

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Stokes County Schools (850) 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. 115C:150.5).

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)

Vision

Empowering all students to achieve and succeed.

(Stokes County Schools Vision Statement)

Mission

Stokes County Schools AIG Program's mission is to actively respond to the talents of gifted children through varied experiences socially, emotionally and academically. SCS strives to provide opportunities for our gifted learners by serving them all day, every day.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 335,821.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

*** Practice A**

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

Stokes County Schools implements a multi-tiered process to identify students who may qualify for gifted education services. This process will involve collecting data, engaging in discussions, and making observations to help determine the most appropriate services for each student. The AIG Specialists or their designees, along with the AIG District Coordinator, are responsible for communicating the screening and referral process to stakeholders across the district.

A. Screening

Stokes County Schools is committed to identifying students who may benefit from gifted education services. To ensure comprehensive process, each school will participate in the following screening procedures:

1. Local Nomination Pool
Each school will develop a pool of students who may qualify for differentiated instruction based on observed potential and academic need.
2. Teacher Nominations
During the spring semester, the AIG Specialist or Designee will distribute class nomination forms to classroom teachers. Teachers complete and submit these forms by the end of the academic year to contribute to the nomination pool.
3. Committee Screening
The Gifted Education Referral Committee (GERC) will review the nomination pool using established district criteria to determine eligibility for further evaluation or services.
4. Data Review
To ensure equity and accuracy, schools will also review the standardized cognitive, universal screeners, and/or achievement test scores of all students who score at or above the 90th percentile each year. This helps ensure that no potentially eligible students are missed.
Based on teacher referrals and/or multiple data sources, such as standardized cognitive or achievement test scores, student work portfolios, and classroom observations, teachers will help identify a pool of students who may qualify for gifted education services.

The AIG Specialist or Designee at each school will coordinate this process through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Tier 2 data discussions, and Tier 3 committee meetings. While a teacher referral is not required to include a student in the gifted education pool, it may be submitted and considered during placement decisions.

When necessary, assessments will be administered with appropriate modifications as outlined in students' 504 Plans or Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and may also be provided in the student's native language when appropriate.

All third-grade students are screened each February using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Students who score at or above the 90th percentile in the verbal, quantitative, or nonverbal domains, or the verbal, nonverbal, or quantitative partial composite(s), will be included in the potential identification pool, with possible placement beginning in fourth grade.

The school-level Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) will meet to review each student in this pool individually. The committee will include school administration, the AIG Specialist or Designee, and at least one general education teacher who is familiar with the student's academic, social, and emotional development.

The GERC will review all relevant data, including test scores, observations, and student portfolios, and recommend appropriate resources and support strategies to further the student's talent development.

B. Referrals

Stokes County Schools is committed to ensuring that all students with high academic potential have access to gifted education services. The referral process is designed to allow nominations from a variety of sources and to recognize potential in students from diverse backgrounds. Through collaboration with educators, families, and school teams, we strive to identify and support students who may benefit from differentiated instruction and enrichment opportunities. The steps outlined below guide how students may be referred and considered for further evaluation.

- Referrals for gifted education services can be made at any time by teachers, parents, peers, or even by students themselves through self-nomination.
- The AIG Specialist or Designee will distribute Individual Nomination Forms to classroom teachers of 3rd-grade and above students annually, to support the referral process.
- Each school will maintain a list of students from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds who demonstrate high interest or potential in language arts and/or mathematics.
- Special attention will be given to ensure access to gifted services for all student populations.
- Additionally, the AIG Specialist or Designee will provide parents or guardians with a Consent for Evaluation form and a Student Interest Survey to complete as part of the referral process.

Grades K–3

Referrals may be made by classroom teachers, administrators, or parents/guardians for students who demonstrate advanced performance in reading and/or math. Referrals are submitted to the Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) for informal placement consideration. The GERC reviews various data sources, including benchmark assessments at or above the 90th percentile, student work portfolios, and classroom performance.

Grades 4–8

Students in grades 4–8 may be referred by administrators, parents/guardians, teachers, or students themselves for possible AIG placement. The GERC will consider multiple data points when making placement decisions, including standardized test scores, benchmark assessments at or above the 90th percentile, student portfolios, and classroom performance.

Grades 9–12

Students in grades 9–12 may be referred to the GERC for possible AIG placement by administrators, parents/guardians, teachers, or students themselves. In addition to standardized test scores and benchmark assessments at or above the 90th percentile, the GERC will review student portfolios and classroom performance. SAT/PSAT or ACT scores may also be used to screen students for potential AIG placement.

C. Identification

The Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) will review the information for each candidate and fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Assessing the student's eligibility for AIG services
 - Determining if further assessment is required
 - Referring the student to the appropriate program options
 - Reviewing records of transfer students who have been previously identified for gifted education (This review will occur at the end of the semester or as soon as records are received upon the student's enrollment in Stokes County Schools.)
- The GERC may include the following members, depending on the student's grade level or course: a grade-level or course-specific teacher, a teacher familiar with the student, a school counselor, the AIG Specialist or Designee, and an administrator.
- If additional assessment is deemed necessary, the committee will formally request an evaluation from the AIG District Coordinator. Testing will be completed within 90 days of the request.

D. Placement Process

The following outlines the identification and placement process:

1. Notice of Consent: A notice is sent to the parents to obtain consent for evaluation.
2. Interest Inventory: An interest inventory is sent to parents to gather feedback about the student's strengths and learning preferences.
3. Gifted Education Committee: Reviews evidence of giftedness to determine eligibility and makes recommendations.
4. Conference Invitation: An invitation to a conference is sent to the parents to discuss the evaluation results.
5. Differentiated Education Plan (DEP): If the student is determined eligible, the Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) develops a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP).
 - a. The AIG Specialist or Designee will review the plan with the parent/guardian before it is finalized.
6. Parent Agreement: The parent/guardian signs the agreement for service options and provides permission for placement.

* 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.

Stokes County Schools uses a multiple criteria approach to identify AIG students, which is essential for highlighting students' strengths and providing appropriate instruction. Research indicates that using a combination of formal, informal, and dynamic assessments helps create a comprehensive identification process.

Best practices recommend that teachers, trained to recognize gifted learners, review a variety of criteria for identification and placement. These include checklists for parents and families, valid and reliable assessment tools, student interviews, and the evaluation of work samples. Multiple factors are considered to determine the services provided to gifted students.

The following are general categories that represent the multiple criteria for identification, followed by more specific criteria based on grade level and the stage of giftedness.

According to the State of North Carolina, Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students are defined as those who "perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment." These students demonstrate exceptional performance in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or both.

Possible identification areas:

Academically Gifted (AG) - Students who have demonstrated high academic performance.

- AM (Academically Gifted - in Math)
- AR (Academically Gifted - in Reading)

Intellectually Gifted (IG)

Intellectually Gifted (IG) students demonstrate high intellectual capacity but have not yet shown exceptional academic performance. This plan intentionally includes IG students, acknowledging their unique pathway for identification, which differs from the process typically used for Academically Gifted (AG) students.

Intellectual giftedness refers to a level of intellectual ability that is significantly higher than average. It may manifest as a general high ability or in a specific area of strength. Experts describe IG students as developmentally advanced in language and thinking (VanTassel-Baska, 2003), with a mental age that exceeds their chronological age (Binet), or exhibiting asynchronous development, where their cognitive abilities are more advanced than their age-level achievements (Silverman, 2003).

For IG students, there can be a noticeable gap between their abilities and actual accomplishments. These students often excel on standardized or reasoning tests but may struggle with class exams or assignments. This discrepancy can stem from factors such as underachievement, which may result from a lack of challenge in coursework or negative social consequences from being perceived as "too smart." Emotional or psychological factors, including depression, anxiety, perfectionism, or self-sabotage, may also contribute to this gap.

Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) - Students who are demonstrating high intellectual capacity and high academic performance.

*AI - Designation in Student Information System (SIS)

The following categories, as defined in the accompanied AIG glossary, provide either quantitative or qualitative data to build a comprehensive learner profile for considering student eligibility for AIG services.

- Student Performance
- Student Achievement
- Student Aptitude (Intellectually Gifted)
- Student Interest
- Student Motivation to Learn

Specific Categories Detailed by Grade Spans and Stages:

Early Talent Development and K–3 Enrichment:

Stokes County Schools delays formal identification for the Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Program until the end of 3rd grade when testing is more developmentally appropriate and reliable for predicting a student's need for an advanced curriculum. In the meantime, students in kindergarten through 3rd grade who show advanced abilities may receive enriched instruction within the regular classroom setting with like peers for continued talent development.

Using a collaborative and consultative model, classroom teachers and the AIG Specialist or Designee work together to meet the needs of these learners. The primary goal at this stage is to identify, nurture, and develop the strengths and potential of the whole child, while also sparking new interests through appropriately challenging opportunities.

Stokes County Schools recognizes that some students may develop cognitive abilities at a more rapid pace than their peers. K–3 students who show a clear need for learning beyond the standard curriculum should be supported through the school's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team, which will help determine enrichment and acceleration opportunities to meet the student's needs. If the student continues to require greater academic acceleration, the general education teacher may refer the student to the Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC).

Before referring to GERC, the student should have demonstrated a sustained and significant need for differentiation, such as reading or performing in mathematics two or more grade levels above current placement. If the GERC determines that informal AIG identification is appropriate, the general education teacher, in collaboration with the AIG Specialist or Designee, will develop a K–3 Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) for the student.

In cases where grade acceleration (grade-skipping) is being considered, the general education teacher, AIG Specialist or Designee, and Principal may submit a referral to the AIG District Coordinator.

All referral requests must include supporting documentation from teachers, the AIG Specialist or Designee, parents/guardians, and/or the student. This documentation should include multiple forms of evidence, such as portfolios of student work, assessment data, and interview responses. Once received, the AIG District Coordinator will assemble a team of specialists to review the referral and create a plan that best supports the individual needs of the student.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten:

In 1997, the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation permitting a child who turns four on or before April 16th to be considered for early entry into kindergarten if they demonstrate exceptional academic ability and maturity.

To determine eligibility, the school principal will convene a committee of educational professionals to evaluate each candidate on an individual basis. The committee will consider multiple criteria, including:

- Aptitude
- Academic achievement
- Observable behaviors
- Motivation to learn
- Student interests

Eligible children must show precocious academic and social development and must score at or above the 98th percentile on a standardized individual intelligence test administered by a licensed psychologist. All testing must be conducted by a certified, licensed psychologist, and all testing costs are the responsibility of the parents or guardians.

After required screenings are completed, Stokes County Schools will convene a screening committee, led by the child's future principal, to determine whether the child qualifies for early entry into kindergarten.

K-3 Talent Development

Stokes County Schools is committed to the continuous development of talent in students from kindergarten through third grade. In the upcoming plan cycle, the AIG District Team will focus on expanding identification efforts to younger students by:

- Enhancing teacher capacity through phased professional development
 - Creating and sharing resources that support early identification
 - Gradually expanding formal identification to grade 3 as we build district teacher capacity to serve our gifted learners.
- This phased-in approach ensures long-term sustainability and provides educators with the tools and support needed to effectively identify and nurture advanced learners at an early age.

CRITERIA AND STAGING GUIDELINES FOR AIG STUDENTS: (GRADES 4 – 12)

All students are addressed in this AIG Plan and are denoted by stages 1, 2, 3, and 4. Gifted students in this AIG Plan are denoted as stages 2, 3, or 4. Each of the four stages involves an important way of differentiating instruction in relation to the AIG learners' strengths, talents, and interests. Standard 3 of this plan discusses services provided within each of the stages.

ELEMENTARY CRITERIA (GRADES 4 – 5)

STAGE 1 - Quality educational experiences with continuous talent development are available to all students through differentiated core instruction.

STAGE 2 - Talent Development (These indicators may suggest a need for talent development in students who do not meet the formal criteria for AIG identification. Two of the four indicators are required for a student to be considered for Stage 2.)

- Aptitude in the 85th–89th percentile range (Supporting documentation detailing the need for this test should accompany the request)
 - End of Grade Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 85th - 89th percentile range
 - Scores in the 85th to 89th percentile on a universal screener in Reading or Math
 - Past academic performance in the subject area within the last school year
 - Minimum grade of 85 required based on 10-point scale
- STAGE 3 – Four of the seven criteria must be met, and at least one criterion of the four must be the aptitude or End of Grade Test(s). The seven categories are:
- Aptitude in the 90th–97th percentile range

- End of Grade Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 90th - 97th percentile range
 - Scores in the 90th to 97th percentile on the universal screener in Reading or Math
 - Teacher recommendation (AIG Individual Nomination Form) with anecdotal documentation attached to the teacher recommendation form, including specific indications of giftedness
 - Student Interest Inventory (AIG Student Interest Inventory Form) with sample documentation as evidence
 - Student Performance Portfolio
 - Academic performance in the subject area of identification within the last school year.
 - Minimum grade of 90 required based on 10-point scale.
- STAGE 4 - Five of the seven criteria must be met, and at least one criterion of the five must be the aptitude or End of Grade Test(s). The GERC should consider both aptitude and EOG scores for the placement of a student in stage 4. The seven categories are:**
- Aptitude in the 98th percentile or greater
 - End of Grade Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 98th percentile or greater
 - Scores in the 98th percentile or greater on a universal screener in Reading or Math
 - Teacher recommendation (AIG Individual Student Nomination Form) with anecdotal documentation attached to the teacher recommendation form, including specific indications of giftedness
 - Student Interest Inventory (AIG Student Interest Inventory Form) with sample documentation as evidence
 - Student Performance Portfolio
 - Academic performance in the subject area of identification within the last school year.
 - Minimum grade of 95 required based on 10-point scale.
- MIDDLE SCHOOL CRITERIA (GRADES 6 - 8)**
- STAGE 1 - Quality educational experiences with continuous talent development is available to all students through differentiated core instruction.
- STAGE 2 - Talent Development (These indicators may suggest a need for talent development in students who do not meet the formal criteria for AIG identification. Two of the four indicators are required for a student to be considered for Stage 2.)
- Aptitude in the 85th–89th percentile range (Supporting documentation detailing the need for this test should accompany the request)
 - End of Grade Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 85th - 89th percentile range
 - Scores in the 85th to 89th percentile on a universal screener in Reading or Math
 - Past academic performance in the subject area within the last school year

- Minimum grade of 85 required based on 10-point scale
- STAGE 3 – Four of the seven criteria must be met, and at least one criterion of the four must be the aptitude or End of Grade Test(s). The seven categories are:
- Aptitude in the 90th–97th percentile range
 - End of Grade Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 90th - 97th percentile range
 - Scores in the 90th to 97th percentile on the universal screener in Reading or Math
 - Teacher recommendation (AIG Individual Nomination Form) with anecdotal documentation attached to the teacher recommendation form, including specific indications of giftedness
 - Student Interest Inventory (AIG Student Interest Inventory Form) with sample documentation as evidence
 - Student Performance Portfolio
 - Academic performance in the subject area of identification within the last school year.
 - Minimum grade of 90 required based on 10-point scale.

STAGE 4 - Five of the seven criteria must be met, and at least one criterion of the five must be the aptitude or End of Grade Test(s). The GERC should consider both aptitude and EOG scores for the placement of a student in stage 4. The seven categories are:

- Aptitude in the 98th percentile or greater
- End of Grade Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 98th percentile or greater
- Scores in the 98th percentile or greater on a universal screener in Reading or Math
- Teacher recommendation (AIG Individual Student Nomination Form) with anecdotal documentation attached to the teacher recommendation form, including specific indications of giftedness
- Student Interest Inventory (AIG Student Interest Inventory Form) with sample documentation as evidence
- Student Performance Portfolio
- Academic performance in the subject area of identification within the last school year.
- Minimum grade of 95 required based on 10-point scale.

NOTE: Upon request by a teacher or parent, a request for a Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) may be made to the AIG District Coordinator and the Director of Testing and Accountability.

SECONDARY CRITERIA (GRADES 9 – 12)

STAGE 1 - Quality educational experiences with continuous talent development is available to all students through differentiated core instruction. Additionally, individual course counseling is available to ensure students are enrolled in academically challenging courses.

STAGE 2 - Talent Development (These indicators may suggest a need for talent development in students who do not meet the formal criteria for AIG identification. Two of the four indicators are required for a student to be considered for Stage 2.)

- Aptitude in the 85th – 89th percentile range
- End of Grade/Course Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 85th - 89th percentile range
- PSAT/SAT or ACT in Reading or Math area(s) 85th – 89th percentile range
- Academic performance in the subject area of identification within the last school year.
- Minimum grade of 85 required based on 10-point scale
- Scores in the 85th to 89th percentile on a universal screener in Reading or Math

STAGE 3 - Three of five criteria must be met with one of the three being either the aptitude or End of Grade/Course Test(s). The five categories are:

- Aptitude in the 90th – 97th percentile
- End of Grade/Course Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 90th – 97th percentile
- PSAT/SAT or ACT in Reading or Math area(s) 90th – 97th percentile
- Teacher recommendation (AIG Individual Nomination Form) with anecdotal documentation attached to the recommendation, including specific indications of giftedness.
- Academic performance in the subject area of identification within the last school year.
- Minimum grade of 90 required based on 10-point scale.

STAGE 4- Four of five criteria must be met, with one criterion of the four being either the aptitude or End of Grade/Course Test(s). The five categories are:

- Aptitude in the 98th – 99th percentile or greater
- End of Grade/Course Test(s) in Reading or Math area(s) 98th percentile or greater
- PSAT/SAT or ACT in Reading or Math area(s) 98th percentile or greater
- Teacher recommendation (AIG Individual Nomination Form) with anecdotal documentation attached to the recommendation, including specific indications of giftedness
- Academic performance in the subject area of identification within the last school year.
- Minimum grade of 95 required based on 10-point scale.

NOTE: Upon request by a teacher or parent, a request for a Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) may be made to the AIG District Coordinator and the Director of Testing and Accountability.

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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 following data provides an overview of the student demographics and AIG (Academically and Intellectually Gifted) population within Stokes County Schools. This information is essential for understanding the distribution of student characteristics and ensuring that identification and services for gifted students are across all student groups. The data reflects current enrollment, with breakdowns by race/ethnicity, gender, and special populations, including Exceptional Children, English Learners, and Economically Disadvantaged students.

Currently, the student population in Stokes County Schools (SCS) is as follows:

- Less than 1% Asian
- Less than 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Less than 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 3.2% Black or African American
- 6.7% Hispanic
- 4.5% Two or More Races
- 85% White
- 19.3% Exceptional Children
- 1.7% English Learners
- 58.70% Economically Disadvantaged Students

The gender breakdown is 47% female and 53% male.

For the Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) program, 10% of the student population is identified as AIG. The racial and ethnic breakdown of the AIG population is as follows:

- Less than 1% Asian or Native American
- 1% Black
- 5.2% Hispanic
- 3% Two or More Races
- 90% White

The gender distribution within the AIG program is 49% female and 51% male. Additionally, 2% of the AIG population is identified as twice exceptional (2E).

The District AIG Coordinator will continue to collaborate with the Director of Testing and Accountability (Federal Programs and English Learners), Director of Special Programs, Director of Secondary Education and Career and Technical Education, Director of Academic and Emotional Support, Director of Student Information to analyze student demographics and review data. This collaboration will help ensure that identification practices for the AIG program are for all student populations.

In response to the inclusion of underrepresented populations in the AIG Program, Stokes County Schools (SCS) has implemented several strategies to ensure a more identification process. These include incorporating the non-verbal component of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and a universal screener as additional data points for annual data sweeps to better meet the needs of our student population.

A CogAT non-verbal score at the 95th percentile or higher will serve as an initial indicator for identifying Intellectually Gifted (IG) students. Given that IG students may not meet enough of the standard criteria for AIG placement, individual case studies will be conducted by the GERC and forwarded to the AIG District Coordinator for further review and approval. These cases will be handled on an individual basis. Both verbal and quantitative scores from the CogAT will continue to be considered, along with the non-verbal component. The combined analysis of all CogAT components will help AIG Specialists or Designees, as well as the Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) at each school, determine whether further screening is necessary and identify underserved populations for the AIG Program.

In addition, SCS will introduce a student performance portfolio as another measure to highlight higher-than-average academic performance during this plan cycle. The goal is to establish clear criteria for the types of work samples that should be submitted and how they will be consistently evaluated. Self-nominations, as well as nominations from parents or teachers with academic knowledge of a student, can be submitted to the AIG Specialist or Designee at any time.

At the end of each school year, the AIG Specialist or Designee will review standardized scores for all students to identify potential candidates for the AIG Program. However, the GERC can meet at any time during the year if a student is recommended for screening. The district will also continue to collect demographic data annually, which will be disaggregated to assess and improve equity in identification practices.

As with all students, multiple criteria will be used in the identification process for the AIG Program, ensuring that no single factor excludes students from underrepresented populations. Classroom teachers and AIG Specialists or Designees will collaborate to support the development of these students, whether they are formally placed in the AIG Program or being considered during the screening process.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	---	8.15%	---	10.08%	---	10.94%
Male	---	---	7.57%	---	---	---	10.46%
Total	---	---	7.86%	---	6.91%	---	10.68%

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.

Stokes County Schools will implement the procedures for nomination, eligibility, screening, referral, and identification of students for the AIG program. AIG Specialists or Designees will take a leadership role to ensure that the school-level Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) is formed, meets regularly, and follows the outlined procedures in this plan, utilizing the Stokes County Schools (SCS) AIG Nominations, Eligibility Determinations, and Placement Process guidance documents. This includes educating GERC members and staff members about the Stokes County AIG Plan, with particular attention to procedures for identifying students from traditionally underrepresented populations. If needed, the AIG Specialist or Designee may involve experts from other areas, such as special education or ESL, to support the process.

Each identified AIG student will have a dedicated folder containing documentation of the screening, referral, and identification process. These folders will be stored securely within the student's school. AIG department staff will annually monitor these records to ensure compliance and completeness. When a student transfers to a new school, a folder verification transfer form must be completed. The AIG Coordinator and AIG Specialists or Designees will provide consistent professional development for principals and all school identification committees/teams regarding identification procedures. They are also responsible for keeping school leadership informed and addressing any concerns related to the implementation of this plan. If an issue cannot be resolved at the school level, the AIG Specialist or Designee should consult with the AIG District Coordinator.

Documentation of adherence to these procedures should be maintained at the school level by AIG Specialists or Designees, including a list of students who were referred and/or screened but not identified. The district will maintain a spreadsheet for each school of students' AIG identification, stage, grade level, and identified content area. The district will also maintain those students in Stage 2: Talent Development.

Annual professional development on monitoring the district's AIG nomination, eligibility, screening, referral, and identification procedures will take place at the beginning of each school year. District-wide meetings will occur every October to serve as a working support session, ensuring consistency in identification, process, and implementation across the district.

An internal audit of all AIG files and GERC documentation will be conducted annually to ensure that any errors or missing components are addressed within the academic year. This review will help ensure that AIG records are consistent and that procedures are followed accurately.

*** Practice E**

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

Stokes County Schools values input from all stakeholders. The AIG District Team is committed to improving communication with students, families, the community, and school personnel regarding all aspects of the AIG program. The following steps will continue to be taken to ensure effective communication:

- An AIG brochure will provide parents and other stakeholders with essential information about the AIG Program.
- An annual school-level AIG meeting will be held within the first six weeks of school to inform parents and students about AIG expectations, including available extracurricular activities facilitated by the AIG Specialist or Designee.
- Transition meetings will be held between the AIG Specialist or Designee and/or School Counselors to support transitions from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school.
- Professional development will be provided for both regular education and gifted education teachers, with a specific focus on the needs of gifted learners.

- The Gifted Education Review Committees at all schools will be strengthened through professional development sessions focused on the identification process and AIG services.
- An overview of the AIG Plan, including the screening, referral, and identification processes, will be presented to school staff within the first six weeks of school, with ongoing sessions as needed to ensure the process is clearly understood and implemented correctly.
- The AIG Coordinator will provide updates and an annual overview to administrators and other stakeholders across the district.
- The AIG Plan will be posted on the district's website and each school's website.
- A hard copy of the plan will be available at each school.
- Information on the websites and in the brochures will be available in both English and Spanish.

Additionally, the district will host an annual AIG Advisory Board meeting. This board will consist of parents/guardians, students, AIG teachers, regular education teachers, and other district stakeholders, such as school psychologists, counselors, and administrators. Advisory board members will be informed of the referral, screening, and identification procedures and will be given opportunities to provide feedback.

* **Practice F**

Documents the evidence gathered and analyzed to support an AIG identification decision. This documentation is reviewed with parents/guardians and maintained in student records.

The AIG Specialist or Designee at each school is responsible for maintaining documentation of the identification process and service options for each AIG student. They are also responsible for reviewing this documentation annually with parents, families, or guardians. Additionally, the AIG Specialist or Designee will ensure that the required paperwork is consistently used throughout the district during the identification process. The following documents must be included in each student's AIG folder:

- Completed AIG Folder checklist
- AIG Summary of Eligibility and Recognition of Needs form should be completed for each nominated student and signed by the GERC
- AIG Annual Review Form should be completed and signed annually by the AIG Specialist or Designee (Process is described below.)
- AIG Individual Nomination Form along with appropriate student data and records
- AIG Multiple Indicators
- AIG Consent for Evaluation, signed by the parent/guardian
- AIG Student Interest Inventory
- AIG Initial Qualification Letter & Invitation to Conference
- AIG Notice of Ineligibility (If applicable)
- AIG Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)

- AIG Invitation to Conference

- Due Process and Procedures to Resolve Differences shared with parents/guardians

AIG documentation is reviewed with parents/guardians during the initial placement conference and at the annual meeting, which takes place within the first quarter of school. During these meetings, AIG services are explained, and documents are signed. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share any concerns and provide input regarding AIG services. The signed documents are securely stored in each student's AIG folder. Additional meetings are scheduled with parents/guardians as needed to address concerns related to student identification, placement, and/or services.

Annual Review

Each school year, the GERC, led by the AIG Specialist or Designee, will review the progress of every student receiving differentiated services. Parents will be notified of their child's continued placement in the program and any necessary updates to the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), including changes to staging.

The following outlines the procedures for conducting an annual review:

1. Teacher Communication:
The teacher providing the differentiated service will maintain ongoing communication through progress reports, report cards, NC End-of-Grade/Course Test scores, and other relevant data.
2. Behavioral Observations:
The teacher will also provide insights into observed student behaviors, including:
 1. Student performance: Mastery demonstrated through work samples, portfolios, etc.
 2. Student interest: Identified through formal interest inventories, informal interviews, or documentation of the student's particular passion.
 3. Student motivation: Demonstrated through the student's commitment to pursue learning experiences both inside and outside of school.
3. Review Process:
 1. If a student is not performing satisfactorily, the team will:
 - Invite the parent/guardian and student to a conference to develop a plan that addresses the student's academic needs.
 - Amend the DEP, if necessary.
 2. If a student is performing satisfactorily:
 - The GERC will notify the parent/guardian of the student's continued placement in the program.
 3. If a student requires an adjustment in the level of differentiated service:
 - The GERC will recommend to the AIG Specialist or Designee that the DEP be amended to better meet the student's needs.
 - A conference will be scheduled with the parent/guardian and student to explain any changes in services.

4. Probationary Period: If needed, a student may be placed on probation for no longer than one year, with a minimum of 9 weeks.

1. AIG Specialists sends home a probation letter and schedules a conference.

2. AIG Specialists, along with the parent/guardian and student, write a plan for improvement.

At the end of the probationary period, the GERC will either:

- Remove the student from probation.
 - Meet with the parent/guardian and student to discuss progress and determine next steps.
1. Exit Process:
Stokes County Schools does not practice "de-gifting" students and strongly discourages students from exiting the AIG program. However, in extreme and rare cases, a student may exit due to:
1. A request from the student or parent.
 2. Documented evidence that differentiated services are no longer appropriate.

In these cases, parents/guardians will be notified and asked to attend an exit conference. The student will then be placed in Stage 2 for continued Talent Development.

If all stakeholders agree, the student may exit the program, but their identification within the AIG program will remain.

*** Practice G**

Develops and documents a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is developed and reviewed annually with parents/ guardians to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

Stokes County Schools provides differentiated educational services beyond the general education program to support academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students, in accordance with North Carolina Legislation, Article 9B. To meet this goal, a written plan guides the identification, placement, and service delivery for AIG students and ensures a continuum of services and smooth transitions across grade levels.

Each student identified as AIG in grades 4–12 has a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) developed by the AIG Specialist or Designee in collaboration with the school's Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC). This committee includes the AIG Specialist or Designee, general education teachers, the school counselor, and an administrator. The DEP is created upon initial placement and is reviewed and amended as needed during the annual review process. A new DEP is developed for all rising sixth-grade students to support their transition to middle school.

A standardized DEP form is used across all schools and includes key student data (academic and social/emotional), service plans, transition plans, and signatures from the AIG team, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators. The DEP is reviewed annually with families during a meeting held within the first quarter of school. Students are encouraged to participate in these meetings to practice self-advocacy.

Initial placement and annual review meetings are opportunities to explain AIG services and gather parent/guardian and student input. All signed DEP documents are securely stored in each student's AIG folder. Additional DEP meetings are scheduled as needed throughout the year.

At the high school level, meetings with families are also held when concerns arise regarding a student's identification, placement, or services, or upon parent/guardian request. High school counselors review student transcripts and course registrations annually to ensure AIG students are enrolled in appropriate coursework. Academic advisement is provided at least once per year.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

Move AIG Forms to digital platform.
Develop performance tasks for student performance portfolio that may be used as criteria evidence for placing AIG students. Train GERC on how to evaluate these pieces of evidence. Pilot during this plan cycle.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG Forms		
* Meeting agendas, sign-in sheets, minutes		
* Portfolio Samples		

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A		 <u>2025 - 2028 SCS AIG Forms</u>

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

Stokes County Schools (850) 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.

AIG Specialists or Designees, general education teachers, and other school personnel work collaboratively to meet the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students across all classrooms, grade levels, and learning environments. Educators who work with gifted students are expected to use diverse and effective instructional strategies that promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.

Instruction should also foster students' interests and talents, providing opportunities for self-directed and self-initiated learning with guidance from the AIG Specialist or Designee. Stokes County Schools (SCS) serves AIG students through an inclusion model that utilizes cluster-grouping, ensuring gifted learners receive support throughout the school day.

AIG Specialists or Designees collaborate with classroom teachers by offering coaching, professional development, and support with differentiated planning that reflects best practices in gifted instruction. Lessons are designed using varied instructional approaches to meet the unique needs of AIG students. Teachers engage gifted learners by encouraging rich discussions, asking higher-order questions, exploring diverse perspectives, incorporating student interests, and offering enrichment and extension activities.

Additionally, teachers are mindful of different learning styles and strive to provide support, including for students from underrepresented populations who may not yet be formally identified as gifted.

Grades K-3 AIG Services

The K-3 program is designed to nurture and develop potential in all students, with a focus on early talent development. Students may be identified for informal placement and are cluster-grouped within classrooms to support their academic growth.

For K-3 students identified for informal AIG placement, Stokes County Schools implements a K-3 AIG Enrichment Plan to ensure their instructional needs are met. The AIG Specialist or Designee and/or the instructional coach provides indirect support by collaborating weekly with classroom teachers. This collaboration includes planning differentiated instruction, analyzing assessment data, and offering enrichment resources that extend learning or provide appropriate challenge within the regular classroom setting.

Grades 4 - 8 AIG Services

AIG students are cluster-grouped in classrooms supported by certified AIG Specialists or Designees. These specialists collaborate weekly with general education teachers to plan instruction, provide differentiated instruction, offer enrichment opportunities, analyze student data, and assess potential acceleration options.

Differentiated, enrichment, and advanced learning opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Differentiated core instruction
- Curriculum compacting
- Accelerated content
- Problem-Based Learning (PBL) tasks
- Interest-based projects
- Choice boards
- Independent study
- Enriched curriculum within the general education classroom
- Subject-specific acceleration

Please note that any student obtaining the highest level on EOG or EOC in mathematics will be cluster grouped in advanced mathematics classes or courses, regardless of AIG identification. (HB986). Stokes County Schools (SCS) provides services to students identified as academically gifted in mathematics through a variety of instructional approaches designed to meet their advanced learning needs. These services may include differentiated core instruction, supplemental support, and intensive enrichment opportunities. Instructional strategies used to engage and challenge gifted math students include flexible grouping, enrichment stations, curriculum compacting, and differentiated teaching methods tailored to gifted learners. Additional enrichment options may involve cluster grouping, cross-age or multi-age classes, problem-based learning (PBL) tasks, and participation in after-school math clubs, as well as school, district, and regional math fairs. Math 1 is offered to 8th-graders who are identified during 7th-grade after completing the compacted 6 - 8 math curriculum. Included are any students who scored a level 5 on Math EOGs in the prior school year in accordance with Advanced Mathematic Course (AMC) Enrollment Legislation.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) supports students identified as academically gifted in reading by providing a range of services that include differentiated core instruction, supplemental support, and intensive enrichment. Instructional and enrichment strategies are designed to challenge and engage gifted readers through flexible grouping, enrichment stations, and differentiated instruction tailored to their advanced needs. Additional opportunities may include cluster grouping, curriculum compacting, problem-based learning (PBL), and participation in cross-age or multi-age classes. Gifted reading students may also take part in after-school clubs and literacy-focused competitions such as the school, district, and regional Battle of the Books.

Eligible middle school students may take two levels of World Languages (Latin, Spanish, French, etc.) in 7th and 8th grade through NC Virtual Public Schools (NCVPS), earning two high school foreign language credits that satisfy UNC system graduation requirements.

Eligibility criteria for taking World Language courses in 7th and 8th grade:

- Score in the 93rd percentile or higher on the district universal screener
- Maintain an 85% or higher in all classes
- Receive two teacher recommendations supporting the student's readiness and independence

At the high school level: Stokes County Schools provides a variety of advanced learning opportunities to support gifted learners. Students may self-select academically challenging courses and participate in special programs, with guidance and support from school counselors who ensure appropriate placement based on individual strengths and interests. Options include Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), Career and Technical Education (CTE), and community college courses offered through the Career and College Promise program in partnership with Forsyth Technical Community College. Additionally, students may apply to Stokes Early College High School, where they begin college coursework in ninth grade while completing high school requirements. All students also have access to expanded course offerings through NC Virtual Public Schools (NCVPS), including additional AP classes. Students may earn credit through Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM), a two-phase process that allows them to test out of courses by demonstrating mastery of content. Those who meet graduation requirements may pursue early graduation, with a plan developed in collaboration with school counselors and parent/guardian approval. Internships provide real-world experience and career exploration opportunities, planned jointly by the student, Career Development Coordinator, and business partners. These can occur during the school day or as a fifth-period course. Students enrolled in college-level courses through Forsyth Tech earn both high school and college credit, with transfer-level courses receiving additional GPA weighting equivalent to AP credit. These diverse pathways allow AIG students to personalize their high school experience while preparing for postsecondary success. In meeting the needs of AIG students in grades 9–12, AIG Specialists or Designees should also directly and indirectly support general education teachers and instructional staff by providing all teachers, specialists, and school counselors with access to students' Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs); offering instructional support to help implement strategies that enrich, extend, and accelerate learning; consulting with teachers and counselors to address specific needs of gifted learners; participating in the development and evaluation of honors level courses and sharing relevant resources with educators and administrators to promote best practices in gifted education.

NC Virtual Public Schools (NCVPS): All students have access to NCVPS courses, which expand the available course offerings beyond the traditional curriculum. These online classes including honors and AP options that allow students to explore a wide range of academic interests.

Early College: Students accepted into Stokes Early College High School begin taking high school and college courses in ninth grade. This dual enrollment model enables students to meet North Carolina high school graduation requirements while earning college credits toward certificates, diplomas, or associate degrees.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM): CDM offers students the opportunity to earn high school course credit by demonstrating comprehensive mastery of the course content without completing the course itself. This two-phase process includes a standardized assessment and an artifact component. Timelines and guidance for the CDM process are shared with students in grades 9–12 and their families at the start of each school year by school administrators or the secondary education director.

Early Graduation: Students who meet all North Carolina and Stokes County graduation requirements may apply for early graduation. Students pursuing this option collaborate with school counselors to develop a personalized graduation plan, which must include written parent/guardian consent. Early graduates may take advantage of community college, NCVPS, or other online courses during fifth period or summer sessions to accelerate their credit accumulation. Diplomas are awarded during the spring commencement ceremony after all requirements have been fulfilled.

Internships: Available primarily during a student's senior year, internships provide hands-on experience in a career field of interest. These experiences allow students to observe daily workplace operations, engage with professionals, and perform job-related tasks. Internships may be exploratory or aligned with a specific career path. The Career Development Coordinator, student, and business partner collaboratively plan, implement, and evaluate the internship, which may occur during the school day or as a fifth-period course.

Forsyth Technical Community College – Career and College Promise: Through a partnership with Forsyth Tech, students can enroll in college transfer pathways that lead toward a four-year degree or technical career pathways for job-specific credentials. These dual-enrollment opportunities allow students to earn both high school and college credits. College transfer courses that qualify for credit at four-year institutions also earn students an extra quality point on their GPA, equivalent to AP course weighting.

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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.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) recognizes the importance of addressing the social and emotional needs of all students, including those identified as academically and intellectually gifted (AIG). To ensure these needs are met, the AIG District Coordinator will collaborate with the Director of Academic and Emotional Support to equip school counselors and social workers with knowledge of the AIG identification process, available service options, and the unique social and emotional considerations associated with gifted learners. Together, they will hold meetings with K-12 school counselors to clarify their role in the identification process, service delivery, and overall support of AIG students, as outlined in the district's AIG plan.

AIG Specialists or Designees will participate in school-level problem-solving teams to identify trends and address the social and emotional needs of AIG students. These teams will continuously seek out and share resources to support school communities. School counselors are encouraged to share relevant tools and materials with teachers and instructional staff and to take an active role in supporting gifted students through small-group or individual sessions. Additionally, AIG Specialists or Designees serve as integral members of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) teams, engaging in discussions focused on academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. These teams analyze student data to inform adjustments to both core and enrichment instruction.

School counselors play a critical role in supporting AIG students by providing a range of services tailored to their unique academic and emotional profiles. Their work includes:

- Individual and Group Counseling: Counselors offer personalized support for challenges related to accelerated learning, social-emotional adjustment, stress, and peer relationships.
- Academic Support: They assist students in identifying their strengths and areas for growth, advising on course selection, test preparation, and long-term academic planning
- Career Planning: Counselors guide AIG students through exploration of career interests and post-secondary opportunities, including advanced coursework and college pathways.
- Advocacy and Access: School counselors advocate for access to rigorous coursework and programs that meet the needs of gifted learners.
- Addressing Unique Challenges: Counselors help students develop coping strategies for perfectionism, stress, and pressure related to high achievement.
- Collaboration with Parents and Educators: Counselors work closely with families and staff to ensure coordinated support, creating a strong foundation for academic and personal success.

To support this collaboration, school counselors and social workers are given access to PowerSchool AIG markers and student identification lists to ensure gifted students' needs are considered in individual and group planning. Additionally, input from school counselors is encouraged when service options are being determined by the Gifted Education Referral Committee (GERC), as they are well-positioned to provide insight into the emotional and behavioral wellness of students. Schools are encouraged to include counselors, social workers, and school psychologists as members of their GERC teams.

Collaborative discussions about the social and emotional needs of AIG students should also occur regularly during PLCs and other team meetings. These meetings may include activities such as book studies, lesson planning focused on social-emotional learning, spring DEP development training, and professional development related to mental health. Districtwide, SCS continues to offer ongoing professional learning for AIG Specialists or Designees, general education teachers, instructional coaches, and school counselors with an emphasis on the social and emotional development of gifted learners.

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* **Practice C**

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

According to North Carolina's Rationale for the AIG Program Standards, public schools are expected to challenge all students to reach their highest academic potential. A differentiated core within a multi-tiered system of support ensures that all students receive a quality educational experience. Stokes County Schools' vision is to "Empower all students to achieve and succeed," and this is reflected in the SCS AIG Plan. All students are addressed within the stages, which are designed to ensure that every student is empowered to succeed. The specific needs of gifted students are primarily addressed in stages 2, 3, and 4. Gifted students, in comparison to their peers, demonstrate high-performance capabilities in either intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or both. These students require differentiated educational services to meet their varying needs.

The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a key component of all Professional Learning Community (PLC) discussions across all grade levels. Every month, general education teachers, AIG Specialists or Designees, administrators, and other staff analyze the impact of core and supplemental instruction for AIG students. This ongoing analysis allows for continual adjustments to core instruction to better support AIG students' growth. Supplemental instruction for AIG students may include, but is not limited to, using varied texts, curriculum compacting, and temporary homogeneous in-class groupings, as outlined in Stokes County Schools (SCS) Board of Education Policy 3130: Grouping For Instruction. The effectiveness of these supplemental strategies is regularly discussed and evaluated during PLCs at individual schools. Regular data analysis offers frequent opportunities to adjust daily lesson plans to meet the evolving needs of AIG learners. These adjustments may involve differentiated core instruction, maintaining a focus on grade-level or advanced standards, or providing enrichment units or independent study opportunities.

The initial placement and continued progression of students in the AIG Program, including their annual staging and review, should be carefully considered. Each gifted child's placement and stage should be evaluated individually, based on the child's specific needs and the available resources within the district.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) understands that for the AIG Program to become an integral part of the instructional program, comprehensive training for all personnel is essential. This training is a priority for the district and is fundamental to enhancing the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction within a multi-tiered system of support. By improving differentiation strategies and integrating support and enrichment, SCS aims to extend identification and services to K-3 students and ultimately improve the district's long-term AIG service plan.

To support this effort, the AIG District Coordinator will provide universal access to information regarding all resources, programs, and services through a district webpage, infographics, and other materials. These resources will demonstrate the alignment between identification criteria and available services. District-wide training and meetings, including monthly district PLC meetings, will ensure that all programs are aligned with SCS district policies and the district's strategic plan.

As the district is in the process of rewriting its strategic plan, the AIG District Coordinator will serve as an advisor and advocate to ensure that the needs of gifted learners are represented. The AIG District Coordinator will work to ensure that AIG students are considered in all policy and initiative changes, and will actively seek partnerships with other programs within and outside the district to advance the Stokes County School AIG Program in both policy and practice.

* **Practice D**

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

Purposeful grouping practices will be used both at the start of the school year and throughout the year to ensure appropriate placement for AIG students. Administrators and teachers will review local and state assessments, along with other relevant student data, to determine the most effective placement, including the use of cluster grouping. Cluster grouping involves placing gifted students in a mixed-ability classroom and providing differentiated instruction by a teacher trained in gifted education. While the class includes students of various ability levels, gifted students receive targeted instruction that aligns with their

advanced capabilities. This setup allows gifted students to engage with their intellectual peers while also interacting with same-age peers. Cluster grouping also presents opportunities to develop talents in non-identified students. By grouping AIG students with same-age peers, the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted students can be effectively addressed.

In addition to academic and intellectual giftedness, the needs of the whole child should be considered during placement decisions. Throughout the school year, benchmark assessments, teacher-created assessments, and other factors such as readiness, interest, and learner profile will guide any necessary adjustments to flexible grouping.

The AIG District Coordinator, curriculum directors, principals, accountability director, AIG Specialists, gifted education inclusion teachers, and general education teachers will work together to monitor the progress of gifted learners. Every year, they will engage in collaborative discussions and evaluations to assess the effectiveness of grouping strategies and instructional practices. Based on this feedback, student placement and professional development opportunities will be adapted to better support the needs of AIG students and enhance student outcomes.

Stokes County Schools' intentional and flexible grouping practices provide a variety of opportunities across different settings for AIG students to reach their highest potential. The following practices are utilized to promote growth and achievement:

- AIG students are cluster-grouped in general education classrooms.
- Enrichment opportunities are provided through cross-grouping.
- An annual list of AIG-certified teachers is provided to principals.
- Planning time is made available with AIG Specialists, Designees, or instructional coaches.
- Instruction is adapted using a combination of strategies to meet students' needs, including:
 - Encouraging student discourse.
 - Using higher-order questioning techniques.
 - Bringing diverse viewpoints into the classroom through guest speakers, Socratic seminars, etc.
 - Involving students in various school and district committees, clubs, and extracurricular activities.
 - Addressing a variety of learning styles.
 - Meeting students' needs efficiently and effectively.
 - Allowing enrichment or extension based on formative and summative assessment data.
 - Providing instruction tailored to students' interests, readiness, or learning styles.
 - Offering focused small-group instruction.
 - Incorporating learning stations to achieve multiple objectives within a lesson.

*** 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.

Each revision period, the district AIG Coordinator will present updates to the Stokes County Schools' AIG Plan and share relevant data with the Stokes County Board of Education. In addition, annually, the District Accountability Director will provide the Board and school leadership with standardized test scores and other performance metrics related to AIG students and other subgroups.

Each fall, the AIG Coordinator will meet with school administrators to review the Stokes County Schools Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Education Plan. The Coordinator will also schedule an annual meeting with gifted education specialists and/or designees to review both the screening process and annual student review procedures.

At the school level, AIG Specialists or Designees will share key information about the district's AIG Plan and program with staff each year. Annual training will ensure that all teachers understand the characteristics and needs of gifted learners and are equipped with appropriate instructional strategies to support them.

The district will offer AIG-focused professional development at least once per year, with sessions open to all teachers. Topics will be selected based on a comprehensive needs assessment, which may include informal feedback, student data, and districtwide surveys. Stokes County Schools (SCS) implements a system for creating, implementing, and evaluating high-quality honors-level courses at the high school level. AIG Specialists or Designees will participate in honors course development and evaluations to ensure instruction in honors courses aligns with AIG best practices. Honors courses will be evaluated on differentiation, acceleration, enrichment, depth, and complexity. AIG personnel will provide support and guidance to ensure instructional practices align with the needs of AIG students.

Districtwide, AIG Specialists or Designees will meet monthly in PLCs to collaborate, share resources, discuss best practices, and maintain consistency in service delivery across schools. These meetings also provide an opportunity for peer support and shared problem-solving.

At the school level, weekly PLC meetings should include collaboration between general education teachers and AIG Specialists or Designees. These sessions will focus on planning differentiated instruction, reviewing student data, aligning curriculum and materials, and ensuring lessons are responsive to student needs and interests—while staying aligned with the district's AIG program goals.

*** Practice F**

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

Principals will ensure that all teachers are informed of AIG student identification and service needs at each grade level by incorporating a review of the AIG Plan into the school's beginning-of-year meetings. This responsibility may be delegated to the school-level AIG Specialist or Designee.

When students transition from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school, AIG Specialists or Designees from the sending and receiving schools will meet to discuss each student's needs and recommended services. The district has implemented a transition meeting checklist document with guidelines to facilitate transitions. During these transition meetings, schools will share rosters of AIG-identified students as well as students in the candidate pool who have not yet been identified. The AIG Specialist or Designee will also be responsible for transferring AIG folders and completing the records transfer form to ensure that student information is shared safely and securely.

At the high school level, school counselors will meet with students and families during registration to advise AIG-identified students to enroll in Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), Career and Technical Education (CTE), or Career and College Promise courses, as appropriate, to provide access to more rigorous academic opportunities.

*** 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.

Stokes County Schools is committed to aligning services and programs with student needs, while also considering available district resources. Acceleration is a research-based, evidence-supported practice in gifted education that can offer high-ability students optimal learning opportunities. The selection of the most appropriate type of acceleration requires careful consideration of a student's abilities, characteristics, interests, and developmental readiness.

Gifted students often exhibit uneven profiles of development, excelling in academic or intellectual areas while still developing in areas such as motor skills, social-emotional maturity, and executive functioning. Therefore, acceleration decisions must consider strengths and growth areas across multiple domains.

A variety of acceleration options are available to meet the needs of gifted learners across grade levels and content areas. These may include:

- In-class flexible grouping by skill
- Cluster grouping
- Curriculum compacting and differentiated instruction within the inclusion classroom
- Mixed-grade classes (e.g., completing two years of curriculum in one)
- Subject-matter acceleration (e.g., attending a higher-level class for specific subjects)
- Participation in academic competitions and talent searches

Middle and High School Options:

- Advanced Placement (AP) and college-level courses taught at the high school
- Enrollment in Stokes Early College High School, where students can earn 60+ college credits and/or an associate degree through Forsyth Technical Community College
- Online courses for high school or college credit, including opportunities for early graduation
- Summer enrichment camps and university-sponsored programs to promote intellectual curiosity and post-secondary readiness

Curriculum Compacting (Grades K–8)

Curriculum compacting may occur during core instruction or enrichment time. AIG Specialists or Designees will collaborate with general education teachers during PLCs to pre-assess students' mastery of upcoming standards. When students demonstrate mastery, instruction will be adjusted to allow time for enriched or accelerated studies. Compacting may take place during whole-group, small-group, or independent learning.

Middle schools offer advanced reading and math classes for students who show a need for acceleration. Any student scoring at the highest level on state math End-of-Grade assessments may enroll in advanced math courses, regardless of AIG identification.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

In accordance with State Board of Education policy, all districts must offer CDM as an option for high school courses. This is available to all North Carolina public school students, not just those identified as gifted.

The CDM process includes:

- Phase I: Meeting a state-specified minimum score on an EOC, CTE, or other qualifying exam
 - Phase II: Creating an artifact that demonstrates deep, applied understanding of course content
- Artifacts may take various forms (e.g., written, digital, oral presentations) and are evaluated by a school-based Credit Mastery Committee following DPI guidelines.

Students interested in CDM will meet with their school counselor, parent/guardian, and a team that includes administrators and subject-area teachers to review eligibility and expectations. Stokes County Schools will follow NC DPI guidelines regarding both testing and artifact evaluation.

Dual Enrollment Opportunities

Dual enrollment allows high school students to earn college credits while completing high school requirements. Stokes County Schools partners with Forsyth Technical Community College through the Career and College Promise Program, offering:

- College Transfer Pathways: Courses that satisfy general education requirements for NC public universities
- Technical Career Pathways: Programs leading to credentials, certificates, or diplomas in career/technical fields

Students receive both high school and college credit, and college-transferable courses provide an additional GPA quality point, equivalent to AP classes.

Stokes Early College High School students begin dual enrollment in 9th grade and may graduate with both a high school diploma and college credentials. Admission is selective and based on academic performance and potential.

Subject-Specific and Whole-Grade Acceleration

In grades K–8, the Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) at each school determines services for AIG-identified students. Subject or grade acceleration may be recommended when data demonstrates a significant need. Evidence may include:

- Achievement two or more years above grade level in reading and/or math
- Standardized test scores showing advanced performance
- Classroom assessments, teacher observations, work samples, or student portfolios
- Indicators of readiness such as time management, emotional maturity, and motor skills

Subject acceleration may involve adjusted instructional schedules and transition planning. Whole-grade acceleration requires clear evidence that a student's academic needs cannot be met through other means. Final approval for subject acceleration is given by the principal; for whole-grade acceleration, the AIG District Coordinator and Director of Curriculum must be involved.

Referrals for grade acceleration must include supporting documentation. A team of specialists will review each case and determine if acceleration is appropriate.

Early admission to kindergarten is a form of grade acceleration available to exceptionally advanced young learners. To be considered:

- Parents must submit documentation to the school principal within the first 30 calendar days of the school year.
- The child must score at or above the 98th percentile on an individually administered IQ test conducted by a licensed psychologist (testing must occur after April 16 following the child's fourth birthday).
- The cost of testing is the responsibility of the parents.

Principals will respond to requests within three weeks. If a student is admitted but struggles to adjust within the first 90 days, the school may rescind the placement following intervention efforts. The full process is detailed on the district AIG website and is followed consistently across elementary schools.

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

The Academically/Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Education Program in Stokes County Schools is designed to nurture and challenge gifted learners by offering instruction tailored to each student's abilities, readiness, and motivation. The program supports students in developing their potential through advanced-level learning experiences and opportunities to progress through the curriculum at an appropriate pace and depth.

In grades K-3, the focus is on identifying and nurturing the academic and intellectual potential of all students. Using both formal and informal assessments within the general education classroom, teachers identify students who are performing above their peers and provide differentiated instruction to meet their needs.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 problem-solving teams support this process by helping K-3 teachers collaboratively plan enriched learning experiences for students demonstrating advanced abilities. These experiences are designed to further develop the talents of young learners who show signs of giftedness.

General education teachers work in partnership with AIG Specialists or Designees to deliver differentiated instruction. Primary service delivery options include flexible in-class grouping. When appropriate, students working at advanced levels in reading and/or math may be:

- Cluster grouped with peers at similar levels within the classroom
- Cross-grouped with students across classes at the same grade level
- Subject-accelerated (e.g., a first-grade student may attend second-grade math)

To support this work, all teachers receive professional development in differentiated instruction strategies, with a focus on meeting the needs of advanced learners.

The Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) program is available to all K-3 classrooms and promotes critical thinking development. These lessons may be delivered to the entire class to encourage higher-order thinking for all students.

Additional enrichment strategies for young gifted learners include, but are not limited to:

- Flexible or cross-grade grouping
- Classroom stations and learning menus

- Choice boards
- Cross-age/multi-age classes
- Independent study
- Content enrichment
- Tiered lessons
- Subject or grade-level acceleration

When appropriate, individual Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) may be developed for students requiring more advanced instruction.

*** Practice I**

Develops mindsets, policies, and practices to promote equity and excellence by broadening access to advanced learning opportunities through a variety of talent development efforts, including frontloading, in grades 4-12.

Stokes County Schools uses an inclusion model to provide AIG services in grades K-8. This model ensures all students have access to differentiated, high-quality instruction every day, delivered by classroom teachers in collaboration with AIG Specialists or Designees. The district is committed to identifying and nurturing the potential of all students, especially those from underrepresented populations, through intentional practices.

Instructional Practices and Data-Driven Identification

To support early recognition of advanced learners, Stokes County Schools utilizes a variety of ongoing assessments, including: District universal screener (administered three times annually), NC Check-Ins, standards mastery assessments, common formative assessments, portfolios of student work, etc.

This data, collected across all student groups, enables teachers and AIG staff to identify patterns of strength and potential in students, particularly those who are:

- English Learners (ELs)
- Highly gifted
- Twice-exceptional
- Culturally and linguistically diverse
- Economically disadvantaged

As part of its identification process, Stokes County Schools administers a universal screener to all 3rd-grade students in the second semester. This screener, available in English and Spanish with modifications as required by IEPs, 504 plans, or English Learner Plans (ELLP), contributes to the creation of a Talent Pool—a group of students who may not yet be formally identified but are showing potential. This pool helps guide ongoing efforts and instructional differentiation to better reflect the diversity and needs of the student population.

The district also incorporates the nonverbal component of the CogAT and additional data points such as the district's universal screener scores to support a more comprehensive screening process. A student performance portfolio has been added as a flexible measure of advanced academic performance. Stokes

County Schools has changed the criteria for Stage 2 placement to focus on talent development for all students. No single criterion is used to exclude students, and all data is considered in combination.

Talent development is prioritized as Stage 2 of the AIG identification process. Students in this stage may not yet meet formal identification criteria but show potential and readiness for advanced learning opportunities. In this stage, teachers implement frontloading strategies—providing access to advanced content and thinking skills early and often to prepare students for deeper engagement.

AIG Specialists and general education teachers collaborate to observe and document student growth and readiness, using:

- Daily enrichment periods
- Tiered instruction strategies
- Critical and creative thinking tasks

Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) and other enrichment tools are made available to all K–3 classrooms to support early talent development and encourage high-level thinking across the curriculum. During PLC and MTSS meetings, AIG Specialists or Designees may identify students for observation and support based on advanced skills or mastery.

Stokes County Schools continues to strive to identify and serve twice-exceptional students—those who demonstrate both advanced abilities and learning differences. AIG Specialists work alongside Exceptional Children (EC) and English Learner (EL) teachers to ensure these students receive services in both areas of need. Strategies and service plans are individualized to support both strengths and challenges, affirming that giftedness can coexist with other exceptionailities.

All educators—including classroom teachers, AIG Specialists, EC and EL staff, counselors, and administrators—are engaged in a collaborative-consultative model through our district's Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) problem-solving model. This model ensures consistent communication, shared responsibility, and strategic planning to meet the needs of:

- Formally identified AIG students
- Students in Stage 2: Talent Development
- Students emerging from underrepresented populations

Through intentional practices, Stokes County Schools ensures that every student has the opportunity to discover and develop their potential.

* Practice J

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

According to Duke TIP's Digest of Gifted Research, both academic and non-academic extracurricular activities offer valuable learning experiences for students. These activities provide gifted adolescents with opportunities to connect with like-minded peers, form relationships beyond their immediate circles, and explore different roles that may help develop existing or emerging talents.

A recent study of gifted high school graduates revealed that many of their most positive school experiences occurred through participation in extracurricular activities. Students reported that involvement in sports, the arts, and clubs helped them relieve stress, build non-academic skills, and foster a strong sense of belonging. These experiences also offered motivation for personal growth and allowed students to see the results of effort and persistence, especially important for those who may not feel sufficiently challenged in the classroom.

To support these benefits, each grade span, school, and/or region in the district is encouraged to create and share a resource guide or list of extracurricular opportunities. These opportunities may be available both within and outside of school and should be regularly communicated to students and families through newsletters, websites, social media, or other accessible channels. The guide should prioritize free or low-cost options to ensure access, especially given the district's large population of economically disadvantaged students.

Examples of Enrichment Opportunities

A non-exhaustive list of extracurricular and enrichment opportunities includes:

- Duke TIP Programs: Summer Studies, Independent Learning, eStudies, and Scholars Weekends
- Field Trips: Educational experiences that extend classroom learning
- Clubs: After-school or during-school academic and interest-based clubs
- Sports: School-based or community-based athletic teams
- Arts Programs: Visual arts, drama, music, and dance (available through the Stokes County Arts Council, private providers, or other local organizations)
- Community Organizations: Scouting, 4-H, and other leadership-focused groups
- Civic Engagement: Student government, political groups, and volunteering
- Service Projects: Opportunities for gifted students to lead and serve their communities
- Career Exploration: Guest speakers, job shadowing, and mentorships aligned with student interests
- Family Engagement Events: Challenging, themed family fun nights including science and S.T.E.M., reading, and math, to promote engagement and creativity
- Summer Enrichment: Camps, swim clubs, and other structured learning or recreational activities
- Internships: Internships offering real-world experience in professional settings aligned with their interests and talents.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

To stay abreast of current research-based practices for gifted learners, encourage teachers to join professional organizations, read scholarly articles, provide training for peers and administration, etc.
Under the district's initiative of differentiated instruction - general education, special education, and gifted education will provide joint professional development for teachers and administrators
Continued improvement of AIG communication and collaboration among all stakeholders.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Professional development offerings
* Meetings, agendas, invitations, minutes, and attendance
* Presentations, participant feedback, and participant artifacts

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

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

Stokes County Schools (850) 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.

AIG Specialists or Designees in Stokes County Schools use the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (SCOS) K-12 as the foundation for instruction. Educators differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including those identified as AIG. The goal is to enrich, extend, and accelerate learning in order to help each student reach their full potential.

Differentiated instruction is based on student-centered, standards-aligned, and research-based practices. Key components include:

- Clear instructional objectives and aligned, focused activities
- Ongoing assessment to inform instruction
- Multiple pathways for students to demonstrate mastery
- Variation in instructional depth, complexity, and pacing

To ensure appropriate differentiation, educators may use:

- Curriculum compacting
- Above-grade-level content
- Tiered assignments
- Advanced vocabulary instruction

Instructional strategies may include small group discussions, cooperative learning, seminar-style lessons, debates, research projects, essay writing, and independent reading that challenge students beyond their current level.

In grades, K-12, teachers collaborate during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to develop formative assessments and analyze student data. Based on these discussions, they adjust core instruction and design daily enrichment or extension opportunities. AIG Specialists or Designees provide targeted strategies and support to general education teachers, including in-class grouping, independent interest-based projects, and differentiated resources.

Stokes County Schools continues to strengthen its use of pre-assessments to guide acceleration decisions for all students, including those identified as AIG.

According to the National Association for Gifted Children, effective gifted education includes:

- Access to advanced curricular resources
- Ongoing professional development for all educators on the needs of gifted learners
- Gifted education specialists who model and support differentiation

Gifted students benefit from a combination of differentiated core instruction, supplemental enrichment, and—when needed—intensive support. In Stokes County, these learners primarily participate in AIG classrooms, where all teachers receive training to meet their academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs. Differentiation may involve flexible grouping, varied resources, adjusted pacing, and opportunities for deep intellectual engagement with complex tasks and ideas.

Program Service Option Stages:

Gifted students demonstrate a wide range of individual needs. Stokes County Schools strives to provide numerous opportunities and options to meet these needs. A continuum of services allows for individual students' needs to be addressed. The four stages of services offered in SCS are based on Treffinger's model of All, Many, Some, and Few (Maker and Nielson, 1995). The organizational pattern utilizes common grade span groupings identified at the primary, elementary, middle, and secondary levels.

- Stage 1 students include all learners who benefit from a challenging and engaging program that supports the development of their abilities, skills, and talents. At this stage, the focus is on nurturing potential and sparking interest in all students. These needs are met through differentiated instruction and enrichment opportunities within the general education classroom at all grade levels.
- Stage 2 students demonstrate giftedness through emerging talents or strengths in specific areas. While their performance may vary across academic subjects, they show clear potential for advanced learning. These students are supported through intentional talent development, which may include strategies such as flexible or cross-grade grouping, or cluster grouping with academic peers. These opportunities help nurture and extend their abilities as they continue to grow.
- Stage 3 students demonstrate exceptional ability across multiple academic areas and require a rigorous, enriched, and highly differentiated program. These learners often benefit from exploring the curriculum in greater depth or advancing through content at an accelerated pace. Support options may include cluster grouping with intellectual peers, curriculum compacting, advanced content differentiation, and independent study contracts tailored to individual interests and strengths.
- Stage 4 students require a highly individualized program that often includes accelerated learning opportunities. Appropriate supports may involve subject or grade-level acceleration, independent study contracts, mentorship experiences, or advanced grades or courses. These students need ongoing opportunities to explore content well beyond grade-level expectations.

Service Delivery Option Descriptions:

PRIMARY SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

Formal AIG identification in Stokes County Schools begins in Grade 4. In Grades K–3, classroom teachers work collaboratively with AIG Specialists or Designees using a consultative approach to support advanced learners. The focus is on providing an enriched curriculum and increasing differentiated instruction within the general education classroom.

Stokes County Schools is committed to building the capacity of K–3 teachers' understanding of gifted learners and ways to provide quality instruction. Efforts will focus on aligning Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) lessons with current pacing guides and instructional frameworks. To nurture the talents of young advanced learners, the following instructional options may be used:

- In-class flexible or cross-grouping
- Classroom learning stations
- Menus and choice boards
- Cross-age or multi-age groupings
- Technology-enhanced instruction, including responsible use of Artificial Intelligence
- Independent study
- Content enrichment
- Tiered lesson planning
- Grade-level or subject-specific acceleration
- Cooperative Groups

These strategies are designed to provide appropriate challenge and opportunity for early learners showing signs of advanced ability.

Grades 4-8 Service Delivery Options

A general description of the service delivery options is outlined below. The ones that are appropriate and applicable for each level (elementary, middle, and secondary) and each stage (1, 2, 3, or 4) within the levels are specified in the charts included in this section of the plan. The purpose of the various service delivery options is to select the most appropriate educational setting that meets the needs of gifted learners within the context of this plan and the resources of Stokes County Schools. These service options may include grade skipping, subject skipping, classroom stations, workstations, inclusion, cluster grouping, consultative services, cross-age/multi-age groupings, flexible grouping, curriculum compacting, enrichment units, independent study, shadowing programs, multimedia experiences, and science instruction.

ELEMENTARY SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

- NC Standard Course of Study

- Flexible grouping

- Differentiated core instruction for talent development of all learners

Stage 2

- NC Standard Course of Study
- Differentiated Supplemental Core
- Cluster grouping that fosters talent development
- Curriculum enhancement through content, tasks, and assignments

Stage 3

- NC Standard Course of Study
- Flexible grouping
- Tiered Assignments
- Cooperative and independent learning stations or labs
- Learning contacts
- Differentiated advanced core instruction
- Cluster grouping
- Curriculum compacting
- Curriculum extension activities and opportunities
- Curriculum enrichment through content, tasks, and assignments
- Curriculum acceleration by content area
- Cross-age/multi-age grouping or classes
- Content extension activities

Stage 4

- NC Standard Course of Study

- Differentiated and intensive advanced core instruction
- Flexible grouping for advanced learners
- Cooperative and independent learning stations or labs
- Content extension activities
- Differentiated and advanced instruction for gifted learners
- Cluster grouping
- Independent curriculum compacting
- Accelerated curriculum
- Cross-age/multi-age grouping or classes
- Independent study contracts
- Grade acceleration
- Subject acceleration

MIDDLE SCHOOL SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

Stage 1

- NC Standard Course of Study
- Flexible grouping
- Differentiated core instruction for talent development of all learners

Stage 2

- NC Standard Course of Study
- Differentiated Supplemental Core
- Cluster grouping that fosters talent development
- Curriculum enhancement through content, tasks, and assignments

Stage 3

- NC Standard Course of Study
- Tiered assignments
- Flexible grouping
- Cooperative and independent learning stations or labs
- Differentiated advanced core instruction
- Cluster grouping
- Accelerated curriculum
- Curriculum compacting
- Curriculum enrichment through content, tasks, and assignments
- Cross-age/multi-age class
- Content extension activities
- Specialized content-specific classes, i.e., Math 1

Stage 4

- NC Standard Course of Study
- Tiered assignments
- Flexible grouping
- Content extension activities
- Cooperative and independent learning stations or labs
- Differentiated advanced core instruction
- Cluster grouping
- Accelerated curriculum
- Curriculum compacting
- Cross-age/multi-age class
- Independent study contracts

- Grade acceleration
- Subject acceleration
- Specialized content-specific classes, i.e., Math 1

SECONDARY SCHOOL SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

At the high school level, gifted students are supported through a variety of differentiated learning opportunities aligned with the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS). Teachers, in collaboration with AIG Specialists or Designees, adapt and extend SCOS standards to meet students' advanced learning needs, ensuring appropriate depth, complexity, and pace.

School counselors play a critical role in addressing the academic, career, and social-emotional needs of gifted students. Their support includes curriculum guidance, responsive services, individual planning, and systemic coordination. To effectively meet these needs, counselors must understand the unique characteristics of gifted learners.

At the high school level, school counselors collaborate with students, families, AIG Specialists or Designees, content-area teachers, and external organizations such as colleges and universities. This collaboration ensures that each gifted student has an individualized, rigorous, and meaningful plan during course selection and beyond.

Stage 1

- NC Standard Course of Study
- In-class flexible grouping
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- Differentiated instruction strategies for talent development of all learners

Stage 2

- NC Standard Course of Study
- In-class flexible grouping
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- Differentiated instruction strategies for gifted learners
- Honors courses
- Accelerate Curriculum

- Advanced Placement courses
- Stokes Early College High School
- Dual enrollment in Career and College Promise courses in conjunction with Forsyth Technical Community College

Stage 3

- NC Standard Course of Study
- In-class flexible grouping
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- Differentiated instruction strategies for gifted learners
- Honors courses
- Advanced Placement courses
- Content extension activities
- Stokes Early College High School
- Dual enrollment in Career and College Promise courses
- Accelerated Curriculum

Stage 4

- NC Standard Course of Study
- Content extension activities
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- In-class flexible grouping
- Differentiated instruction strategies for gifted learners
- Honors courses
- Advanced Placement courses
- Stokes Early College High School
- Dual enrollment in Career and College Promise courses

- Early Graduation
- Early college entrance
- Accelerated Curriculum

*** Practice B**

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

Gifted learners receive enrichment and acceleration services from AIG Specialists or Designees to promote high levels of academic achievement. Instructional decisions are guided by data from formal and informal assessments, student work samples, and classroom observations. These help determine the most appropriate differentiated strategies for each learner.

AIG Specialists or Designees collaborate with instructional coaches, administrators, and general education teachers to implement diverse instructional practices that support continuous growth. The district encourages the use of pre-assessments, interest and learning inventories, and small group instruction to create personalized learning experiences. Differentiation is aligned with students' identification areas and academic strengths.

- Learning Contracts
 - Agreements between the AIG Specialist or Designee and the student, allowing the student to work independently on enriched or accelerated material. These contracts include realistic goals and require regular check-ins to monitor progress.
- Differentiated Instructional Units
 - Units tailored to students' learning levels and content mastery in reading, writing, and math, aligned with the NC Standard Course of Study. These units foster student-centered, independent, and collaborative learning and may include curriculum compacting, interdisciplinary connections, and personalized instruction based on learning styles.
- Academic Enrichment Units
 - Designed to enhance core instruction with real-world applications such as Project-Based Learning (PBL), product development, and interest-based exploration. These units emphasize higher-order thinking and provide opportunities for students to expand content knowledge beyond the standard curriculum.
- Independent Study
 - Offered to students with demonstrated content mastery or strong interests. These projects allow self-directed learners to explore topics in depth. The AIG Specialist or Designee acts as a mentor, providing guidance and monitoring progress periodically.
- Accelerated Curriculum
 - For students capable of mastering content at an advanced pace. Learners may progress independently or in small groups through the curriculum in a shortened time frame. Progress is monitored regularly by the AIG Specialist or Designee.
- Curriculum Compacting
 - For students who have already mastered current grade-level content. The AIG Specialist or Designee replaces known content with enrichment or extension activities. Clear goals, progress monitoring, and alignment with standards ensure continued academic challenge.

Instructional Support and Best Practices for Gifted Learners

AG Specialists or Designees in Stokes County Schools are committed to implementing best practices that challenge gifted learners and support their continuous academic growth. The curriculum is modified to meet the unique needs of gifted students and those with high potential by differentiating content, process, product, and learning environment.

In addition to providing direct services, AG Specialists or Designees collaborate with general education teachers to recommend and support effective instructional strategies for gifted learners. These strategies may include:

Instructional Planning and Differentiation

- Using pre-assessments and assessment data (formative/summative) to inform instruction and identify enrichment or acceleration needs
- Compacting the curriculum to eliminate redundancy and allow for deeper exploration
- Designing tiered lessons, activities, and instructional units based on student readiness, interests, or learning styles
- Implementing learning contracts and independent study projects aligned with student strengths and interests
- Providing instruction that supports a variety of learning styles through flexible grouping and reciprocal teaching practices
- Offering small group enrichment or extension opportunities within the classroom

Skill Development and Engagement

- Teaching research, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving, communication, and higher-order questioning skills
- Encouraging student ownership of learning by incorporating choice and autonomy in how they access, process, and present information
- Facilitating student-led discussions and promoting active student involvement in the learning process
- Bringing in diverse viewpoints and real-world contexts through Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and collaborative projects

Peer Interaction and Enrichment Opportunities

- Cluster-grouping gifted students to foster intellectual peer relationships
- Providing access to academic competitions and collaborative events (e.g., math fairs, spelling bees, Battle of the Books, Quiz Bowl)
- Integrating multimedia and technology-enhanced instruction
- Offering distance learning and advanced-level coursework, including virtual and online options

College and Career Readiness

- Supporting career and college planning through targeted guidance
- Assisting with the exploration of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and opportunities for career development

These practices aim to create a dynamic, challenging, and supportive learning environment in which gifted learners can excel.

Each school in Stokes County has AIG Specialists or Designees who support teachers in implementing diverse and effective instructional practices for gifted learners. General education teachers are responsible for delivering instruction that includes differentiation, enrichment, and extension to meet the needs of gifted students. The service delivery model includes the following components:

- Cluster grouping of AIG students within classrooms to promote peer interaction and intellectual challenge
- Distribution of a list of AIG-certified teachers to principals to support strategic student placement
- Collaborative planning time between AIG Specialists/Designees and general education teachers to develop differentiated instruction
- Services for students with high potential, offering multiple opportunities to demonstrate ability and access enrichment
- Use of a variety of research-based instructional strategies within lessons to address the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners

Grades K-3 AIG Services

In grades K–3, AIG Specialists or Designees collaborate regularly with general education teachers to plan instruction, share instructional resources, analyze student data, and support the implementation of enrichment strategies. The focus at this level is on identifying potential and providing differentiated learning experiences. Instructional support includes small-group work, talent development opportunities, and flexible grouping based on student needs and strengths.

Grades 4-5 AIG Services

In grades 4–5, AIG-identified students are cluster-grouped in general education classrooms. AIG Specialists or Designees work closely with classroom teachers to plan, teach, and assess differentiated instruction. Data is used collaboratively to inform grouping and instructional strategies. Students may also participate in extended learning opportunities such as after-school clubs, Math Fairs, Battle of the Books, etc.

Grades 6-8 AIG Services

At the middle school level, students are either subject-grouped based on their AIG identification or cluster-grouped in general education classes. AIG Specialists or Designees collaborate with instructional staff to analyze data and plan for differentiated instruction and enrichment. Students have access to extracurricular enrichment activities, including after-school clubs, Math Fairs, and Battle of the Books.

Grades 9-12 AIG Services

High school students are supported in personalizing their academic paths and exploring college and career goals. They may attend a traditional high school or Stokes Early College High School. With guidance from school counselors, students select courses that align with their graduation plans and career interests. Options include Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), dual enrollment through Career and College Promise (CCP), and online courses via North Carolina Virtual Public Schools (NCVPS). In addition to rigorous coursework, students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular and leadership opportunities that support academic and personal growth.

Enrichment Opportunities Across All Grades

Students across all grade levels may participate in a variety of enrichment activities, including academic field trips, Math Fair, Battle of the Books, Science Fair, academic competitions, and after-school clubs.

Ongoing Professional Development

Stokes County Schools remains committed to building teacher capacity to serve gifted learners. Ongoing professional development is provided for AIG Specialists, inclusion teachers, and general education teachers. These efforts ensure that all educators are equipped to differentiate instruction effectively, recognizing that most gifted students spend the majority of their instructional time in the general education setting.

* Practice C

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

Teachers of gifted learners in Stokes County use a variety of research-based supplemental resources to help gifted learners grow. These resources include but are not limited to challenging tasks, advanced technology, multimedia projects, collaborative learning, challenging questioning, in-depth discussions, and multi-level problem-solving. The following are examples of resources that may be used. Also, reference the Stokes County Schools AIG Canvas page, which is a resource for all stakeholders. SCS will continue to build a repository of evidence-based supplemental resources to meet the needs of gifted learners.

Examples of Research-based Supplemental Resources:

- Differentiation and Intervention for Gifted Learners: Including best practices for academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs.
 - [Gifted Students: Recommendations for Teachers](#)
 - [Learning Modalities](#)

Gifted Education Resources: (Not an exhaustive list.)

- Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program
- Challenging Common Core Math Lessons from the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William & Mary
- [hoagiesgifted.org](#)
- [byrdseed.com](#)
- [tangmath.com](#)
- [steveyborney.com](#)
- [https://gffletchy.com/](#)
- Gifted Education Units from the Center for Gifted Education
- Shared inquiry lessons from the Junior Great Books Program
- Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS)

- Problem and project-based learning lessons

- NCDPI AIG Instructional Resources.

- Learning Labs

- Duke Tip Teachers Workshop - teachersworkshop.org

- Major Clarity Career Exploration

- Dual Enrollment

- [NCDPI Portrait of a Graduate](#)

- Buck Institute for Education Project-Based Learning [PBL Works](#)

- [Study Guides and Strategies Problem-Based Learning](#)

- [Odyssey of the Mind](#)

- Problem-Based Learning

Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI)

SCS Generative AI Guidance Policy

Stokes County Schools aims to drive innovation and produce globally competitive students for the future. In order to achieve these goals, Stokes County Schools has decided to follow in the footsteps of [NCDPI Guidelines](#) in their approach to generative AI and prepare staff and students to continue closing the digital divide. Generative AI is a powerful tool that has the ability to transform how teaching and learning are expanded, such as providing additional learning support to students, adapting teaching methods, enhancing accessibility to underrepresented groups in education, and enabling teachers to customize learning experiences for personalized learning.

Our district is committed to using AI technologies but doing so in an ethical and responsible manner as laid out in the “[AI Roadmap for K12 Schools](#)”. District and school leadership will be responsible for providing consistent professional development, resources, and support regarding generative AI. These efforts will continue by providing students, parents, and the larger community opportunities to learn about AI to ensure a common understanding.

Social and Emotional Learning Needs of AIG Students

Stokes County Schools strives to address the academic, social-emotional, and executive functioning needs of gifted learners. As part of differentiated instruction, AIG students are given opportunities to engage with intellectual peers and participate in extracurricular activities that support their interests. The district has strengthened counseling services to meet the socio-emotional needs of gifted learners, addressing challenges like underachievement, multi-potentiality, perfectionism, peer relationships, parental pressure, and executive functioning difficulties. Executive functioning skills such as working memory, inhibition, cognitive flexibility, planning, task initiation, metacognition, self-monitoring, time management, organization, and emotional control are critical for

gifted students' success. These skills help students manage information, control impulses, adapt to new situations, plan and execute tasks, maintain focus, monitor their progress, allocate time effectively, organize their work, and regulate emotions.

To support these needs, professional development will be provided annually for teachers and staff. The AIG District Coordinator will work closely with the Director of Academic and Emotional Support to build the capacity of school counselors and staff. Collaboration among AIG Specialists, inclusion teachers, and school counselors will ensure that the social-emotional and executive functioning needs of gifted students are addressed, especially during placement and service decisions. Counselors will also offer lessons focused on executive functioning skills, including task initiation, planning, and time management. Each school's AIG team will proactively consider these needs when making placement decisions.

- School counselors should meet with AIG students annually to address their social-emotional and executive functioning challenges.
- Provide professional development for counselors and teachers to better understand and support the executive functioning needs of gifted learners.
- School counselors should offer consultative support and resources to teachers and students, focusing on strategies to improve working memory, inhibition, cognitive flexibility, planning, task initiation, and other executive functioning skills.
- Gifted learners should complete surveys to assess multiple intelligences, learning styles, and executive functioning abilities.
- Offer professional development to classroom teachers to help them support the executive functioning development of gifted students.

Books/Magazines:

- The Cluster Grouping Handbook: A Schoolwide Model: How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All by Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brullés
- Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom: Strategies and Techniques Every Teacher Can Use by Susan Winebrenner
- Teaching Young Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom: Identifying, Nurturing, and Challenging Ages 4-9 by Joan Franklin Smutny, Sally Yahnke Walker, and Elizabeth A. Meckstroth
- Differentiating Instruction with Menus by Laurie E. Westphal
- Best Practices in Gifted Education: An Evidence-Based Guide, a service publication of the National Association for Gifted Children
- Gifted Child Quarterly, publishes original research and new and creative insights about giftedness and talent development
- Gifted Child Today: information about teaching and parenting gifted and talented children. The journal provides critical information for teachers and administrators involved with gifted children.

Professional Organizations:

- National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC): A national organization of parents, teachers, educators, other professionals, and community leaders who are advocates for gifted and talented children - membership and annual conference
- North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented (NCAGT): A non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the educational and social-emotional needs of academically and/or intellectually gifted students. - membership and annual conference

Competitions and Enrichment Programs:

- Battle of the Books
- Math Fair
- Quiz Bowl
- NC Governor's School
- Poetry Outloud
- Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA)
- Government and Youth Conference
- National Honor Society
- Junior National Honor Society
- Tech Teams
- Future Business Leaders
- Scholarships
- Arts (Multidisciplinary)
- Sports (Multidisciplinary)
- Internships
- Career Fairs
- CTE Credentials
- North Carolina High School Diploma Endorsements

* 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.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) aims to foster the development of critical 21st-century skills in gifted learners by promoting communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Lessons are designed to encourage higher-order thinking, problem-solving, and the integration of technology, with a focus on providing opportunities for students to engage with unstructured problems and new information. As a 1:1 device district, SCS offers learning opportunities such as STEM/STEAM projects, creative problem-solving tasks, coding, rocketry, and project-based learning. To support this, resources are shared through the SCS

AIG Canvas Page and NCDPI's Portrait of a Graduate framework, which emphasizes the acquisition of both academic content and durable skills like adaptability, empathy, and responsibility. Opportunities for real-world application are offered through experiences such as Youth Government, technology teams, Robotics, and community service learning projects, with support from local businesses for internships and mentorships. By embedding critical thinking in advanced programs and fostering student discussions and peer interactions, SCS aims to equip students with the skills necessary to succeed in post-secondary education, careers, and beyond, in alignment with the North Carolina Portrait of a Graduate.

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

Stokes County Schools employs a comprehensive approach to monitor student progress and inform instructional decisions through a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods, including pre-assessments, formative assessments, anecdotal records, and summative assessments. Pre-assessments identify students' prior knowledge and help inform instructional grouping. Formative assessments provide ongoing feedback, identify misconceptions, and guide instructional adjustments. Summative assessments determine mastery of skills, concepts, and processes. AIG Specialists or Designees regularly review student data with instructional coaches in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to ensure that academic needs are met, using the data to identify the need for enrichment or acceleration. Data collected through the DEP and MTSS processes provides a holistic view of student progress, including academic, social-emotional (SEL), and behavioral data, supporting a comprehensive understanding of each learner's needs. SCS utilizes a K-12 Universal Screener as a tool used to identify students who may be at risk for academic challenges or may demonstrate advanced abilities, helping to ensure that no student's needs are overlooked. SCS has a K-12 academic, behavioral, and attendance matrix to assist in planning for intentional and targeted supports for all students. Through collaborative planning with teachers, instructional support staff, and administrators, the district aims to differentiate curriculum and instruction to support gifted students' growth. This includes using research-based tools to provide acceleration, enrichment, and extension opportunities. Regular analysis of student growth helps to evaluate instructional effectiveness and informs future teaching decisions, ensuring that all students, including gifted learners, are appropriately supported. Open communication and structured MTSS protocols facilitate unbiased, effective data analysis to optimize instructional strategies and outcomes for all students.

Examples of assessments may include: (Not an exhaustive list.)

	Formative Assessments	Summative Assessments
Pre-assessments	Observation	End of semester or unit tests
	Graphic organizers such as KWL charts	Performance tasks
Observation	Exit cards/tickets	Products
Questioning	Portfolio checks	Portfolios
Most Difficult First	Anecdotal records	End of Grade Tests
Common Formative Assessments (CFA)	Quizzes	
Standards Mastery Assessments	Check-Ins	Benchmark assessments (district & state)

Surveys	10 minute meetings
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* **Practice F**

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

To effectively meet the needs of gifted learners in Stokes County Schools, collaboration among instructional personnel is essential. AIG Specialists or Designees work directly with gifted students while also serving as resources for general education teachers, exceptional children's teachers, other instructional staff, and administrators. Through professional development opportunities, all stakeholders will receive training on the characteristics of gifted learners and strategies for differentiating instruction to meet their needs. AIG Specialists or Designees participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Tiered meetings, where the academic and support needs of gifted students are regularly discussed as part of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

Through district-level coordination, AIG personnel meet monthly with the district coordinator to reflect on and refine action plans for differentiated curriculum and instruction. These meetings focus on building capacity by sharing resources and strategies that help general education teachers develop student strengths and plan responsive instruction for gifted learners. School counselors and other instructional staff are also included in discussions, ensuring a holistic approach to supporting the academic, social, and emotional growth of gifted students. During PLCs, teams reflect on the effectiveness of instruction, adjusting support as needed, and ensuring that gifted learners' needs are met consistently.

To maintain a collaborative environment, AIG personnel and other instructional staff communicate regularly through tools such as Google Docs, Canvas page, emails and running agendas. This fosters continuous collaboration around the needs of advanced learners, ensuring alignment and a shared understanding of key concepts such as the characteristics of giftedness, available resources, and social-emotional considerations.

Additionally, AIG personnel collaborate with district leadership to ensure that differentiated curriculum and instruction are supported and expected across all instructional staff. AIG Specialists or Designees regularly advocate for differentiated instruction during district-level instructional teams and PLCs, ensuring that the needs of gifted students remain a priority. They guide the development and integration of differentiated units, focusing on advanced content and instructional strategies. This collaboration includes time dedicated to planning, problem-solving, and evaluating the effectiveness of instructional units for gifted learners.

AIG personnel and classroom teachers work together to reflect on differentiation strategies using guiding questions, refining the implementation of advanced content, and ensuring that the curriculum remains rigorous and engaging. Resources, including curriculum examples, scenarios, and teaching models, will be provided to support the engagement and challenge of gifted multilingual learners, ensuring their needs are met within a differentiated learning environment.

* **Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Provide training in differentiation for all teachers, including K-3. Suggested focus on tiered lessons by combining the work of gifted, general, and special education representatives to demonstrate the need for a team approach, create ownership, and better ensure sustainability.
Advocate and ensure that gifted learners are a part of Tier 2 and Tier 3 discussions (or agendas)

Planned Sources of Evidence

* Examples - Tiered Lesson Plans
* Administrative walkthroughs showing evidence of differentiated instruction
* Agendas, minutes, and sign-in sheets from meetings (school and district level)

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

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

Stokes County Schools (850) 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 Stokes County Schools AIG District Coordinator is a licensed Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) educator who collaborates with AIG Specialists or Designees, gifted education inclusion teachers, and administrators to guide, plan, implement, monitor, and revise the district's AIG program.

Responsibilities of the AIG District Coordinator include:

- Communicating the components of the local AIG plan to all stakeholders
- Overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the AIG plan
- Determining and managing the AIG program budget
- Coordinating the AIG Advisory Board, with a goal of increased engagement and annual meetings even in non-revision years
- Planning and facilitating evidence-based professional development
- Consulting with principals to support effective AIG services
- Participating in monthly PLCs with AIG Specialists or Designees across the district
- Actively engaging in regional and statewide professional development and initiatives to strengthen gifted education
- Serving as a resource for teachers across the district
- Addressing and resolving concerns raised by parents or teachers
- Coordinating AIG-related events and activities
- Ensuring AIG Specialists or Designees provide foundational information on gifted education at the school level
- Representing gifted education on various district-level teams, including the MTSS Team, School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), District Curriculum Team, Honors Implementation Committee, and as a stakeholder for Federal Programs (Title I, II, III, IV, and ESSER funding)

*** 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.

The AIG District Coordinator collaborates with school principals throughout the year to ensure that AIG Specialists or Designees are effectively meeting the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted learners. This support is provided through ongoing consultation with school-based instructional leadership teams and regular review of AIG documentation, including:

- Advisory Council meeting agendas, minutes, and rosters
- Professional development agendas and attendance records
- Rosters of new students served under the Talent Development Model (formerly Nurture)
- Rosters of newly identified AIG students

To promote accountability and instructional quality, school administrators conduct annual observations and regular classroom walkthroughs of AIG Specialists or Designees, offering feedback to ensure consistent delivery of differentiated instruction. Specialists or Designees must demonstrate their impact through data collection, instructional artifacts, and lesson plans that reflect attention to the needs of gifted learners. They are also responsible for promoting events and learning opportunities that showcase how the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted students are being addressed.

AIG Specialists or Designees are expected to:

- Implement and support the district AIG Plan at the school level
- Facilitate identification and placement team meetings
- Coordinate the development of Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs)
- Provide both direct and indirect services in alignment with the AIG Plan
- Act as a communication link between stakeholders regarding AIG programming, services, and concerns
- Maintain and secure AIG student records and data
- Provide school- and district-level professional development focused on student achievement, formative assessment, instructional strategies, and alignment with the NC Standard Course of Study
- Collaborate with classroom teachers through consultation, co-teaching, and modeling differentiated instructional practices
- Continuously seek innovative ways to meet the needs of gifted learners
- Encourage professional growth by promoting engagement with scholarly research, professional organizations, and peer collaboration around best practices in gifted education

* **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.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) recognizes that high-quality gifted programs depend on educators who are well-prepared and continuously supported in their work with academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students. Ongoing, differentiated professional development is essential for all educators involved in identifying, teaching, and supporting gifted learners.

Approach to Professional Development

Licensed AIG Specialists or Designees in Stokes County Schools engage in ongoing professional development to remain current in best practices, instructional strategies, and state standards related to gifted education. This includes regular participation in district-sponsored workshops, regional and state conferences, peer collaboration, and continued study of topics such as differentiation, acceleration, enrichment, social-emotional learning, and the needs of underserved gifted populations. This ongoing learning ensures they are equipped to lead, model, and support high-quality, research-based instruction for gifted learners across all school settings.

Other professional learning opportunities offered may include multiple formats, such as:

- District-sponsored workshops and courses
- Higher education courses
- Professional conferences
- Peer-led sessions by AIG-licensed teachers
- Presentations from external consultants

SCS provided its first local licensure professional development in many years. We partnered with Marty Erskine, Erskine Educational Consulting, to create a five-day course. The course focused on:

- Teaching Gifted Kids in Today's Classroom by Susan Winebrenner
- Learning Modalities
- Methods for differentiation, acceleration, enrichment, etc.
- Social and Emotional Learning of AIG Students
- Serving AIG students in the classroom
- Minority and underserved populations
- Models of lessons, activities, choice boards, etc.
- Characteristics of the gifted learner
- NC SCOS
- Best Practices of AIG Instruction
- NC AIG Booster Shots

- NC AIG Program Standards
- Article 9B
- SCS AIG Plan
- State Praxis

This course reflected principles of adult learning: self-direction, experiential learning, practical application, and problem-solving. SCS outlines expectations and competencies for key stakeholder groups, ensuring alignment with the Local AIG Plan:

Classroom Teachers

- Recognize characteristics of giftedness in diverse populations
- Understand referral and identification procedures
- Use evidence-based differentiation strategies to challenge advanced learners
- Collaborate with AIG Specialists to plan, implement, and reflect on differentiated instruction
- Learn the role of gifted education in a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Understand the needs of twice-exceptional and multilingual gifted learners
- Participate in the development and evaluation of honors level courses

Instructional Coaches

- Support curriculum planning that embeds differentiation for AIG students
- Facilitate data-informed decision-making for instruction
- Model and coach evidence-based strategies for advanced learners

Student Services Personnel (Counselors, Social Workers, etc.)

- Understand the social-emotional and academic needs of gifted students
- Provide counseling services aligned with the characteristics of gifted learners
- Participate in service planning and implementation teams

School Administrators

- Support the implementation of AIG services and policies
- Provide time and resources for professional development and collaboration
- Monitor instructional quality and fidelity of AIG program delivery
- Assign honors level courses to teachers who possess the skills, knowledge and dispositions to facilitate honors level courses with advanced curriculum content
- Ensure teachers participate in the development and evaluation of honors level courses and implement honors courses to fidelity.

Targeted and Ongoing PD Efforts

- Annual survey of certified staff and administrators to assess PD needs
- Use AIG Specialists and licensed teachers to lead sessions
- Integrate results with broader district needs assessments
- Provide resources and tools (e.g., templates, planning guides, strategy banks) aligned with NCDPI Advanced Learning and Gifted Education tools
- Continue collaboration with institutions of higher education and community organizations
- Contract services for local licensure endorsements

Focus Areas for All Staff

- Differentiation techniques and tiered lessons
- Student data analysis for instruction
- Addressing the needs of gifted learners
- Access in gifted education
- Teaching gifted multilingual and twice-exceptional students

By building educator capacity through tailored, ongoing professional learning, Stokes County Schools aims to ensure that all gifted learners receive high-quality, differentiated instruction that fosters their academic and social-emotional growth.

*** 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.

Stokes County Schools understands the importance of ensuring that AIG students receive high-quality instruction from educators trained in gifted education. Research confirms that teachers with specialized training in gifted pedagogy are better prepared to meet the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of advanced learners.

Ideally, all AIG students are served by educators who hold an AIG add-on license from an accredited institution. While AIG licensure is strongly recommended for all teachers serving gifted learners, the district recognizes staffing limitations and addresses them through a collaborative, supportive model.

Procedures and Practices:

- AIG Licensure Expectation: Classroom teachers with AIG students are encouraged to hold AIG licensure. Principals are provided with annual lists of AIG-licensed staff to assist with scheduling and student placement for the upcoming year.
 - Cluster Grouping: Principals are expected to implement cluster grouping whenever possible. This model places 4–6 identified students with an AIG-licensed teacher or a teacher who meets district requirements, with the remainder of the class being mixed-ability. If more than six gifted students are present, multiple clusters may be formed.
 - Placement Monitoring: The AIG District Coordinator monitors student placement and collaborates with principals to ensure identified students are assigned to appropriately trained teachers.
 - Collaborative Support: When an AIG-licensed teacher is not available, AIG Specialists or Designees, along with Instructional Coaches, support general education teachers through PLCs, Tiered support meetings, and the School Improvement Team (SIT).
 - Professional Development: The district has worked in conjunction with Erskine Education Consulting to design a five day local licensure professional development to prepare educators to serve AIG students or for those who wish to obtain AIG add-on licensure. This course will benefit both aspiring AIG teachers and current educators of gifted students. Alongside this opportunity, SCS provides annual professional development for teachers already licensed with the most current AIG best practices for educating our gifted learners.
 - Leadership Involvement: The district partners with school leaders to ensure proper grouping and teacher preparation, while promoting ongoing dialogue around research-based practices such as cluster grouping.
 - Ongoing Review: Placement practices, teacher qualifications, and training efforts are reviewed regularly and shared with school leaders and the Board of Education to inform planning and accountability.
- This multi-faceted approach ensures that, regardless of the setting, AIG students are supported by educators with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to provide differentiated and effective instruction.

*** Practice E**

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

Stokes County Schools continues to strive to recruit, develop, and retain highly qualified educators to support gifted learners, with a strong preference for those holding AIG add-on licensure.

Recruitment and Staffing Strategies

- Principal Collaboration: Partner with principals to identify staffing needs aligned with the Local AIG Plan and determine personnel with the potential to pursue licensure.
- IHE Partnerships: Maintain partnerships with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) to offer AIG licensure coursework and explore renewed interest as it arises.
- Professional Development: Develop and implement professional development that supports established AIG teachers, locally licensed AIG teachers, and general education teachers around best practices of gifted learners.
- Regional Collaboration: Partner with other LEAs, RESAs, IHEs, and educational organizations to provide access to local or regional AIG professional development opportunities.
- Financial Support: Work with district leadership to offer financial assistance for licensure efforts, especially targeting teachers in Title I schools or schools with limited AIG-licensed staff.
- Hiring Practices: Collaborate with Human Resources to:
 - Filter applications for AIG licensure or out-of-state gifted certification.
 - Embed AIG-focused questions in interviews.
 - Strategize hiring to address gaps in AIG services across the district.

Retention and Recognition

- Commitment Agreements: Consider developing agreements requiring teachers to remain in the district after completing licensure funded by the district.
- Recognition: Publicly recognize educators who earn AIG licensure or complete local requirements (e.g., at Board of Education meetings).
- Internal Recruitment: Encourage current staff to pursue AIG licensure through district communications, PD sessions, and collaboration with AIG Specialists and Administrators.
- Diversity Goals: Promote AIG licensure among educators of diverse backgrounds and from across all grade levels and instructional roles.

By combining flexible pathways to licensure, strategic staffing, and meaningful support, Stokes County Schools aims to increase the number of AIG-licensed educators and improve services for gifted learners districtwide.

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

The district regularly reviews AIG program goals, district initiatives, and best practices to align professional development (PD) with the needs of diverse gifted learners in an effort to build educator capacity.

The AIG District Coordinator collaborates with the Curriculum Team and school leaders to plan and implement PD that reflects the AIG Program, MTSS Framework, and district priorities, such as quality differentiation. One example includes contracted training on differentiation for district leadership, followed by staff coaching and observation. AIG educators are actively included in department meetings, PLCs, and cross-district collaboration to extend learning and impact.

SCS prioritizes PD that addresses educator mindsets, policies, and instructional practices. This includes:

- Expanding understanding of giftedness and addressing common misperceptions.
- Highlighting strategies for supporting underrepresented gifted learners, such as English Learners (EL), Economically Disadvantaged Students (EDS), and twice-exceptional (2e) students.
- Utilizing NCDPI's Call to Action, Guidebook 1.0 and 2.0, and additional resources to guide PD.
- Hosting in-person training and regional conference opportunities through NCAGT, PTEC, and NCCAT.

The district works to shift mindsets and change outdated perceptions that gifted services are only for students who are highly motivated, well-behaved, or achieve at the highest academic levels. Instead, the goal is to provide meaningful services every day, in every classroom, for all identified gifted learners. Recent changes to support students include revised identification criteria, as well as a district-wide practice that maintains a student's AIG identification even if services are exited. These steps reflect the district's ongoing effort to evaluate and improve practices to better serve all gifted students.

Through sustained, comprehensive, and mindset-shifting professional development, Stokes County Schools is working to ensure gifted education is effective across all settings and student groups.

* **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.

Stokes County Schools will continue to align professional development (PD) with district initiatives, AIG program goals, and best practices in gifted education. The AIG District Coordinator collaborates with the Curriculum Team and district leaders to advocate for gifted learners and design PD that supports AIG services within the MTSS framework and district goals.

A current priority is quality differentiation. The district partnered with an outside agency to train leadership on differentiated instruction, which includes coaching and classroom observation. AIG teachers are integrated into department meetings, PLCs, staff development, and cross-district collaboration to strengthen gifted services.

Administrators regularly review school data, including AIG student performance, to identify areas for improvement. Data-driven conversations during teacher conferences help shape professional growth plans and inform school improvement goals.

PD is offered through various formats, including the district's back-to-school conference, school and cross-district PLCs, book studies, webinars, and conferences such as NCAGT, PTEC, and NCCAT. Topics include differentiation, critical thinking, social-emotional needs of gifted learners, and problem/project-based learning. AIG-certified teachers meet monthly for team PD and share their learning with school staff through PLCs and coaching.

By offering diverse, ongoing PD opportunities, Stokes County Schools is building teacher capacity to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners across all settings.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Continue to provide local AIG endorsement professional development training course.
- Provide ongoing PD for teachers with AIG licenses or local endorsement.
- Provide ongoing PD for principals
- Continue cross-district AIG Specialists or Designees led gifted education teacher meetings with a focus on specific professional development and collaboration during monthly meetings.
- Provide professional development for all teachers about the social and emotional needs of gifted learners and how to differentiate instruction

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG licensure data		
	* Sign-in sheets, online registrations, and CEU reports	
		* Documentation from gifted education professional development (sign-in sheets, handouts, presentation slides, teacher responses/assignments)

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

Standard 5: Partnerships

Stokes County Schools (850) 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 A/G program to develop strong partnerships.

*** Practice A**

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

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

Stokes County Schools fosters two-way partnerships with parents and guardians to ensure gifted learners' academic and social-emotional needs are met. These partnerships promote shared responsibility and input between families and the school district, recognizing that parent perspectives are essential to program development and improvement.

- Advisory Involvement: The A/G Advisory Board meets annually and includes a diverse group of stakeholders—parents, students, educators (including AIG, EC, EL, and general education), counselors, and administrators. The focus is on gathering feedback to inform program strengths and needed improvements.
- Individualized Communication: A/G Specialists or Designees meet face-to-face with families upon initial identification. Ongoing two-way communication continues throughout the year, with students included in conversations when appropriate.
- Parent Education and Input: Annual A/G Parent Nights at the school level inform families about A/G services and provide space for dialogue. Bi-annual surveys of parents and students gather feedback to improve identification processes, service options, and resources.
- Multiple Engagement Opportunities: Families are invited to participate in enrichment activities, guest speaking, and school-level events such as curriculum nights, A/G family engagement nights, and service projects. Schools are also encouraged to host events that specifically celebrate gifted learners.
- Community Collaboration: Parents and local professionals support career exploration for A/G secondary students through mentorships, shadowing, and internships.

Recognition and Visibility: Family engagement is further encouraged through recognition opportunities at the school level and during the Spotlight Award of Excellence at School Board meetings. Examples of recognition events celebrating A/G student achievements include Math Fair awards, Junior National Honor Society and National Honor Society inductions, Spelling Bee awards, Battle of the Books awards, and other celebrations of student achievement.

*** 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 A/G program and services.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) works to build strong partnerships with community organizations, businesses, and institutions of higher education to support the enrichment, extension, and acceleration of gifted learners. One way the district strengthens these relationships is by including community stakeholders in team meetings to gather input and collaboratively shape programming. Community engagement is further extended through mentorship and internship opportunities with local businesses and groups, providing real-world experiences that align with students' interests and career goals.

SCS actively collaborates with community partners to involve gifted students in a variety of learning experiences, including guest speakers, service projects, field trips, clubs, and special events. In addition, the district works with Forsyth Technical Community College to increase Career & College Promise (CCP) options for high school students and with the College Board to offer professional development for AP teachers.

The district also leverages support from a wide network of community organizations such as local YMCA chapters, churches, Rotary Clubs, government agencies, and arts councils. These partners contribute to programming through sponsorships, volunteerism, and direct engagement with students. SCS maintains a longstanding partnership with the Stokes County Arts Council, which delivers arts programming to all schools and hosts an annual student art show celebrating the diverse talents of SCS students. For the past few years, SCS has worked with community health partners to host an event centered around student mental health, called YOuth Matters. The event is centered around supporting the mental, physical, and emotional health and safety of youth in our communities.

Through these collaborative efforts, Stokes County Schools ensures that gifted students benefit from a comprehensive support system that nurtures both academic and social-emotional development while fostering strong community connections.

* 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.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) has established an AIG Advisory team that plays a vital role in guiding the district's AIG Program. The team meets at least once annually to review, evaluate, and provide feedback on the strengths and areas for improvement within the program. Efforts are made to ensure the advisory team reflects the demographics and diversity of Stokes County Schools by recruiting members from a wide range of backgrounds and stakeholder groups. Representation is drawn from across the district to ensure input that supports the varied needs of gifted learners.

Membership may include AIG parents/guardians, students, AIG Specialists or Designees, regular education teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, school counselors, special program coordinators, and other instructional and support staff. The board also includes community stakeholders such as representatives from institutions of higher education, the local arts council, YMCA, School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), local businesses, and government or civic leaders. This diverse membership ensures a comprehensive view of the AIG program from multiple perspectives. Members are recruited through invitations, recommendations, and public announcements to encourage broad participation.

The AIG Advisory team assists in the development of the local AIG plan, monitors its implementation, and evaluates its overall effectiveness. Feedback gathered during meetings is used to inform revisions to identification practices, service delivery models, and professional development efforts. The District AIG Coordinator facilitates the work and provides updates, data, and professional development as needed to support a deeper understanding of gifted education. Through this collaborative and ongoing process, the advisory board helps ensure the AIG program remains responsive and aligned with the academic and social-emotional needs of all gifted learners in Stokes County.

* 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.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) has a communication plan to ensure all stakeholders are informed about the district's AIG Plan, program policies, and services available to gifted and advanced learners. This plan ensures that students, parents/guardians, staff, and the broader community are informed through a variety of intentional and targeted efforts.

The AIG Plan is made publicly available through multiple platforms, including the district and individual school websites. Hard copies are also available at each school. The plan is also reviewed with students and parents during initial AIG placement and at annual reviews to reinforce understanding of services and expectations. A digital presentation outlining the AIG Plan, program goals, and policies is created and posted on the district's website and AIG Canvas page.

Information about the AIG Plan and program is disseminated through various channels to ensure broad access. These include automated calls, Class DoJo, district and school brochures, email communications, and social media platforms such as the SCS Facebook page. Local media, such as the Stokes News, are also utilized to highlight student accomplishments and community engagement opportunities, building a positive impression of the AIG program. An AIG-specific Canvas page is maintained and regularly updated by the AIG District Coordinator with announcements about events like testing, academic competitions, and enrichment programs.

Intentional efforts are made to reach families in their preferred language. Translation tools and interpreters are available to support communication for non-English speaking families, ensuring that all stakeholders can access and understand important information. The district uses Gen AI tools to assist with multiple languages so that language isn't a barrier for students or families. The AIG program also includes a glossary of acronyms and key terms to ensure clarity and shared understanding among families and staff.

SCS incorporates communication into existing events, such as Open House, curriculum nights, and parent-teacher conferences. Annual AIG group parent meetings are held at the beginning of each academic year, and school-level or district-wide parent nights offer additional opportunities for families to engage with the AIG team and ask questions. Meetings may be conducted virtually or in person to accommodate varying schedules and preferences.

Students are participants in understanding their Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs), and the AIG team works closely with them to ensure they are aware of the academic and enrichment opportunities available to them, such as Duke TIP, math fairs, and local arts events. Printed materials like brochures and fliers are created to explain program policies.

Overall, SCS ensures that communication about the AIG program is ongoing and multi-modal, reflecting a commitment to transparency, family engagement, and access to advanced learning opportunities throughout the year.

* **Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Create opportunities at the school level and district level to improve communication and collaboration with stakeholders.
Improve collaboration and communication regarding SCS AIG Program and Services

Planned Sources of Evidence

* School and district websites
* Meeting agendas and minutes
* Flyers, brochures, social media

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

Stokes County Schools (850) 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.

Throughout the fall semester, Stokes County Schools (SCS) gathered feedback from a wide range of stakeholders to inform the revision of its AIG Plan. Input was collected from parents/guardians, students, educators, families, and community members through surveys, meetings, and informal dialogue. This stakeholder feedback, along with recommendations from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) from previous AIG plan cycles, was carefully considered by the district AIG committee during the revision process.

To ensure data-driven decision-making, the district analyzed multiple data points including student formative and summative assessment results, to identify patterns in academic growth and proficiency. Demographic data, North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey results, and existing programming practices were also reviewed. This comprehensive analysis helped identify areas most in need of improvement and directly shaped the updates made to the AIG Plan.

The revised plan reflects a commitment to improving practices aligned with the NC AIG Program Standards and focuses on addressing identified gaps. Once the revisions were finalized, the District AIG Coordinator presented the updated plan to the Stokes County Schools Board of Education. Upon receiving local board approval, the plan was submitted to the NCDPI for review, as required by state legislation.

Ongoing evaluation is a critical component of the district's AIG program. The AIG Advisory team, composed of varied stakeholders, meets to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and progress toward established goals. This evaluation process includes a review of student data (formative, benchmark, and summative assessments), demographic trends, policies, procedures, and the alignment of the program with the district's mission and vision.

The AIG Advisory team will analyze the following key data sources and program elements:

- AIG identification and service data from PowerSchool (Infinite Campus)
- EVAAS teacher and student growth data
- Standardized testing results and other student achievement measures
- Feedback from professional development specific to AIG services
- Effectiveness of service delivery options across all grade levels
- Stakeholder feedback from surveys and meetings
- Fidelity of implementation across the six NC AIG Standards

- Annual review of the AIG mission and vision statements for alignment with district goals
- Efforts to increase the number of fully licensed AIG teachers in grades K-12

If mid-cycle adjustments are warranted based on this analysis, the District AIG Coordinator will propose changes to the Board of Education for approval. Once approved, revisions will be updated in the official AIG Plan and published on the district website for transparency and accessibility.

This ongoing cycle of feedback, analysis, and refinement ensures that the SCS AIG Plan remains responsive to the evolving needs of gifted learners and their families, and that programming continues to align with both district priorities and state expectations.

* **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.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) has established a system to monitor the implementation of the local AIG Plan and program. This system is led by the AIG District Coordinator, who serves as the primary overseer of both program fidelity and policy adherence across all school sites. The Coordinator works closely with school administration, AIG Specialists or Designees in each school and provides leadership, guidance, and oversight to ensure that what is documented in the local AIG Plan is consistently implemented in practice.

Regular communication and collaboration are components of this monitoring process. The AIG District Coordinator meets with AIG Specialists or Designees at least quarterly, and more often as needed, to review identification procedures, service delivery options, curriculum differentiation, and professional development. These collaborative meetings ensure alignment between school-level practices and district-wide goals, and provide opportunities to discuss challenges, share successes, and determine next steps. Information is also gathered through observations, teacher feedback, and student data to support continuous program evaluation.

To ensure consistent and systematic monitoring, SCS will utilize a variety of tools and processes.

- Facilitate the use of monitoring checklists at the school and district level to support AIG Specialists or Designees to ensure all processes and guidelines of the AIG program are completed.
- Maintain a Google Sheet at each school containing AIG students, identification, and services. This is updated throughout the school year.
- Maintain a Google Sheet at each school containing all students who achieved a Level 5 on EOG or EOC to ensure we are meeting the needs of all students.
- Guide reflection and planning with AIG PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- Collect formal and informal feedback from staff, parents, students, and community stakeholders.

AIG Specialists and Designees receive ongoing support, training, and leadership opportunities through professional development, mentoring, and shared leadership roles within PLCs. The district fosters collaboration across schools to promote consistency in services and to develop teacher leaders in gifted education.

To ensure transparency and stakeholder involvement, the AIG Advisory team, composed of educators, parents, students, community members, and higher education representatives, meets annually to evaluate implementation and offer feedback.

If mid-cycle revisions to the AIG Plan are needed due to shifts in local or state policy, changes in student needs, or evaluation findings, the AIG District Coordinator will collaborate with stakeholders to develop updates. These revisions will be presented to the local Board of Education for approval. Upon approval, the updated plan will be shared with stakeholders via the district website, the AIG Google Site, and other communication channels.

Through these efforts, SCS ensures that AIG program implementation is ongoing, transparent, and responsive to the needs of gifted learners, while remaining in alignment with both local priorities and state expectations.

* **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.

Stokes County Schools develops the AIG budget plan through collaboration between the AIG District Coordinator and the district Finance Director to ensure alignment with the goals of the Local AIG Plan, state policies, and the identified needs of students and stakeholders. This plan is informed by a thorough analysis of program priorities, such as staffing, resources, and professional development, while ensuring that all expenditures directly support the implementation and effectiveness of the comprehensive AIG program.

Each year, the AIG District Coordinator works with the Finance Director to develop a budget based on the state's AIG allotment (034 funding code) and district-level priorities. This budget prioritizes personnel by funding the salaries and benefits of AIG Specialists, who are critical to the implementation and monitoring of gifted services. In addition, funds are strategically allocated to support instructional resources, professional learning, and student enrichment opportunities. For example, during the previous plan cycle, the funds supported the district's first class of local certification for AIG teachers. The funds have been used for registration fees and travel for AIG teachers to attend the NCAGT Conference, covered transportation costs for students participating in the county math fair, and paid for substitute teachers to allow AIG staff to attend training and facilitate student enrichment events.

To ensure fiscal accountability and effective implementation, the AIG District Coordinator regularly reviews the 034 budget report in collaboration with the Finance Director and other district staff. These reviews, conducted monthly or quarterly, help confirm that spending aligns with the Local AIG Plan and allows the district to make adjustments as needed based on emerging needs or program goals.

All expenditures are transparently connected to the goals of the Local AIG Plan. Strategic spending is designed to maximize impact on student outcomes, ensure access to services, and build capacity within the district to sustain and grow the AIG program.

Stokes County Schools does not receive any additional funds for the AIG program.

* **Practice D**
Maintains and analyzes multiple sources of student achievement and growth data, as well as annual dropout data for AIG students. Data is disaggregated to recognize patterns and trends over time and inform mindsets, policies, and practices for equity and excellence.

Stokes County Schools uses a consistent, data-informed approach to monitor and evaluate the AIG program. The AIG District Coordinator works with the Accountability and Student Information Directors to access and analyze data related to achievement, growth, demographics, and dropout rates. Data is disaggregated by student groups to guide planning, improve services, and address disproportionalities.

AIG Specialists or Designees analyze classroom and school-level data, including EVAAS reports, EOG/EOC scores, and CogAT results, to tailor instruction and ensure student needs are met. PowerSchool is used to maintain accurate AIG records, with specialists responsible for roster management and correct coding.

District-level data reviews occur quarterly for elementary and at least once each semester for middle and high schools. High school data includes AP course completion, college acceptances, scholarship awards, dual enrollment, and internships. Dropout data for AIG students is monitored, and follow-ups are conducted to identify areas for support and early intervention.

Multiple data sources inform instructional practices, service delivery, and program decisions. Key findings are shared annually with the AIG Advisory team, district leadership, and the Board of Education to guide continuous improvement and align with the goals of the AIG Plan.

*** 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.

Stokes County Schools has established a system to monitor referral, identification, services, and retention within the AIG program to ensure access and support for all student populations. The AIG District Coordinator collaborates with AIG Specialists or Designees and district leaders to regularly analyze CogAT, EOG, EVAAS, universal screener, demographic, and school-level data. This process helps identify trends in representation, especially for underrepresented groups, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically diverse, and twice-exceptional students.

A universal screening process is in place, along with using all three CogAT domains (nonverbal, verbal, and quantitative), with an emphasis on nonverbal data to support in identifying underrepresented populations.. Students meeting set thresholds (e.g., Nonverbal 85+ with Verbal or Quantitative 50+) are added to a screening pool for further review. Additional consideration is given through student portfolios as a non-traditional identification tool.

Referrals can be submitted year-round by teachers, parents, or students, ensuring open access to the nomination process. Data is routinely discussed in PLCs to prevent overlooked candidates and to support informed decisions during identification. The district has also lowered percentile thresholds in Stage 2 of identification to increase inclusivity and added a portfolio component to support broader representation.

Data on referrals, identification, services, and retention is reviewed quarterly at the district level and in collaboration with school teams and MTSS structures. These reviews help identify any disproportionality, assess service effectiveness, and ensure alignment with AIG program goals. Though the district cannot directly track Economically Disadvantaged Students due to privacy laws, school-level teams remain mindful of the district's high poverty rate and its potential impact on representation.

Program access data, such as AP, dual enrollment, and honors course participation, is also analyzed to assess student engagement and retention. Findings are used to guide programming improvements and shared with stakeholders annually to support transparency and continuous improvement.

*** 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.

Stokes County Schools maintains licensure and certification data for all educators serving AIG students through a collaborative effort between the AIG District Coordinator and the Director of Human Resources. The Human Resources Department is responsible for tracking and updating licensure status for all staff, including those with an AIG add-on license or working toward certification.

The AIG District Coordinator partners with Human Resources and school administrators during the staffing and teacher allotment process to ensure AIG students are supported by qualified educators. This collaboration includes reviewing licensure data, identifying gaps in certification, and targeting professional development opportunities aligned with the goals of the Local AIG Plan.

A centralized spreadsheet is maintained and regularly updated by the AIG District Coordinator to track AIG-certified teachers, those in progress, and relevant support staff across all grade levels. This information is shared with principals and district leaders to assist in making informed hiring decisions, ensuring placement of AIG students, and identifying school-specific AIG needs.

The district is actively working to increase the number of AIG-certified educators and strengthen staff capacity through targeted professional learning. Participation in AIG-focused professional development is monitored, and staff progress toward licensure is aligned with the district's strategic goals for expanding and improving AIG services.

*** 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.

Stokes County Schools will gather formal and informal feedback from a wide range of stakeholders to support the continuous improvement of the AIG program. Feedback will be collected through district and school AIG advisory groups, annual parent meetings, student and parent surveys, informal discussions, and school-level data reviews. Additional input will be gathered through instructional coaches' strategic plan reviews, MTSS and PLC meetings, and monitoring of program implementation and fidelity.

Surveys will be designed to reflect the standards in the Local AIG Plan and will be administered periodically to parents, students, and staff. Growth data from EOG and EOC assessments, as well as AIG identification trends, will be used to evaluate program impact and inform decision-making. AIG Specialists or Designees will use this feedback at the school level to guide improvements, while district-level data and input will be shared with the AIG Advisory Council for broader program development. Honors course evaluations will also be reviewed to ensure advanced learning indicators are met and instructional practices in honors courses are reflective of best practices for meeting the needs of AIG students. This ongoing feedback process will help ensure consistency and fidelity in service delivery across all schools.

The data gathered from surveys, stakeholder feedback, and student performance measures will be used to inform ongoing development and refinement of the AIG program. Trends in identification, service delivery, and student growth will help determine areas of strength and those needing improvement. This information will guide professional development priorities, resource allocation, and adjustments to identification practices to ensure access. By using data to drive decisions, Stokes County Schools aims to strengthen program effectiveness and better meet the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners.

*** Practice H**
Shares local AIG program evaluation data with school and district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and other community stakeholders. Stokes County Schools will use a variety of communication strategies to share AIG program evaluation data with key stakeholder audiences while maintaining confidentiality and adhering to FERPA guidelines. An annual AIG fact sheet will be developed by the AIG District Coordinator in collaboration with AIG Specialists and will include student achievement and growth data, demographic information, and an overview of services. This fact sheet will be shared with parents, students, school and district leadership, the AIG Advisory Council, and community partners. It will be made available both in print and online on the district's AIG website. Additionally, school-specific AIG data will be provided annually to administrators. A brochure highlighting key aspects of the AIG program will be distributed at parent meetings, informational sessions, and community events to ensure families and community members are informed and engaged.

*** Practice I**

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents/guardians through established written policies, procedures, and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

Stokes County Schools (SCS) ensures the rights of AIG students and their families are fully respected and upheld in accordance with Article 9B, Parents' Right to Know, and the district's policies regarding consent for assessment, placement, and reassessment. The district is committed to providing clear, transparent, and accessible communication about the identification, placement, and services provided to AIG students.

Informed Consent for Assessment, Placement, and Reassessment:

At the initial stage of identification, parents/guardians are required to provide informed consent for assessment, which includes detailed explanations of the evaluation process and the potential for AIG placement. Parents/guardians are also asked to provide informed consent for their child to receive AIG services and for reassessment, should additional evaluation be necessary. This information is provided through the district website, brochures, and a formal consent process at each school. The AIG Specialist or Designee is responsible for maintaining records of the consent forms and ensuring that these are kept in a secure and confidential location. The consent process also includes detailed discussions with parents/guardians to ensure understanding of how their child's performance will be evaluated and how placement decisions will be made.

Annual Review Process:

The AIG Specialist or Designee will meet with parents/guardians annually to review the student's performance, program services, and whether reassessment is necessary. Feedback from parents/guardians is solicited during this meeting to ensure the services provided are meeting the child's needs. If any changes in placement or services are needed, they are discussed and agreed upon with the parent/guardian's consent.

Transfer Students from Other LEAs:

SCS recognizes that students transferring from other districts or states with documented evidence of AIG services are entitled to continued support. The district honors the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children and ensures that AIG services are maintained for these students. The district evaluates the documentation of identification from the previous school, and parents/guardians are invited to a conference to discuss placement and service options. If the student was already identified as AIG in the previous district, the same services will be provided, with adjustments made to ensure alignment with SCS criteria. Parents are notified of their child's status and are provided the opportunity to review and discuss services.

Procedures for Resolving Disagreements:

In the event of a disagreement concerning the identification, services, or placement of an AIG student, SCS has a clear, multi-level process for resolving disputes:

- Level I – School Site Review: If parents/guardians have a concern, they may request a meeting with the principal and the Gifted Education Review Committee (GERC) at the school within 10 days of the written request. The principal and committee will review the issue and attempt to resolve the matter during this meeting.
- Level II – Administrative Review: If the issue is not resolved at the school site, parents/guardians can appeal in writing to the AIG District Coordinator or Superintendent, who will review the case and provide a written response within 10 days.
- Level III – Superintendent and/or School Board Review: If the disagreement persists, parents/guardians may appeal to the SCS Board of Education, following the district's Student and Parent Grievance Procedure Policy 1740/4010. If necessary, the matter may be escalated to the state level, where an administrative law judge may be involved.

Stakeholder Rights and Communication:

All procedures and rights are clearly articulated and communicated to parents/guardians through various means, including the AIG Parent Handbook, the AIG Specialist Handbook, and during parent conferences. Parents/guardians receive documentation about their rights, including a Procedures to Resolve Differences form, Consent for Placement, Consent for Testing, Consent for Differences, and the Annual Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). These documents are shared at the time

of initial placement and at annual meetings. Parents/guardians are also informed of their right to request reassessment or request that their child retake the CogAT test once every two years if they feel it is necessary.

Confidentiality and FERPA Compliance:

SCS is committed to protecting the confidentiality of all student data. All records, including achievement and aptitude scores, are kept secure and are only shared with authorized personnel. In compliance with FERPA, data regarding individual students is not disclosed without prior written consent from the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians have the right to access their child's AIG records at any time.

Comprehensive Communication Strategies:

The district uses a variety of communication methods to ensure that all stakeholders, school personnel, district personnel, students, parents/guardians, families, and the community are kept informed about the AIG program. Information is shared through the district website, printed brochures, fact sheets, and annual program reviews. The information provided includes AIG student achievement data, services offered, and demographic data. Communication is also offered in multiple languages to accommodate diverse families within the district. Feedback is gathered through surveys, focus groups, and advisory committees to continuously improve the program.

By adhering to these procedures, Stokes County Schools ensures that AIG students and their families are well-informed, involved in the decision-making process, and supported in a way that respects their rights and addresses their needs effectively.

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* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

- AIG Advisory Team continues to analyze data to ensure under-represented populations are being properly identified and served equitably.
- AIG coordinator with support from the Director of Accountability and Testing will provide AIG growth data so that schools can monitor the progress of their AIG students.
- Surveys to elicit feedback will be given more frequently than every three years as has been the pattern in the past.

Planned Sources of Evidence

- * Stokes County Schools education budget reports
- * Shared data spreadsheets that show AIG student growth
- * Survey results

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
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Stokes County Schools (850) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:

06/16/2025 

AIG Related Documents**Stokes County Schools (850) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0**

Type	Required Documents Document Template	Document/Link
Local Board of Education Approval Signatures [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	 <u>Local Board of Education Approval Template</u>	 <u>2025 - 2028 SCS AIG Plan Approval</u>
Type	Optional Documents Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>2025 - 2028 SCS AIG Forms</u>
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	

Glossary

Stokes County Schools (850) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Phrase	Definition
Academically Gifted (AG)	Students who have demonstrated high academic performance. AM (Academically Gifted - in Math) AR (Academically Gifted - in Reading)
Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG):	Students who are demonstrating high intellectual capacity and high academic performance. *AI - Designation in Powerschool
Intellectually Gifted (IG):	Students who have demonstrated high intellectual capacity but have not yet demonstrated high academic performance. The purposeful inclusion of Intellectually Gifted (IG) students is addressed in this plan and is a pathway different from those used to typically identify Academically Gifted (AG) students. Intellectual giftedness is an intellectual ability significantly higher than average and may involve a generally high ability or a single superior criterion. Gifted experts describe IG students
Student Achievement:	Indication of a student's knowledge may be shown through a standardized test score or an End of Grade/End of Course test score (90th percentile or above).
Student Aptitude:	Indication of a student's capacity for learning that involves reasoning, problem-solving, memory, etc. Aptitude may be shown through standardized testing as demonstrated abilities in the 90th to the 99th percentile range.
Student Interest:	Indication of a student's focus areas and/or curiosity may be shown through a formal interest inventory/survey, an informal interview, or documentation of a student's particular passion. Interest may also be demonstrated through student's participation in extracurricular activities.
Student Motivation to Learn:	Indication of a student's commitment to pursue learning experiences may be shown through school and/or outside of school activities. With some students, this area may be muted by unfavorable environmental or experiential circumstances. For students, who have often been called "underachievers," an individual case study may be important to reflect a student's specific area(s) of need (Coleman and Gallagher, 1995).
Student Performance:	Indication of a student's demonstrated mastery may be shown through work samples, portfolios, grades, or other authentic assessment strategies.
AIG Designee:	A qualified individual who has been designated by the school or district administration to perform functions or make decisions on behalf of the AIG Specialist when the specialist is unavailable or when responsibilities are shared. The designee might be an instructional coach, school counselor, administrator, or lead teacher who has received training or guidance in AIG processes. The designee should be knowledgeable about AIG policies, the North Carolina AIG Program Standards, and local procedure