of methods tailored to meet the needs of different audiences, ensuring accessibility and clarity. Below, it is outlined how and when the results of the AIG program evaluation are shared with school personnel, district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and community stakeholders, while maintaining the confidentiality of sensitive information in accordance with FERPA guidelines.

School Personnel

AIG Specialists share program evaluation data and annual survey results with school administrators and staff during staff meetings, PLCs, and planning sessions. This includes a review of school-specific feedback and collaborative discussion about how the findings impact AIG service delivery, professional development needs, and classroom practice. School staff are encouraged to reflect on the data to support continuous improvement aligned with the district's AIG goals.

District Personnel

The AIG Program Specialist and team present evaluation findings annually to district leadership. This includes sharing trends, strengths, areas for growth, and recommendations based on stakeholder feedback. District-level presentations may occur through leadership meetings or data sessions. These meetings are designed to ensure district leadership remains informed and engaged in the development, implementation, and refinement of the Local AIG Plan.

Students

Students in grades 3–12 are invited to participate in the annual AIG program survey. Their responses contribute to the evaluation and help inform improvements in instructional strategies and student support. While individual student feedback remains confidential, age-appropriate summaries of findings may be shared with student advisory groups, AIG student groups, or through classroom discussions. At the high school level, AIG contacts or counselors may lead reflection activities tied to survey outcomes.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians of identified students in grades 3–12 are encouraged to complete the annual AIG program survey, which includes both multiple-choice and open-ended response items. Letters sent home include clear directions for accessing both surveys and evaluation results. Parents who serve on the RCSS AIG Advisory Committee receive deeper insights into evaluation findings and help interpret data through the lens of family experience.

Families and Community Stakeholders

To ensure accessibility and transparency, RCSS shares AIG program evaluation results with families and broader community groups such as the RCSS Advisory Committee, Gifted Guardians meetings, PTOs, community partners, and family engagement organizations. Evaluation summaries are provided in user-friendly formats, including infographics, translated documents, and short digital presentations, and are shared via the district website, school messaging platforms (e.g., Remind, Class Dojo), and during events such as parent nights and open houses. Schools may also provide paper copies or designated viewing stations for families with limited internet access. Community stakeholders and family representatives are invited to review findings during AIG Advisory Committee meetings. These collaborative opportunities strengthen partnerships and help ensure that families and community members are informed, involved, and equipped to support the goals of the AIG program.

*** 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.

RCSS has clearly written policies, procedures, and practices in place to safeguard the rights of all AIG students and their parents/guardians. These policies align with state regulations and ensure that students are fairly identified, placed, and continuously supported. The district's plan includes procedures for informed consent regarding assessment, placement, reassessment, transfers from other LEAs, and a clear process for resolving disagreements.

Informed Consent for Assessment

Before initiating any assessments to determine AIG eligibility, parents/guardians must provide written consent. The "Permission to Test" form, outlining the type of assessments, how the results will be used, and who will have access to the data, is sent to parents/guardians. Testing proceeds only after the school receives signed consent.

Informed Consent for Placement (Services)

Once a student has been identified as AIG, a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is created to outline the specific services that will be provided. Parents/guardians are invited to review and approve the DEP. Written consent is obtained before services are implemented to ensure that families are fully informed about their child's educational plan.

Reassessment Procedures

RCSS has a clear process for reassessing students. Reassessments are conducted if there is evidence that a student may benefit from additional opportunities to demonstrate a need for AIG services. Reassessments may be requested by parents/guardians, teachers, or the SBC-AIG team. These evaluations typically occur once per academic year and are designed to ensure that students are receiving the appropriate level of service.

Transfers from Other LEAs

RCSS honors AIG identifications from other NC LEAs, and ensures that students transferring into the district continue to receive appropriate services. When a student transfers, the SBC-AIG team reviews the student's prior records, including any DEPs, Permission to Test, and Screening/Referral/Identification forms. This ensures that the original identification remains intact, and if necessary, the team will evaluate the student against RCSS's specific criteria to determine whether additional services or evaluations are needed.

To continue services, the SBC-AIG team will ensure the student is immediately placed in the appropriate program based on the previous identification and any necessary reassessment. Services will be maintained without disruption, and parents/guardians will be notified in writing about the continuation of services and any new services provided based

on the student's needs.

School level personnel also communicates regularly with parents/guardians throughout the transfer process. They will be informed of the identification and services through written notifications, including meetings with the SBC-AIG team, as necessary, to ensure clarity and transparency in the transition process.

Note: All student data, including prior identification records and service details, are confidential and protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). RCSS adheres strictly to FERPA guidelines in all processes, ensuring that student data is shared only with authorized individuals and organizations.

Procedures to Resolve Disagreement

RCSS has a clear and structured process to resolve disagreements regarding AIG identification, services, or placement. The procedure follows the N.C. General Statutes (115C-150.8) and includes multiple levels of appeal:

- **Step 1: Appeal to SBC-AIG**
Parents/guardians submit a written request for a conference with the SBC-AIG. The team reviews all relevant information and discusses the decision with parents within 10 days.
- **Step 2: Appeal to the AIG Program Director**
If the disagreement is not resolved, parents/guardians may appeal the SBC-AIG decision to the AIG Program Director within five working days. The Director responds in writing within 10 working days.
- **Step 3: Appeal to the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent**
Parents/guardians can appeal to the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent within five working days. A response is provided in writing within 10 working days.
- **Step 4: Appeal to the Board of Education**
If needed, parents/guardians can appeal the decision to the Randolph County School System Board of Education. The Board reviews the grievance and responds in writing within 10 working days.
- **Step 5: Appeal to the State**
If parents/guardians are still dissatisfied, they may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.



[Click here to remove the table and use only the narrative field.](#)

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

1. Advocate for use of other funding sources, such as federal monies and/or grant monies connected to institutes of higher education, local community/business/industry partners to meet the needs of the AIG program and its learners.
2. Collaborate three times per year with district leadership (Curriculum team, Testing & Accountability) to disaggregate multiple data sources by school, grade, gender, and race to recognize patterns and trends that over time will inform mindsets, policies, and practices for equity and excellence.
3. Administrators will be encouraged to strategically utilize AIG certified teachers on school-level committees and to utilize certified staff to spotlight and shared best practices utilized with gifted students (e.g., faculty meetings, PLCs, required workdays).

4. Use an "Early Warning Systems" to recognize trends and patterns to intervene for potential dropouts among gifted students. Collaborate with others to create support plans for these students.
5. Investigate the use of a Student Review Form for each AIG student, considering all data gathered that quarter. The teacher would complete and send it to the AIG specialist/contact. The AIG Program Specialist would analyze each student's performance review, document students not performing to their capabilities, and follow the data through PLCs and classroom visits, potentially interviewing students to determine issues and necessary interventions.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	*RCSS AIG annual budget/expenditures	
*	*RCSS AIG subgroup student performance, dual enrollment, graduation rate, drop out, Honors/AP/ CCP/AVID participation and performance	
*	*Annual Human Resources report reflecting number of certified staff holding AIG add-on licensure	
*	*District and school leadership meeting, PLCs' agendas, rosters, notes	
*	*RCSS AIG Parent/Guardian Handbook 2022-2025 (RCSS Written Appeals Process for parents/guardians)	

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

Randolph County School System (760) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:

06/26/2025 

AIG Related Documents

Randolph County School System (760) 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](#) [Randolph County Board Approval for 2025-2028 AIG Plan](#)

Optional Documents

Type Document Template Document/Link

AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources N/A [AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources](#)

[AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources](#)

AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources N/A [AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources](#)

[AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources](#)

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

Glossary

Randolph County School System (760) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Phrase	Definition