

**Richmond County Schools**  
**Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan**  
**Effective 2016-2019**

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 07-JUN-16

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Richmond County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs and relate to the categories related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C-150.5). These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what an LEA should have in place, and guide LEAs to improve their programs.

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs and align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2016-2019. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

***For 2016-2019, Richmond County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Richmond County Schools Vision for local AIG program:** Richmond County Schools believes in AIG "All day- Every day!" Our vision is that, "All students in Richmond County Schools will receive a 21st Century education, empowering them to lead productive lives in a complex and changing world. Our mission is to partner with families and community to produce graduates who are able to create, communicate, collaborate and think critically.

**Sources of funding for local AIG program (as of 2016)**

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
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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**

Articulates and disseminates the procedures for AIG student identification, including screening, referral, and identification processes for all grade levels to school personnel, parents/families, students, and the community-at-large.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools is determined to provide our community and stakeholders with relevant ongoing information about our policies and procedures for AIG identification and placement.

The AIG Specialists, in conjunction with the coordinator, disseminate information so that established processes and procedures are concisely communicated to stakeholders. We realize information needs to be provided to the stakeholders through multiple means such as a website, newsletters, our phone connect system and brochures. Events spotlighting gifted learners are posted on Twitter, Facebook and Snapchat. Our Public Information Officer also consistently provides information to our local news paper. In addition to these forms of communication, we highlight ideas and data about our gifted program at our local Board of Education meetings which are televised to our community.

AIG Specialists provide parents with an informational handbook that articulates the referral and identification processes, as well as the differentiated service options that are implemented in Richmond County Schools. The AIG Specialists are at the open house meetings to provide information to parents about the AIG program; they are also visible in schools on our two parent teacher conference days.

Materials are also available in the student's native language. The ESL Coordinator works closely with the AIG Specialists to ensure that parents are supported in their native language in regards to paperwork and meetings. Specialists use the school ESL translator for parent meetings as needed.

### Screening Procedure:

The screening process for AIG identification begins with a review of all students to determine which students may need further assessment and/or differentiated services. All students that are screened and/or show a need for testing will be placed on the Screening Roster which includes the student's demographic data and tracks the student's test scores. The Screening Roster is used as a tool to transfer student information from year to year and for the transfer to the next school.

Screening procedures in K – 2 will use the Middle of Year and End of Year mCLASS data for TRC.

- Kindergarten: TRC Level I
- 1st Grade: TRC Level L or M
- 2nd Grade TRC Level: P or Q

In addition to the reading TRC score, we also look at the Middle of Year and End of Year math

assessment. Students that demonstrate exceptionally high mathematical understanding based on the math assessment will be screened.

In grades 3 – 12, all students scoring a level 5 on the reading, math or science EOG / EOC will be screened for identification.

Third graders will be screened. AIG Specialists develop a "screening pool" to list the third graders that demonstrate scores in the top 20% of TRC from mClass or 76% or higher on the third grade Beginning of the Grade (BOG) test and proficiency on the second grade math assessment. The third graders who demonstrate a need will then be given the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) following notification provided to the parents/guardians regarding the assessment. Results will be shared with the parents along with recommendations for further testing or placement in the AIG program.

AIG Specialists inform all teachers and administrators about the screening, referral and identification process through a mandated meeting with an informational PowerPoint presentation during the first six weeks of each academic year. In addition to this meeting, newsletters and a handbook to faculty and staff with AIG information will be disseminated.

Not only do we provide handbooks and information through a variety of social media avenues, we collaborate consistently in PLCs. At these meetings we discuss the needs of students and examine data that is used by the AIG Specialists to begin the referral process.

School administrators also work with the specialists to ensure that communication is ongoing about our gifted processes.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue meetings with classroom teachers and school administrators
- update our handbooks with a timeline so parents are informed of upcoming events

### **Practice B**

States and employs multiple criteria for AIG student identification. These criteria incorporate measures that reveal student aptitude, student achievement, or potential to achieve in order to develop a comprehensive profile for each student. These measures include both non-traditional and traditional measures that are based on current theory and research.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools realizes that students can be academically, intellectually or academically and intellectually gifted. Having students with these varying needs requires a strong understanding of the gifted learner.

Explanation of Gifted Designations:

Students that are Academically Gifted (AG) (high achievement in reading and math) or Academically Gifted in Reading or Math (AR or AM) show potential in academic endeavors. They excel academically and often find the work easy and enjoyable. These students require rigorous academic experiences that provide them with complex materials. These students traditionally understand

curriculum quickly and need curriculum compacting to ensure they grow as learners. These students may be strong in reading, math or both which is evidenced by the achievement scores on assessments.

Students that are Intellectually Gifted (IG) often have high intelligence scores but may not achieve in content areas. These students may have difficulty with tasks like organization, time management, cooperative collaboration, etc., that cause them to struggle academically. AIG Specialists often need to advocate for these kids with classroom teachers because they are often weak academically.

Students that are Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) have high intelligence based on ability assessment scores and succeed academically with high achievement assessment scores. This comprehensive profile using multiple criteria allows our AIG identification to align with the potential and strengths of the learner. The evidence collected helps to better align service options with students.

Below is the criteria from the comprehensive profile that indicates the appropriate designation:

**Academically Gifted in Reading (AR) Criteria:**

The criteria to receive the designation of AR is to have an 89% or higher on a reading achievement test and 89% or higher on an ability test.

**Academically Gifted in Math (AM) Criteria:**

The criteria to receive the designation of AM is to have an 89% or higher on a math achievement test and 89% or higher on an ability test.

**Academically Gifted (AG) Criteria:**

The criteria to receive the designation of AG is to have an 89% or higher on a reading and a math achievement test and 89% or higher on an ability test.

**Intellectually Gifted (IG) Criteria:**

The criteria to receive the designation of IG is to have 98 – 99% on a composite score of an ability test.

**Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) Criteria:**

The criteria to receive the designation of AI is to have 98 – 99% on a composite score or partial battery of an achievement test and a composite of 98 – 99% on an ability test.

**Identification:**

We are aware of the varying abilities and diverse needs of these learners. As a result, Richmond County Schools' AIG identification processes reflect a comprehensive profile that includes ability, achievement, referrals, portfolios and teacher observation. We exercise flexibility by building on students' strengths through subtest and composite scores across multiple criteria using a comprehensive profile for identification; this includes qualitative and quantitative measures based on a point system.

Pathway 1 addresses the designation of Intellectually Gifted (IG) and Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI). For the IG designation, the student is expected to score 98-99% on an ability test. To

receive the designation of AI, the student is expected to have a composite score of 98 – 99% on ability and achievement assessments.

Another trajectory for identification is Pathway 2. This addresses the designation of Academically Gifted (AG), Academically Gifted in Math (AM) or Academically Gifted in Reading (AR). A student is identified with a composite ability score of 89% or higher and an achievement score of 89% or higher.

Pathway 3 utilizes multiple criteria to identify a student as either AG, AR or AM. Three points are awarded for a test score of 97-99% , two points for a test score of 93-96% and one point for 89-92%. Qualitative data receives one point for each criterion that exhibits exemplar ratings on our rubric. A maximum of two qualitative points are allowed. Six points total are required to be identified for one of these gifted designations.

#### Qualitative Data

Ability Tests- AIG Specialists will administer the following ability tests for identification. Composite and/or battery scores will be utilized to provide data for the comprehensive profile.

We use a variety of ability tests. The Comprehensive Profile allows us to gather data from subtests and composite scores. This ensures that students are not prevented services based on areas that are strengths.

The ability tests used are:

Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT/NNAT2)  
Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT)  
Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)

Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – Qualifying scores can be from composite arrangements or individual batteries.

Below are arrangements for possible points:

Composite scores are derived from a combination of the following subtests:

Verbal, quantitative and nonverbal  
Verbal and quantitative  
Verbal and nonverbal  
Quantitative and nonverbal

Individual subtest scores may also be used to determine student eligibility.

Verbal  
Quantitative  
Nonverbal

Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) - Qualifying scores can be from composite arrangements or individual batteries.

Composite scores are derived from a combination of the following subtests:

## Verbal and nonverbal

Individual battery scores may also be utilized to determine student eligibility.

Verbal

Nonverbal

Naglieri (NNAT/NNAT2) – Nonverbal score

Nonverbal ability score

Achievement Tests- One of the following achievement tests may be used for identification. To ensure that one score will not prevent a student from accessing gifted services, partial batteries, total achievement scores or subject composite scores will be utilized data for the comprehensive profile.

North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG)/ North Carolina End-of-Course (EOC)

Beginning of Grade Reading

Reading

Math

Science

Stanford 10 Achievement Test

Total achievement

Partial battery

Reading total

Math total

IOWA Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

Total achievement

Reading total

Math total (with or without computation)

Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Test (WJNU)

Total achievement

Reading total

Math total

In developing the quantitative part of our comprehensive profile for identification, ability test scores are comprised of any combination of composite scores and/or any subtest scores. The achievement test data should reflect a total score in a subject area and/or total achievement.

## Qualitative Data

Referral documents are provided to parents, teachers, community members or students who are nominating another student or themselves. These referral documents will be evaluated based upon a rubric to determine if this evidence supports a need for identification. A maximum of one point will be

awarded for referrals on the AIG Comprehensive Profile.

#### Parent Referral

The parent referral provides an opportunity for a parent to nominate their child for gifted services. The parent referral will include written responses that provide evidence by citing specific examples, a checklist and a learning style inventory.

#### Teacher Referral

A teacher may refer a student based on collected evidence that supports gifted behaviors and a need for differentiated services. Teacher referrals may be submitted after the first six weeks of the academic year. Referrals consist of three components: a points-based checklist, a portfolio that contains samples of exemplary student work indicating giftedness and a brief summary that justifies and cites specific examples of gifted behaviors.

#### Peer Referral

A student may refer another student. The referring student will write an essay that specifically explains and provides examples of gifted behaviors and academic qualities that would justify their recommendation for gifted services. A peer referral packet will be provided upon request. This packet will require the peer to justify the referral.

#### Self-Referral

A student may refer him or herself for gifted services. The self-referral will include a checklist and a written analysis that explains differentiated needs and cites specific examples.

#### Portfolio

Enclosed in a portfolio are samples that reflect a student's ability. A well-developed portfolio will be assessed using a rubric. A maximum of one point will be awarded on the AIG Comprehensive Profile for identification if the student exceeds expectation on the rubric.

The portfolio includes three evidences that address the following gifted behaviors:

- Advanced language
- Analytical thinking
- Motivation
- Leadership
- Humor
- Empathy
- Creativity

#### Observation Profile

The AIG Specialist or classroom teacher can complete an observation profile addressing the Twelve Traits of Giftedness. A maximum of one point will be awarded on the AIG Comprehensive Profile for identification if the profile indicates a strength in 8 of the 12 areas.



\*Twelve Traits of Giftedness Profile from the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented and Dr. Mary Ruth Coleman.

#### Gifted Rating Scale

Specialists will utilize a gifted rating scale to determine strengths in areas like ability, application of knowledge, creative thinking and motivation. This scale awards four points to each of these areas. Students will receive a maximum of one point if they score 12 – 16 points on the rating scale.

#### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Headcount data reflects that Richmond County Schools is disproportionate with the identification of underrepresented populations. Current data reflects that the AIG program is serving 28% nonwhite students when the total enrollment population is 56% nonwhite students.

The AIG Specialists and Coordinator monitor and track screening and referral data to ensure that we are working to identify our underrepresented populations.

During monthly AIG PLCs, we discuss the data and put steps in place to ensure that we are screening students in our underrepresented groups.

The identification practices under Pathway 3 allow for multiple criteria. This identification pathway is flexible with data by allowing composite or individual battery scores to be used. This also allows students to demonstrate a need through qualitative measures. The flexibility in this pathway provides more access for our traditionally under-served populations.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- develop interview questions to use as part of our Comprehensive Profile
- investigate identification methods for students that are technological thinkers and struggle with testing
- increase nurturing opportunities
- communicate with teachers the identification procedures and how to best serve gifted students

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** The fundamental expectation that screening, referral and identification processes are consistent is paramount in the RCS gifted program.

In an effort to develop consistency in our screening, referral and identification processes, AIG

Specialists have a resource Livebinder with clear procedures. Adherence to these guidelines is substantiated, with documentation presented, at monthly PLC meetings.

Compliance and consistency is monitored through random visits to the site school by the district coordinator.

In an effort to ensure that screening and identification practices are consistent, AIG Specialists submit screening rosters to the AIG District Coordinator. The screening roster requires the AIG Specialists to provide the origin of the referral; parent, teacher, screening pool based on test data, etc. This monitoring informs screening, referral and identification processes that need to be strengthened.

In an effort to strengthen this practice, we will:

- examine data monthly on the screening and referral processes
- improve our screening sheets by adding information that ensures that processes are done in a timely manner
- offer strategic professional development opportunities for all school level identification team members regarding identification procedures
- require training modules for all faculty members for consistency in referrals
- continue internal auditing of AIG school records by district coordinator and peer monitoring

### **Practice E**

Maintains documentation that explains the identification process and service options for individual AIG students, which is reviewed annually with parents/families.

**District Response:** Communicating policies that protect and inform our parents and students is critical. Richmond County Schools maintains documentation that explains the identification process and service options available to the students in our district. The parent handbook articulates the various paths to identification, service options available to our gifted population and provides accessible a Review to Disagree document concerning placement.

An AIG Livebinder is used to store all informational documents about the program; as well as, all AIG paperwork which ensures that AIG Specialists use the same paperwork across the district. The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP), Decision About Identification and other forms are used to inform parents about decisions.

AIG Specialists will screen all new students who enroll in Richmond County Schools. The AIG Specialists will work closely with the school data managers to ensure screening is done in a timely manner. The school data managers will notify the AIG Specialists when a student enrolls into the school. This will allow the specialists to review the data and determine if the student needs AIG services. The AIG Specialists are notified if parents have indicated previous services so that placement for AIG can be seamless.

Parents will meet with the AIG Specialist annually to review the DEP / IDEP. This review will provide the parent with an explanation of services and provide the Review to Disagreement procedures. Parents will receive copies of all paperwork that is placed in the AIG folder at the schools.

7/7/2016

To strengthen this practice, we will

- implement AIG student- led conferences
- continue high school planning with parents and students to create a four- year plan
- continue to monitor all paperwork to ensure that annual reviews occur

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Consider using student interviews as a part of the identification process, as well as digital portfolios of student work.

Using typical as well as atypical standardized measures builds a strong body of evidence.

**Sources of Evidence:**

Information Packets

Brochures

PowerPoint

Website link

Alert Now Message

CogAT

NNAT2

IOWA

OLSAT

Stanford 10

NC EOG/EOC

Portfolio

Referrals: Parent, Teacher, Peer, & Self

Observation Profile

## **Standard 2: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction**

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

### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools addresses differentiation through alignment to the NCSCOS. AIG Specialists design differentiated instruction that enriches and extends Common Core and Essential Standards, which are continuously improved to ensure they are relevant and accommodate all gifted learners.

The AIG Specialists collaborate within the whole school to design quality instruction based on the NCSCOS. This is evident through teacher training and support provided by the AIG Specialists within the professional learning community setting.

Currently, AIG Specialists use the collaborative coaching model to work with classroom teachers on differentiated strategies. In PLC, the coaching model allows specialists to provide instructional support for teachers that assist them with meeting the needs of our gifted learners more sufficiently. This support can be in the form of co-teaching a lesson to model differentiated strategies, observation of a lesson done by the classroom teacher with follow-up to discuss how to strengthen the strategies utilized or modeling a lesson in the teachers' classroom to allow the teacher to observe the strategies implemented.

The AIG Specialists assist classroom teachers with unit plans that infuse differentiated strategies. The specialists will provide rigorous complex resources in all content areas that the classroom teacher can use to provide challenging learning opportunities. This supports our philosophy that AIG students are "AIG all day every day."

Not only do we support differentiation in the classrooms, but AIG Specialists also provide differentiation for AIG students in several formats.

The K-5 module includes pull-outs, where AIG students meet with the AIG Specialist on a weekly basis. The consultative model is also implemented in certain elementary schools to meet the needs of our gifted population. Conceptual units are taught that integrate all NC Standard Courses of Study. An example of one unit that was taught was a unit on the Economic Principles. This unit integrated standards from ELA, math and social studies. Students had to research and analyze stocks.

The middle school setting addresses differentiation through the consultative model which includes individual conferences, collaboration with classroom teachers, co-teaching and periodic pull-outs. Math compacting is done in middle school to allow students the opportunity to take Math I as an 8th grader. When the AIG Specialists are co-teaching in the classroom, they extend the NC Standard

Course of Study by adding complex text, writing and research, or compacting information. To supplement the conceptual curriculum units, literature circles are utilized to differentiate the text. We hope to do more compacting in the future and allow middle school students the opportunity to begin taking high school courses.

In high school, we offer differentiation through honors, Advanced Placement and community college classes. Increasing our honors options has been a focus in our high school and currently we have many arts and CTE courses that have added differentiated units to create an honors option for students. Not only are advanced courses offered but curriculum materials are delivered in a One to One environment. Teachers differentiate by utilizing Canvas for their courses. Modules are developed and assigned based on the needs of the learners in the class.

The conceptual units are created in the summer by teachers who work with Academic Coaches and AIG Specialists. These conceptual units include pacing, anchor and supplemental text, resources, strategies, unpacking curriculum documents, etc. The units are currently stored on a livebinder. This summer our revision will be completed and documents will move to Canvas. In Canvas, teachers will have access to pacing, conceptual unit plans, text, district initiatives, reading and math strategies, station support and writing support. As teachers create these units, they will include materials that assist with differentiation.

To continue to strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue ongoing curriculum revisions in all subject areas
- continue to provide professional development on differentiation
- continue to co-teach in classrooms with gifted clusters
- provide middle school students that need curriculum compacting the opportunity to take high school courses

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools is conscientious of meeting the needs of our diverse gifted learners. We utilize multiple inventories that incorporate interests, multiple intelligences, Habits of Mind and learning styles to develop profiles of our gifted learners. AIG Specialists attend to the needs of the gifted learners and advocate for them to receive differentiated, rigorous tasks in classes. The AIG Specialists are aware and encourage their diverse learning modalities with our curriculum units. Through these endeavors, we are able to better understand the diverse needs of our students and we will utilize instructional practices that augment their interest learning styles and abilities.

The AIG program uses a variety of research-based instructional practices to meet the needs of our diverse gifted learners. We align all instruction to the NCSCOS and ensure that differentiated experiences occur in our gifted and regular classrooms. We design instruction for our gifted learners through conceptual based units. In these units we also use a variety of instructional practices that meet the needs of our learners such as, tasks that utilize multiple intelligences, problem based learning, Paideia seminars/Junior Great Books and literature circles. Unit design allows for real world experiences and provides choice with projects. The AIG Specialists facilitate the learning

opportunities gifted students are provided in the AIG classroom.

#### Elementary

In addition to rigorous conceptual units, the elementary schools collaborate with Discovery Place for Kids and Camp Millstone 4-H Camp to provide hands-on, real world learning experiences. These places bring in speakers as well as provide curriculum endeavors like exploring life cycles with our baby chick project. This project requires students to keep scientific logs and study the process of how a chick hatches from an egg.

#### Middle

Math in the middle school is compacted to allow students the opportunity to take Math I in the Eighth grade. This supports the students that have a mathematical intelligence.

In the ELA classes, literature circles are completed every six weeks. The students select the book they want to read and engage in collaborative book discussions.

#### Summer Enrichment Opportunities

Our elementary and middle school students also have summer enrichment camps. A range of activities are offered and students select based on their interests. This summer some examples of courses that students may choose are:

- 1.Green Screens, Website Creation, QR Codes, OH MY!
- 2.Coding with Techno Magicians, Princess Coders, and Code Warriors
- 3.The Wonders of Water
- 4.Forensic Investigator
- 5."If you Give a Kid a Spatula...."

#### High School

To prepare our middle school students for high school, we have parent / child meetings that discuss high school options and develop possible four year plans. These plans are created based on areas of interest. Students articulate a possible career interest and college choice. Then we plan with the student explaining courses that will assist them in being successful with their interest.

Each year after the plan is developed, students will meet with the AIG Specialists and Guidance Counselor. This meeting will discuss grades and plans for the upcoming school year. From these meetings, a high school schedule is developed.

#### Support for Teachers

The Curriculum Department has a strong professional development model. The teachers receive sessions each semester on instructional practices to meet the needs of all learners. These sessions provide teachers with current research strategies. For example, the professional development in ELA this year for K – 12 utilized the book, Text-Dependent Questions. Teachers received instruction in developing better questions. The four level of questioning ensures that teachers ask higher order questions.

To monitor the information from the professional development sessions, we also train our administrators in the strategies we present. This allows administrators and Academic Coaches to support teachers in their PLCs.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue our current professional development model that increases knowledge on instructional practices
- continue our summer enrichment opportunities
- continue planning opportunities between AIG Specialists and classroom teachers
- provide middle school students with the opportunity to take high school classes through NCVPS

### **Practice C**

Selects and uses a variety of research-based supplemental resources that augment curriculum and instruction.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools believes that using research-based resources ensures that our AIG Program continues to provide rigor and relevance to our gifted learners. A conscientious effort has been made to guarantee that research-based materials are aligned to the standards, ensuring that this maintained practice is being implemented in all schools, so that we support the instruction for our gifted learners.

Discovery Education provides our educators with resources to support curriculum and instruction. This is used in all classes. Our district also has the Discovery Education Tech Books for math and science. These supplemental resources provide blended learning experiences and strengthens the instruction.

For Advanced Placement support, next year we plan to provide students with AP Insight if they take World History, US History, Chemistry or Calculus. We anticipate that this blended learning support enhance the instruction in the classroom and assist students with being more prepared for the advanced courses.

The Canvas Curriculum and Instruction Support will also provide resources for teachers. These documents will allow our AIG Specialists to assist teachers with resources to meet the needs of the gifted learners.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to use Discovery Education materials
- implement AP Insight
- expand opportunities for professional conferences
- continue ongoing development of support materials to add to Canvas

### **Practice D**

Fosters the development of 21st century content and skills an advanced level.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools will continue to focus on 21st century content and skills. We currently have professional development sessions on integrating these skills into lessons.

At this time real-world applications, critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving are incorporated into the conceptual curriculum units.

In addition to the professional development, we expect these skills to be evident in lesson plans. AIG Specialists work in PLCs to design work for our gifted learners that integrate the 21st century skills with complex content.

The AIG Specialists infuse 21st century content and skills at an advanced level in unit and lesson plans. A variety of complex resources are utilized to allow students opportunities to develop 21st century skills.

To ensure that high school teachers are using critical thinking skills, summer advanced placement training is provided for teachers. These training sessions provide them with content and instructional practices that incorporate 21st century skills.

Students in Ninth grade also get an experience to learn about 21st century skills by participating in the Chamber Career Fair. The Richmond County Chamber organizes a career fair. The students then have seminars with individuals who have a particular career. They attend two seminars that expose them to the skills necessary to be successful in that career. For example, this year a real estate broker discussed with the students about selling and listing homes. She discussed how this career required her to have excellent people skills and be motivated. She explained that she only makes money if she sales a house. She explained to the students that she had to be a good listener and communicate well in both speaking and writing. Experiences like this allow students to understand the relevance of 21st century skills.

Another opportunity to explore 21st century skills occurs in our middle schools. We have changed our Battle of the Books to Battle of the Books and Beyond. The coaches did not feel that Battle of the Books provided students with skills necessary for the 21st century. Battle of the Books and Beyond ensures critical thinking and promotes leadership. The Battle of the Books and Beyond requires the students to read 10 to 12 books of various genres. Each school then chooses two to facilitate a discussion. The students create discussion questions for the books and prepare to lead the analysis of the book. In addition to the discussion, they arrange a guest speaker to come and provide information based on the topic from the book. This has been successful this year. In the fall we had four books that the students explored. Two books were on the topic of being handicapped. The speaker was a Richmond Senior graduate who lost her ability to walk in a car accident. The students decided to raise money and presented a check to the guest speaker for her to get a wheel chair that would allow her to race. Over \$2,000.00 was presented to this speaker. The other two books were on the topic of bullying. The students had the sheriff come and discuss how bullying impacts lives. The Battle of the Books and Beyond has been a great event that supports higher level thinking and enhances student experiences.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to promote 21st century skills and content through our One to One technology at the high school
- continue to integrate 21st century skills into our professional development
- provide more access to experiences that promote these skills



### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools will continue to use formative and summative assessments as a means to differentiate instruction for all gifted learners.

All teachers in our system were required to participate in the NCFALCON modules on formative assessments. The administrative staff conducted walk-throughs to guarantee implementation of formative assessment practices.

Another district initiative is distributed summarizing. This method of formative assessments allow teachers to constantly check for understanding in order to guide instruction and modify assignments as needed. Lesson plans must show distributed summarizing through collaborative pairs and assessment prompts. Teachers chunk their instruction to allow for this summarizing which occurs in many ways. Some strategies that are used are:

- Think – Pair – Share
- Summary Point Writing
- Ticket out the Door
- The important thing is....
- GIST
- Reciprocal Teaching

Teachers are expected to differentiate based on this formative assessment data.

The district also expects teachers at all levels to use a variety of instructional methods. This year we provided all teachers in our district with a puzzle outline of the four methods of instruction they need to use to differentiate for their learners. The methods are small group instruction, work stations, whole group instruction and cooperative groups. In the professional development sessions, teachers received training on how to use formative and summative data to group students using these methods.

To ensure that these district initiatives are being used in classrooms, district walk-throughs occur in the fall and spring. Central Office staff visit each school and examine classrooms for implementation of the district initiatives. After the walk-through, observations are shared with the administration at the school. The administration also completes a rubric that explains how pervasively and consistently they observe the district initiatives in their school.

Another expectation is for teachers to use Schoolnet to create common assessments that inform their instruction on standards. The district created three common assessments and two benchmarks that are required. Academic coaches at the schools submit data reports to the Curriculum Directors. These reports require coaches to examine the data and determine which students are not understanding the standards and how they are going to revise instruction to ensure that the students gain understanding in the areas where they are struggling.

AIG Specialists will work with classroom teachers to analyze academic skills of our gifted learners. The data analysis informs curriculum decisions. By working with the classroom teachers, AIG Specialists will provide support for gifted learners by determining their needs and diagnosing acceleration opportunities.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue district walk-throughs
- continue to utilize Schoolnet to create standards based assessments
- continue data analysis
- continue professional development on methods of instruction
- increase the use of pre-assessments

### **Practice F**

Creates affective curricular and instructional practices which support the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

**District Response:** To support the social and emotional needs of our gifted learners, we must understand what these needs are and how to develop strategies to support them. The AIG Specialists will develop seminars on social and emotional issues that often confront our gifted learners. They will conduct these seminars before, during and after school. Gifted learners will be able to sign up for these classes based on their needs.

In addition to the seminars, the AIG Specialists will incorporate strategies in conceptual units that allow learners to define and identify their social and emotional needs. For example, read alouds will be used to show how a character responds to a problem and then the AIG Specialist will lead a discussion about responding to problems.

In conjunction with the guidance department, AIG Specialists will design learning opportunities that promote self-awareness, positive peer relationships and intellectual experiences, leadership and talent development. These opportunities will support the gifted learners' social and emotional development.

AIG Specialists will also work closely with guidance counselors to support our gifted learners.

One area that has become a focus recently is our gifted high school students. This school year we have had three gifted identified students to drop out. The AIG Coordinator will work closely with high school counselors and social workers to work on this issue. Currently we are meeting with some potential drop outs. We are hoping to identify reasons they feel disconnected to school and why they want to drop out.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- increase seminar opportunities on social and emotional topics
- continue to work with counselors and social workers
- implement professional development for teachers on social and emotional topics

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools strives to enrich the potential of K-3 students with purposeful and intentional strategies to prepare them for the 21st century. We currently develop potential in our K–3 learners in a variety of ways.

One structure utilized is Enrichment Seminars in grades K-2 that develop talents through enhancing the students' strengths, critical thinking and problem solving skills. These Enrichment Seminars provide students with complex problems and conceptual lessons. This pullout experience allows the AIG Specialists to develop potential with our high achieving learners. The selection to attend a session is based on formative assessments by the classroom teacher, the AIG specialist's observations from the whole class nurturing and data that reflects an above grade reading or math need.

Another structure is whole class nurturing lessons. The AIG Specialists teach whole class lessons for kindergarten through third grade utilizing Habits of Mind and thinking skill materials. Our goal is to provide students with purposeful, intentional and differentiated instruction. The K-3 learners will experience a variety of resources and opportunities to guide their ambitions and develop their potential.

Classroom teachers also benefit from these whole class nurturing lessons. They get to observe research-based practices utilized by the AIG Specialists. The whole class structure is a great way to develop collaboration with the classroom teacher and to share differentiated strategies.

In addition to nurturing opportunities, we also screen our K – 3 students for gifted services. We use mCLASS and math data to determine the students that need to be screened. Working with the classroom teachers, the screening list is discussed to determine students that may need to be assessed.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue our nurturing classes in K – 3 classrooms
- continue our Enrichment Seminars
- continue to provide Summer Enrichment Opportunities for K – 3

### **Practice H**

Collaborates with AIG personnel and other professional staff, including regular education teachers, special education teachers, other instructional staff, and administrators, to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools' AIG Program believes in interaction among AIG

Specialists, general education teachers and all professional support staff as a means to work toward a common goal to meet the needs of the gifted population. Gifted learners benefit from collaboration among all personnel related to AIG students when the partnership is intentional and the responsibility is shared. Due to Richmond County Schools' strong commitment to PLC collaboration, AIG Specialists have a format that allows them to consistently communicate with teachers and administrators.

During scheduled PLC meetings, teachers have designated days for planning instruction and days for analyzing data. When schedules permit, the AIG Specialists attend the grade or content PLCs. This attendance will provide consistent communication to better plan instruction for our gifted learners. The AIG Specialists will be able to assist with data analysis and share differentiation strategies based on the evidence.

Shared decision making between the classroom teachers and the AIG Specialists about the development and implementation of differentiated curriculum and instruction is essential. Co-teaching allows the AIG Specialists and classroom teachers to plan and provide differentiated rigorous instruction that meets the needs of our gifted learners.

The AIG Specialists will also conduct after school meetings to collaborate about gifted students. The Gifted Needs Determination Team and any other personnel needed to engage in shared decision making will attend these meetings. This team will consist of the AIG Specialist as the Chair, an administrator, guidance counselor and a teacher from each grade level. Additional people will be invited as deemed necessary to make decisions and provide insights that are in the best interests of our gifted learners.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to keep records of the Gifted Needs Determination Team meetings
- schedule time to work with PLCs
- include all stakeholders in discussions on the needs of the gifted learner

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools is focused on ensuring that parents/families are aware of how their child is being served and in what services they are receiving. Our goal is to provide K-12 services that are reviewed annually. The services that a gifted learner is accessing should be documented in a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or the Individualize Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP).

The DEP and IDEP outline the services that are available to gifted students.

A student that is identified for AIG Consultative services will:

- receive individualized conferences
- benefit from AIG Specialists collaboration with classroom teachers to promote differentiated assignments
- receive periodic pull-outs based on the assessment data

A student that is identified for AIG Resource services will:

- receive weekly pull-outs

A student that is identified for AIG Magnet services will:

- receive individualize projects and units of study based on interests
- have opportunities for online courses

A student that is identified for AIG Acceleration services will:

- receive subject or grade acceleration
- receive an IDEP to ensure roles and responsibilities for support are clearly articulated

Any gifted student can have an IDEP. An IDEP can be developed at any time facilitated either by the AIG Specialists, classroom teacher, administrator or parent. The IDEP specifically outlines the needs the gifted student has and what supports are going to be put in place to ensure success. The roles of each team member and what they are responsible to monitor will be clearly defined. Once an IDEP is developed, the Gifted Needs Determination Team will begin with weekly meetings on the student. At each meeting, a new timeline will be developed for supports once team members have shared both formal and summative data they have collected. Meetings may continue weekly or be adjusted to better meet the gifted learner's needs.

The annual reviews will occur in the spring. These reviews will allow parents to meet with the AIG Specialist and classroom teacher. The purpose of this meeting is to review the services and determine if the services are meeting the gifted learner's needs.

The high school annual review will occur at high school registration. The AIG Coordinator will review four-year plans with gifted learners and determine courses needed to graduate. All options with community college, Advanced Placement and Honors will be explored at this meeting. These meetings allow the students to receive guidance on courses based on their interests and career choice.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue annual meetings with parents
- continue the four-year plans at the high school
- ensure that DEPs and IDEPs are guiding the services for gifted learners
- improve the annual conferences by adding student led conferences that provide them with the opportunity to present a portfolio

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Continue to develop curriculum units aligned to standards.

7/7/2016

Work on social and emotional supports for students by researching and putting together a support handbook for AIG Specialists and classroom teachers.

**Sources of Evidence:** Lesson planning aligned to the NCSCOS

Units of Study

Summer Enrichment

PowerPoints

Observations

AIG Specialists Training Certificates

PLC Minutes

Professional Development Calendar

AIG Specialists Schedules

Handbook for teachers

### **Standard 3: Personnel and Professional Development**

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

#### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools employs an AIG-licensed coordinator to ensure success of the AIG program. The coordinator implements and revises the local plan.

The AIG program is directed by an AIG licensed educator. The lead coordinator has the role of collaborating with AIG Specialists, stakeholders, and central office staff to revise and monitor the program. The coordinator of the program is an advocate for AIG students and strives to ensure that all of their academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs are met.

The coordinator for the gifted program has many responsibilities. The coordinator must monitor all areas of the plan to ensure that implementation is consistently followed by the AIG Specialists. A monitoring checklist will be used to determine how well the plan is being implemented.

The coordinator will do internal audits on the student folders to determine if documentation is being correctly completed and reviewed annually. This audit will occur prior to the submission of the AIG headcount.

The coordinator will require monthly updates on the identification process. The AIG Specialists are expected to provide updates and guarantee consistency with respect to identification processes.

Professional development will be required for the AIG Specialists. The AIG Coordinator and Specialists will attend trainings provided by the North Carolina Department of Education and conferences that provide instruction on gifted learners. In addition to the professional development provided for the specialists, professional development will be planned for all personnel to allow them to strengthen their knowledge of gifted learners. The coordinator will also support all district initiatives and ensure that the AIG Specialists are involved.

Collaboration between the district coordinator and all stakeholders is critical. The coordinator must communicate and articulate information pertaining to gifted learners. The coordinator will participate in the regional meetings and other meetings to stay informed about information pertinent to support gifted education.

To continue to improve in this practice, we will:

- ensure that monthly meetings occur to discuss the AIG plan and implementation
- increase collaboration with other districts
- participate consistently in the regional meetings
- continue parent meetings to support our AIG learners

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools' AIG Specialists currently engage in tasks that support the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners. Focus groups recognized many accomplishments for our work in the academic and intellectual areas.

AIG Specialists are required to implement the AIG program standards based on our plan. The expectation is to create rigorous, engaging learning experiences for our gifted population. With this role, the focus must be on program and classroom responsibilities, while gathering evidence that the AIG plan is being implemented to fidelity.

#### **Program Responsibilities for AIG Specialists**

All AIG Specialists have the responsibility to maintain accurate records of all AIG students. This requires the specialists to collect evidence during the screening and identification process. AIG Specialists are often expected to score ability and achievement tests and accurately review the testing data with parents / guardians. All records on AIG students should have annual current DEPs (Differentiated Education Plans) on file.

Not only must AIG Specialists maintain accurate records, but at all levels they must screen students for gifted services. They must examine any data that exists on a student and determine through collaboration with other stakeholders if additional information or testing is needed. To help with the screening process, each AIG Specialist will chair a Response to Needs Team at each of their schools to assist with determining the needs of students.

AIG Specialists will also accept referrals on students. They will collaborate with stakeholders to gather pertinent information once a referral has been made to determine the best outcome for the student.

The AIG headcount is a responsibility that will require collaboration with the data managers. AIG headcounts will be submitted annually for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Each AIG Specialist must guarantee that the headcount is accurate and reflects AIG students that receive services.

AIG Specialists will advocate for the gifted students and the program. This advocacy requires collaboration with administrators, teachers, parents and community members about the AIG program. Developing and delivering appropriate professional development, while also providing and promoting gifted resources to our learning community, requires the Specialists to provide resources to teachers that support all needs of our gifted learners, including social and emotional as well as academic.

Another responsibility requires AIG Specialists to work with the AIG Coordinator. The specialists must attend monthly PLC sessions that focus on implementation of the AIG plan as well as develop curriculum units. This work will require discussion of current practices in the area of gifted education



and research to address the social and emotional needs of our gifted learners.

#### Classroom Responsibilities for Elementary School AIG Specialists

The AIG Specialists designs the program services with the school administration team each year. This allows the program to be differentiated and meet the needs of our various communities and ensure that we are providing quality services for our AIG students.

AIG Specialists are responsible for quality conceptual units that encourage academic and intellectual growth. AIG Specialist provide pull-out classes as a means to serve students. In these classes, we utilize research-based units that focus on critical and analytical thinking. In creating 21st century learners, students are given opportunities to use technology in creative ways. AIG fosters an appealing environment that allows students to thrive while engaging in challenging content.

In addition to pull out services, we also utilize Co-teaching that allows the AIG to work within the classroom. This allows the teacher and the AIG Specialist to support small group instruction and ensure differentiated learning experiences.

AIG Specialists also provide a strong nurturing program for Kindergarten through third grade students. This consists of both pull-out and whole-group lessons. We utilize a variety of instructional supports in these classes. A major focus for us is Habits of Mind to develop social and emotional thinking processes. These lessons also support critical thinking skills.

#### Classroom Responsibilities for Middle School AIG Specialists

Middle school AIG Specialists provide varied instructional support for gifted learners. These specialists follow the Resource Consultation Model based on the work of Mary Landrum. This model supports team - teaching as well as complementary teaching and pull - out.

Our middle school AIG Specialists work to extend and refine instructional standards. Through multiple service options, the AIG Specialists provide extensive writing and research as well as complex reading. They work in classrooms with gifted clusters to provide small group instruction.

A strength of the middle school AIG Specialists is the Co-teaching support. Co-teaching allows students to receive rigorous activities in differentiated stations.

The middle school AIG Specialists also collaborate with students and families to provide social and emotional support. Middle school is a stressful time with many changes. Emotional support is provided through lunch groups and afterschool activities.

#### Responsibilities for High School AIG Specialist

High school AIG Specialists work with gifted learners to complete and monitor four year plans. Meetings are held with the parent and student to outline a plan for the four years of high school. This plan informs parents and students of all opportunities that are available for gifted learners.

In addition to the four year plan, the high school AIG Specialists works with the Advanced Placement Program to support students. The specialists will provide teachers with instructional materials that

ensure rigor in the AP classes. Assistance is provided to the School AP Coordinator with testing and proctoring.

Additional support is provided to school counselors to assist with social and emotional issues of our gifted learners. Our high school recently had three AIG students to drop out. The specialists and counselors work together to prevent gifted students from dropping out.

In hopes of expanding our services and covering all realms of gifted learners, AIG Specialists incorporate lessons that address the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. In addition to addressing these socio-emotional areas, we administer student interest surveys so that students can express their individual needs.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- plan to offer seminars that will focus on the specific needs of students and provide strategies and problem-solving activities to develop social and emotional well-being
- continue to send AIG Specialists to professional development
- plan to create collaborative units to support rigorous instruction
- require monthly calendars be submitted to the AIG Coordinator for accountability of time with gifted learners
- increase support at the high school in the area of social and emotional development
- continue to create four year plans and assist students with summer endeavors
- continue to support AP teachers and ensure they receive training in the summer

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools AIG Program relies on specific and appropriate professional development requirements for AIG Specialists, general education teachers, and all professional support staff as a means to work toward the common goal of meeting the needs of its gifted population. Focusing on collaboration among all personnel related to AIG students is to the gifted learner's advantage when the partnership is intentional and the responsibility is shared.

Currently, AIG Specialists have licensure in Gifted Education. We realize that we are limited on the number of teachers with AIG certification in our system. We plan to investigate ways to get teachers to commit to pursuing AIG licensure. As we research, we will develop a plan to assist us with this issue.

We also realize the need to provide professional development for all teachers regarding our gifted program and differentiation. The district has two professional development training sessions a year. These professional development days allow the curriculum directors and AIG Specialists to work with all teachers in the district. Utilizing varied instructional methods, training is provided on research based practices that support gifted learners. Differentiated and multiple instructional methods are

promoted. These trainings include special education teachers, ESL teachers and support personnel. This year our major focus was on text dependent questions and argumentative writing.

All personnel are regularly engaged in specific and appropriate professional development in an effort to cultivate and implement differentiated units. Richmond County Schools has professional development annually to revise and strengthen our differentiated units in all grade levels. These units stress content and instructional practices that support gifted learners.

In addition to the two professional development sessions with directors, AIG Specialists have three or four professional development days. These days allow the AIG Specialist to work with classroom teachers in PLCs to support gifted learners.

The AIG Coordinator works with school counselors to support gifted learners. The coordinator provides professional development on high school planning, preparing for AP course work, special programs for gifted learners, improving SAT and ACT scores, etc.

In addition to the professional development, we provide educators with experiences to receive AIG Licensure.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue our professional development sessions
- continue to have AIG licensed teachers employed in AIG positions
- provide research based professional development that supports instructional practices for our gifted learners
- utilize data to determine professional development needs
- continue collaboration with universities to provide gifted licensure for teachers

#### **Practice D**

Places AIG students in general education classrooms with teachers who have earned an AIG add-on license from an Institute of Higher Education (IHE) or who have met the LEA's professional development requirements for that position.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools recognizes the importance of placing AIG students in general education classrooms with teachers holding an AIG licensure. The AIG Specialists will work with administrators to make an effort to cluster AIG students with teachers that have AIG certification.

Since many of our schools have limited personnel with AIG certification, EVAAS data is reviewed to determine teachers that exceed expected growth with gifted learners. Eighty-seven percent of Richmond County Schools' teachers met or exceeded expected growth. The growth of teachers are examined to determine the placement of AIG students.

We also realize that the limited number of AIG licensed personnel impacts how we plan to implement cluster grouping. This creates the need for a strong professional development plan that will assist

teachers who have clustered groups with support and training. We provide after school professional development as well as support through PLC meetings that target teachers with AIG clusters.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to collaborate with universities to advertise AIG certification courses
- begin selecting two teachers per year to receive AIG certification with compensation from the district
- continue to utilize EVAAS data to place students with teachers that exceed growth with our gifted learners
- monitor schedules of gifted students to ensure they are in classes that will meet their academic and social needs

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** The AIG Program of Richmond County Schools is focused on aligning professional development with other county initiatives. It is critical that we provide professional development on differentiated Core instruction.

Our current professional develop plan is focused on standards and increasing instructional strategies in all subject areas. In September and February, all teachers in the district receive a half day of professional development with the curriculum directors. Two groups, the first from 8:00 until 11:30 and the second from 12:30 until 3:30, receive explicit professional development in math, English language arts, socials studies and science. Teachers receive instructional support for differentiated practices. These classes also focus on our district initiatives of vocabulary, distributed summarizing, writing to learn and utilizing multiple instructional methods. The multiple group instructional methods is a focus for meeting the needs of gifted learners. In this session we discuss standards based on grade level whole group instruction, cooperative groups, small group instruction and differentiated work stations. This requires teachers to think about the varied levels in their classrooms and determine how to plan instruction that meets the needs of all learners including gifted students.

In addition to the half day professional development, teachers receive three to four whole days throughout the year. These days allow the AIG Specialists to work together on instructional units. The agenda for these days are created by the AIG Specialists.

We will continue this professional development framework. The focus will continue to be on standards and instructional methods. Realizing that MTSS is a DPI expectation, we will focus on Core instruction and how to strengthen and differentiate instruction.

Professional development will also continue in PLCs. Working in PLCs, we focus on individual students in our classes. Teachers create instructional plans on meeting the needs of students. Utilizing common assessment and benchmark data, flexible groups are created for class instruction as well as Intervention and Enrichment blocks.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue professional development structures currently utilized to ensure growth for our gifted students
- provide opportunities to attend professional development with national presenters that support best practices

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Collaboration between AIG Specialists and classroom teachers allows for the improvement of the educational experience for gifted learners. Teachers need opportunities to refine skills, share successes, capitalize on teaching strengths, address concerns and problem-solve. Richmond County Schools encourages these opportunities. We currently utilize professional learning communities to improve instruction and to ensure collaboration.

We utilize the Professional Learning Community structure for the AIG Specialists to plan instructional strategies with teachers. This is a strong practice in the middle school but one that needs strengthening for elementary school. Due to the number of schools the AIG Elementary Specialists serve, the opportunity to meet with PLCs is not always present.

To ensure that the necessary collaboration is occurring, AIG Specialists will have monthly school PLC meetings with classroom teachers before or after school. These meetings will allow us to align instruction and provide suggestions of instructional strategies to better meet the needs of our AIG learners.

AIG Specialists will meet regularly in PLCs. These meetings will be scheduled monthly.

In addition to school PLC meetings, AIG Specialists are included in the district professional development on half and whole days. The AIG Specialists work with their teachers on these professional development days and provide instructional ideas for supporting gifted learners.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue PLC collaboration between the AIG Specialists and the classroom teachers
- ensure monthly meetings for AIG Specialists
- share lesson exemplars with classroom teachers
- continue their attendance at district professional development

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Develop a professional development plan that allows the AIG Specialists more training.

**Sources of Evidence:** Local AIG Plan  
Steering Committee Meetings

**7/7/2016**

Focus Group Meetings  
Staff Development for AIG Specialists  
Monitoring Checklist  
Monthly PLC minutes  
Screening Rosters  
Folder Reviews  
Test Data  
PLC Minutes and Agendas  
Professional Development Rosters  
Headcount Verification forms  
Parent Meetings  
Conceptual Units  
Seminar Schedules  
Research and discussion on Social and Emotional needs of gifted learners  
AIG Presentation at Board of Education meeting  
AIG Presentation at Principal's meeting  
AIG School Presentations  
Professional Development Sign-ins  
Professional Development monthly calendar and summer booklet  
Plan with university  
Increased licensure of AIG teachers

## **Standard 4: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community**

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

### **Practice A**

Delivers AIG programs and services which are comprehensive of the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners across all classroom environments, grade levels, and settings.

**District Response:** Realizing that AIG programs and services should be comprehensive, addressing academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs are evident in service options.

#### Elementary School Services

##### K-3 Whole Class Nurturing

The AIG Specialists schedule a time to work with the whole class on critical and creative thinking activities. They teach Intelligent Behaviors that we want students to use in solving problems. The nurturing component identifies, nurtures and develops talents and abilities at a level deemed appropriate for each student.

##### Enrichment Seminar

K–3 pull out classes twice a month focus on conceptual ideas and extend the NCSCS. Students participate in critical and creative activities that require reading complex text, writing and mathematical problem solving with multiple steps.

##### AIG Consultative

Students are served in the regular classroom that have periodic pull-outs based on the needs of the student. The classroom and AIG teachers will discuss if additional focused sessions are needed to support the growth of the AIG student. Individualized conferences occur to support either instruction or social and emotional development.

##### AIG Resource

Service that supports gifted learners with weekly pull-outs. Curriculum supports the 21st century skills through differentiated conceptual units.

##### AIG Magnet

Service that supports gifted learners with additional performance-based tasks that are based on individual interests. The AIG Specialist and classroom teacher will collaborate to provide additional time to work on this independent project.

##### Grade and Subject Acceleration

Student will be placed in a higher class or grade based on mastery of the curriculum standards.

#### Middle School Services

##### AIG Consultative

7/7/2016

Students are served in the regular classroom that are based on the needs of the student. The classroom teacher and AIG Specialist will discuss the needs of the student to see if additional focused sessions are needed to support their growth. Periodic pull-outs and individual conferencing may occur to meet the needs of the gifted learner.

#### Seminars

Seminars that AIG students can attend by choice and interests. These sessions focus on social and emotional issues and curriculum topics (before school, lunch sessions or after school).

#### AIG Resource

Service that supports gifted learners with pull-outs or small group instruction in the classroom. Curriculum supports the 21st century skills through conceptual units.

#### Continuous Student Interest (CSI)

Services based on interests of the learner. Modules of learning experiences that are interest based and facilitated by the AIG Specialists in a pull-out setting.

#### AIG Magnet

Service that supports gifted learners with additional performance based tasks that are centered around individual interests. The AIG Specialist and classroom teacher will collaborate to provide additional time to work on this independent project.

#### Grade and Subject Acceleration

Student will be placed in a higher class or grade based on mastery of the curriculum standards.

#### Credit by Demonstrated Mastery

Students will be allowed to demonstrate mastery of standards through this process. This will allow them access to the higher level courses.

#### High Schools Services

##### Seminars

Seminars that AIG students can attend by choice and interests. These sessions focus on social and emotional issues and curriculum topics (Before school, lunch sessions or after school).

#### Honors Courses

Honors courses will provide academic rigor and relevance based on established expectations that ensure that all students develop the capacity to master content that is complex and challenging. Instruction and learning must include commitment to a knowledge core and the application of that knowledge core to solve complex real-world problems.

#### Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

The AP courses provide students with differentiated curriculum that align with career and college readiness. Content is taught with an emphasis on critical thinking, inquiry, reasoning and communication skills. Students may self-select these courses based on interests.

#### Credit by Demonstrated Mastery

Students will be allowed to demonstrate mastery of standards through this process. This will allow them access to the higher level courses.



AIG Specialists work with classroom teachers to support gifted learners in classrooms as well as in the AIG services. The collaboration assists us with meeting the academic and social and emotional needs. All information on services listed in the DEP are shared.

To improve this practice, we will:

- continue professional development that addresses differentiation to support instruction in the consultative service option
- provide more seminars for students in Grades 6 – 12

### **Practice B**

Aligns AIG programs and services with each area of AIG identification, goals of the program, and resources of the LEA.

**District Response:** The needs of advanced learners are best met when the AIG program and services are aligned with the program goals and resources of the LEA. Our goal is to promote student achievement by providing a continuum of services designed to appropriately differentiate and extend core curriculum for our advanced learners.

It is imperative that we value and nurture intelligence in children so that they reach their fullest potential and create opportunities for growth. All K-2 nurturing students are monitored for future placement in the AIG program. Students in grades K-12 may be referred for possible AIG placement by administrators, parents, teachers, peers or self-referral.

By aligning AIG services to AIG designations, the needs of gifted learners can be met.

AIG K – 12 Services:

K-3 Whole Class Nurturing: In the elementary grades, AIG Specialists provide nurturing classes across all grade levels that encourage and instill creative and critical thinking opportunities, while developing intelligent behaviors for all learners. This nurturing experience is designed to develop potential in both intelligence and academics.

K-2 Enrichment Seminars: The AIG Specialists, the classroom teachers and the administrators utilize classroom evidences that recognize advanced learners who demonstrate a need for enrichment opportunities. This collaboration is on-going, which allows for the enrichment groups to be fluid, flexible and based on the needs of students. mCLASS and math data is used to determine if the student needs individualized testing for possible AIG services.

AIG Consultative: Recognizing the needs of our gifted students requires flexibility in delivering appropriate service options. Consultative services will be provided to students in the traditional classroom, with periodic pull-outs based on the needs of the learner. Through collaboration with the classroom teacher and parent/guardian, formative and summative assessment data will be analyzed to determine student placement.

AIG Resource: The AIG resource option consists of weekly pull-out classes for all identified students in the AIG program. Exceptions to this service option include students who are currently being served

on a consultative basis.

**AIG Magnet:** Service that supports gifted learners with additional performance based tasks that are built on individual interests. The AIG Specialists and classroom teacher will collaborate to provide additional time to work on this independent project. This service option is for the highly gifted learner who demonstrates a strong need for additional services that meet individual interests and provide rigor.

**Grade and Subject Acceleration:** We will utilize the North Carolina State Board of Education criteria for early entrance to kindergarten decisions. In addition to the early entrance, we will use the IOWA acceleration scale to examine any student who is working well above grade level.

**Credit by Demonstrated Mastery:** Richmond County Schools will follow state guidelines established by the Department of Public Instruction to determine if credit will be awarded in grades 6 – 12.

**K – 12 Seminars:** AIG Specialists will offer a variety of seminars throughout the school year that focus on the social and emotional issues and curriculum topics that are relevant to gifted learners. These sessions will take place before school, after school, during enrichment blocks, and/or lunch as needed for all students who are identified in the AIG program.

**Continuous Student Interest (CSI):** Students self-select performance-based enrichment courses that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. All middle school students who are identified in the AIG program are eligible for this service option.

**Honors Courses:** High school honors courses will be offered in grades 9-12. A student can self – select to participate in an honors course based on interests. These courses will provide challenging and differentiated assignments. Parents and students will be aware of the expectations in the honors classes.

**Advanced Placement:** Advanced Placement courses will be provided for students in grades 9–12. These courses provide students with differentiated curriculum that align with career and college readiness. Content is taught with an emphasis on critical thinking, inquiry, reasoning and communication skills. Students may self-select these courses based on interests.

Through these services, we match the identification areas to their services.

A student who is Academically Gifted in Reading will have consultative or resource services in reading. Flexible grouping in classes will cluster these learners for instruction.

A student who is Academically Gifted in Math will have consultative or resource services in problem solving and critical thinking around real world problems. These students will also have options for math standards compacting in the consultative service option.

A student who is Academically Gifted in Reading and Math will have consultative or resource services in both areas. These students will receive differentiated conceptual units that provide rigorous academic challenges.

A student that is Intellectually Gifted (IG) or Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) will have opportunities to work in cluster classes for academic growth but will be assigned to AIG Magnet Services. This will require pull-out services as well as individualized learning units of study based on student interests.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to provide instructional support using consultative and resource pull-outs
- examine instructional practices to better meet the needs of our Intellectually Gifted learners and our Academically and Intellectually Gifted learners

### **Practice C**

Delivers AIG programs and services that are integral and connected to the total instructional program of the LEA in policy and practice.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools continues to provide services and program options that are integrated and connected to the overall academic and instructional programs. AIG Specialists follow the Common Core State Standards to ensure that gifted students are receiving relevant and rigorous instruction that extends and refines the curriculum. There is a strong collaborative effort made to ensure that the needs of our gifted learner are considered at all levels: district, school leadership and classrooms.

The AIG program uses a variety of research-based instructional practices as a means to provide differentiation for gifted learners. AIG Specialists collaborate with the regular education teachers via email, surveys, professional learning communities and professional developments to ensure that we are supporting instruction for our gifted learners.

In addition to the collaboration, all district initiatives involve our AIG Specialists. As district leadership teams are formed, AIG Specialists are involved and expected to support the teachers and students with these initiatives.

We also work to ensure that our services align with classroom instruction. We want students to experience the connection between classroom and the AIG services they are receiving.

The AIG Coordinator is also a curriculum director. This organization allows for representation of AIG to be in our monthly administrator meetings, academic coach meetings, weekly curriculum meetings, professional development meetings, School Board Meetings and technology meetings. This consistent collaboration ensures that AIG is integrated into all school and district initiatives.

In addition to organized meetings, the AIG Coordinator also collaborates closely with the English Learner Coordinator and the Exceptional Children's Director. We discuss strategies and information to assist our twice exceptional learners.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to collaborate consistently to ensure that AIG is an integral part of the district and schools

### **Practice D**

Informs all teachers, school administrators, and support staff about delivery of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan.

**District Response:** Gifted students have different needs; therefore, teachers and other support staff must have knowledge and understand characteristics of gifted learners in order to play an active role in their education. Receiving information better enables the school community to fulfill its role in the AIG students overall educational program.

The District AIG Coordinator maintains ongoing communication with administrators, teachers and AIG Specialists. This communication allows for comprehensive gifted services and ensures consistent implementation throughout the district.

AIG Specialists inform classroom teachers of identified AIG students and their matching service needs in addition to "watch list" students. This increases support for gifted learners and provides a team approach in meeting their needs.

Communication is critical for a student's success. Keeping all stakeholders informed requires multiple forms of communication. We will continue to increase communication efforts using a variety of formats. Collaboration with classroom teachers, administrators and support staff provide information regarding the AIG program services along with any regulations related to gifted education.

Examples may include:

- Newsletters
- District and School Websites
- Emails
- Meetings
- Professional Development

AIG Specialists also provide professional development on the AIG plan in PLC meetings, after school planning sessions and during meetings. The Specialists also provide the school staff with a common presentation during the first months of school to explain the AIG plan and the legislation that requires gifted support.

Not only do the AIG Specialists work with schools utilizing a common presentation, they also provide teachers with a handbook that explains how to refer students to the AIG program. This handbook is provided to all employees during the presentation.

A parent handbook exists to provide parents with information about the AIG program and how they can refer their child for services. In the handbook, information is provided on characteristics of gifted learners, multiple criteria explanation and services offered within the district.

To strength this practice, we will:

- create a handbook for processes and procedures for AIG Specialists

- provide administrators with a quick reference guide to the AIG plan
- gather continuous feedback on the understanding of the AIG program

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** The needs of our gifted learners are best met when there is a consistent dialogue among stakeholders. Smooth transitions of records, rosters of identified students and annual review decisions should be in place before the end of the academic year.

The AIG Specialists work closely with PLCs to collaborate information about gifted students. This support informs teachers of the services each child is receiving and strategies to support the students in the classroom.

The AIG Specialists conduct transitional meetings with feeder schools. We want to make sure services are communicated as a student transitions between grades.

A major part of the transition from middle school to high school is the creation of a four year high school plan and parent information session. It is our intent for parents to understand all high school requirements. These sessions involved the AIG Coordinator, AIG Specialist, counselor and school administration. Discussion occurs on the following topics:

- GPA
- weighted and unweighted grades
- Advanced Placement
- exams
- community college
- required graduation course work
- College Foundation of North Carolina
- SAT and collaboration with Khan Academy
- High school schedule

We find these sessions are valuable with informing parents about the many options at the high school level. Parents have been pleased with the information and feel more comfortable with the transition from middle school to high school. This year we have held 20 sessions and hope to increase these parent/student transition meetings.

Annual review decisions to the next grade level occur consistently. This review provides time for us to communicate with teachers and parents to improve the instruction for our gifted students.

AIG Specialists work together to discuss the students transitioning from one school to another. The Specialists share information about students and social and emotional supports needed to ensure effective and continuous services.

Transition from one school to another within the county for our gifted students is communicated by the AIG Specialists to the receiving AIG Specialists. This ensures that services are not disrupted in the transition.

The AIG Specialists will collaborate with data managers when students transfer from private schools, charter schools and schools from another state or outside our school district. The specialists will determine what service the student needs based on data received from the previous location.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- provide more sessions for parents to discuss transitions and the critical information needed to understand procedures at the transitioning level
- improve processes for data managers to communicate information about transfer students
- continue parent information sessions between middle school and high school
- provide processes to ensure that student screening and identification occurs
- continue to collaborate with a variety of educators to ensure support for gifted learners

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Continued collaboration among all stakeholders involved with gifted students is important to the continued success of gifted students. Parents, teachers, students, counselors and administrators are involved in making decisions about gifted learners. Social and emotional needs of gifted learners is an increasing area of concern for us and we realize that we need to explore more intensive and specific plans to address the varying needs of our students.

At this time, counselors hold lunch support groups for students that are struggling socially and emotionally. These lunch support groups provide a safe and nurturing environment where students can share issues and concerns. It is our plan to expand this support and have the AIG Specialists have a lunch support group.

In working with the Exceptional Children's Department, the district is in the process of implementing Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS). By utilizing PBIS, AIG Specialists will hopefully impact some of the emotional and social issues through positive support in all classes.

Not only does PBIS support behaviors, but we utilize the Student Assistant Team (SAT) to provide interventions for social and emotional needs. The team meets and discusses possible interventions for a student. The AIG Specialist is a critical part of this team when a gifted child is being discussed.

We realize that many of our AIG students struggle with perfectionism, a lack of social tolerance, an increased level of stress, unrealistic expectations for themselves, lack of compromise and an inflexibility in their thinking and ideas. These emotional and social issues can impact the student academically and behaviorally. Through PLCs, the AIG Specialists provide strategies to support these problem areas when displayed by the child. The Specialists also share information on how the

problem is displayed in the AIG classroom. This collaboration is a critical part of developing the whole child.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- develop support groups that the AIG Specialists will serve weekly
- provide parents with support materials for social and emotional concerns
- continue to collaborate with counselors and other departments to support gifted learners
- continue to work with PLCs on how to support gifted students

### **Practice G**

Articulates and implements opportunities for acceleration, including compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, subject and/or grade acceleration when an appropriate body-of-evidence indicates the need.

**District Response:** Acceleration options are currently determined by appropriate evidences that indicate whether a student needs accelerated instruction/accelerated placement.

We realize that some gifted students have documented needs for acceleration through differentiation of curriculum and instruction. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss all plans for placement and services with the AIG Specialists. If acceleration is an option for a student, an Individualize Differentiated Education Plan will be developed that outlines the coursework and expectations. The acceleration placement will be closely monitored to ensure that the placements and services are appropriate.

Math Curriculum Compacting:

In an effort to provide students with rigorous math experiences, middle school math courses are compacted which allow students to take Math I as an eighth grader. This math acceleration enables students to take a high level fourth math course in high school.

A school team examines data and determines students that will have successful experiences in compacted math in grade 6 and 7. This compacting teaches grades 6 – 8 math Standard Course of Study so that students have the skills necessary to be successful in Math I.

Early Admission to Kindergarten:

In accordance with state law, early admission to kindergarten is considered for students who score at the 98th or 99th percentile on both achievement and aptitude tests.

Principals and other personnel conduct a screening interview with the student and parents to determine the maturity, motivation and developmental levels of the student.

Parents are responsible for obtaining the information and presenting this information to the principal.

The District AIG Coordinator may be contacted for additional information and will work with the principal to make the best possible decision for the student.

The state requirements can be viewed at: <http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/policies/GCS-J-001.asp?pri=01&cat=J&pol=001&acr=GCS>

#### Grade / Subject Acceleration Process:

Parents or teacher(s) must present the request for acceleration to the AIG specialist in writing. The AIG specialist will notify the principal and the District AIG Coordinator.

The AIG Specialist will gather the team that consists of principal or designee, district AIG Coordinator, classroom teachers and guidance counselor. The team will examine the data that exists on the student. The classroom teacher(s) will provide work samples that demonstrate 2-3 years above grade level. The AIG Specialist will gather any prior testing data available. The student will have the opportunity to share projects that may show above grade level skills. The team will decide if they are going to pursue the request using the data provided.

The AIG Specialist and administrator or designee will meet with the parents and explain the decision of the team. If it is decided that acceleration services need to be explored, the AIG Specialist will explain the Iowa Acceleration Scale.

Once parents have signed the permission to test, both the AIG Specialist and the District AIG Coordinator will complete the required tests.

When testing is finished, the Iowa Acceleration Form will be completed by the school team. If the student scored greater than 10 points on the Academic section of the Iowa Acceleration Scale and has an IQ score of 115 or higher, the team will complete the remaining areas of the form. The student must score a minimum of 60 points on the Iowa Acceleration Scale to be eligible for Grade or Subject Acceleration.

Once the total points on the Iowa Acceleration Scale are completed, the child's acceleration team consisting of the parents, administrator, current teacher(s), potential receiving teacher(s) and AIG Specialist will meet to make a final decision on acceleration for the student.

If acceleration is recommended, an Individual Differentiation Education Plan will be developed to best meet the needs of the student. This plan will outline the transition process and a timeline for review of performance.

#### Credit by Demonstrated Mastery:

Parents may make a written request to the school if they think their 6–12 grade child has an understanding of the content.

Richmond County Schools will follow the procedures outlined in the DPI Implementation Guidelines for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery.

#### Process for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM):

Step 1: Parent or student request in writing that they are requesting credit by demonstrating mastery for a specific course.

Step 2: Parent completes an application for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery.

Step 3: The School CDM meets and discusses the application and begins the process.



Step 4: Work with the testing coordinator to determine when testing can be completed for EOC or NC Final assessment.

Step 5: Provide the assessment in a secure location.

Step 6: If the student scores between a 97 – 99% on the assessment, the student will continue to Phase II: Artifact Development.

Step 7: The student will be provided a deadline for submitting the artifact. The artifact must demonstrate a deep understanding of the content and skills. The artifact must include writing, research and analysis of documents related to the content. The student will be required to have an oral presentation. This presentation will be presented to the school CDM team and teachers from the content being mastered. The student will have questions about topics during this presentation.

Step 8: The school CDM team will examine the artifacts utilizing a rubric.

Step 9: The school CDM team will determine if the student has demonstrated the mastery for the course.

Step 10: The parent(s) and student will be notified of the team's decision in writing within two weeks of the artifact submission.

If credit is awarded, the CDM team will follow the Powerschool guidelines to award credit. If the credit is not awarded, the student will be enrolled in the course.

This policy: <http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/policies/GCS-M-001.asp?acr=GCS&cat=M&pol=001> will guide our work with Credit by Demonstrated Mastery.

The Parent Handbook explains acceleration options and the process for acceleration.

Not only do we have these options for acceleration, but we have a strong relationship with our community college. We offer community college courses to our high school students under Career and College Promise. Our enrollment in these community college courses continues to increase each semester. In addition to these courses, Richmond Community College has secured a grant that will allow any senior with a GPA of a 3.0 to attend the community college for two year free. We hope this grant will continue each year. High school counselors work with students to communicate this information.

Not only have we increased our enrollment of community college classes, we have also increased our AP offering through North Carolina Virtual Public High School. This acceleration provides students with rigorous course work and skills in how to navigate an online environment.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue offering acceleration opportunities
- continue to communicate acceleration opportunities to parents
- plan to begin offering NCVPS courses to middle school students to allow them to receive high school credit

## **Practice H**

Provides intentional programming for traditionally under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools has a very diverse population. Due to our diversity, we have a strong awareness and commitment to the needs of typically under-represented populations in gifted programs. Current data reflects that the AIG program is serving 28% nonwhite students when the total enrollment population is 56% nonwhite students.

Over the past three years, we have provided Ruby Payne training that focuses on children in poverty. This training has assisted with developing understanding but has not helped us identify more diverse learners.

In order to better identify our under-served populations, we will provide training on gifted behaviors in our under-represented groups. This training will bring awareness to the needs and characteristics of our diverse learners.

We also have K – 3 nurturing classes to support and develop our under-represented groups. These classes will support the hidden curriculum (thinking skills and strategies to process information).

In middle school we also have nurturing groups. Administrators group underrepresented students in with AIG clusters. When the AIG teacher works with these classes, all students are exposed to differentiated curriculum.

The major change occurred with our high school. Removing pre-requisites, like grades which excluded students, we now provide our under-served populations with more access to honors and AP courses. This has increased the diversity in our honors and AP courses. It also has increased our under-served representation with NC Governor's School. Over the past two years, we have exceed 50% nonwhite student applications being submitted to Raleigh.

In addition, to better understanding strategies to identify under-represented populations, increased communication between the EL and EC departments has occurred. This communication has assisted us with identifying twice exceptional students.

The District AIG Coordinator requires semester screening rosters. These will be reviewed during monthly AIG meetings to see if we have increased referrals and identification in our under-served populations. We also annually monitor AIG headcounts and report the trends identified in our under-served populations.

A minimal increase has occurred over the past several years with AIG identification but we realize that we need to continue to focus and research a variety of intentional procedures to assist us with our discrepancy.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to provide nurturing classes in K – 3
- continue to collaborate with EL and EC departments
- support under-served represented students in the higher level classes
- monitor the screening and identification of under-served populations
- research strategies that will provide ideas on identification of under-represented populations
- provide professional development in characteristics of under-represented populations

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools encourages student participation in extra-curricular programs that develop the needs and interests of our gifted learners. Many of our schools provide opportunities for students in academic endeavors that extend the NC Standard Course of Study.

Many schools offer extra-curricular academic and creative opportunities including a variety of academic competitions and contests such as Science Olympiad, Battle of the Books, MathCounts, Beta Club, Duke Talent Identification Programs (TIP), Writing contests, visual/performing arts opportunities and Summer Enrichment. These activities address academic, intellectual and socio-economic needs for our gifted learners.

Locally we promote a program called TechyKids. This program provides K – 8 students with week long summer enrichment opportunities. Students can access as many of these courses as they wish. Some enrichments in this summer opportunity is a collaborative effort with Discovery Place Kids. All enrichments are technology based. An example of one of the enrichments that Discovery Place Kids is offering for middle school students is a computer programming class. This enrichment experience will benefit our students over the summer.

Another locally supported extra-curricular activity is our Saturday Tech Club. Students get to explore a variety of technologies. One strength of this club is the work they do with 3-D printers.

In addition to these local clubs, we have also changed our middle schools Battle of the Books to Battle of the Books and Beyond. The teachers and coaches felt that the Battle of the Books questions did not promote higher level thinking for our students. They created Battle of the Books and Beyond to ensure critical thinking and promote leadership. The Battle of the Books and Beyond requires the students to read 10 to 12 books of various genres. Each school then chooses two to facilitate a discussion. The students create discussion questions for the books and prepare to lead the analysis of the book. In addition to the discussion, they arrange a guest speaker to come and provide information based on the topic from the book. This has been successful this year. In the fall we had four books that the students explored. Two books were on the topic of being handicapped. The speaker was a Richmond Senior graduate who lost her ability to walk in a car accident. The students decided to do a fund raiser and present a check to the guest speaker for her to get a wheel chair that would allow her to race. Over \$2,000.00 was presented to this speaker. The other two books were on the topic of bullying. The students had the sheriff come and discuss how bullying impacts lives. The Battle of the Books and Beyond has been a great event that support higher level thinking and enhances student experiences.

Not only do we support local extra-curricular events, we also work with students to get them to apply for endeavors like Summer Ventures and NC Governor's School.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to promote extra-curricular events for gifted learners
- continue to partner with places like Discovery Place Kids to provide summer events
- promote events that provide summer experiences
- ensure that gifted students are aware of events that will support their interests

### **Practice J**

Utilizes intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate effective instruction and support the growth of AIG students.

**District Response:** Grouping practices are critical for ensuring that the needs of our gifted students are met. Richmond County Schools uses flexible grouping to support learning in our schools.

Cluster grouping our gifted learners is a practice consistently done in our schools. This allows the AIG Specialists to better meet the needs of our gifted students. The AIG specialist will work in the classroom with the teacher to ensure flexible grouping and provide small group support.

In addition to our cluster grouping practices, schools also have an Intervention and Enrichment block (I/E) of time in their schedule. Data from a variety of assessments are used to group students in the I/E block. This grouping is flexible and dependent on the needs of the students. Students that do not need intervention on standards receive enrichment opportunities. Some examples of the enrichment is Problem-Based Learning Exploration, Shakespeare Analysis, Literature Circles, etc.

To improve this practice, we will:

- provide more suggestions for enrichment
- continue to analyze data for flexible grouping
- monitor EVAAS data to determine student growth trends

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Social and emotional needs of gifted learners is an area that we need to develop. We want to explore research-based practices and provide professional development.

### **Sources of Evidence:** DEPs

IDEPs

Program descriptions

Description of service options

AIG Comprehensive Profile

AIG student folder

K-2 Enrichment Seminar Referral

Course Guide

Student Sign up

Honors Guides

Advanced Placement Syllabus

**7/7/2016**

District and school newsletters

Emails

Meetings

Staff Development

Notification of AIG Students form

Regularly scheduled meetings with AIG Specialists

District and school websites

Teacher Information Packet

Class Rosters

Meeting Agendas

Schedules of Professional Development and AIG Specialists meetings

Logs of AIG Specialists collaboration contacts with colleagues

Focus Group

School AIG Team

## Standard 5: Partnerships

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

### **Practice A**

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

- ☐ academic and intellectual
- ☐ social and emotional.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools is working to expand the relationships with parents, families and the community to build a partnership in order to support the needs of the AIG students. Communication among the AIG stakeholders is essential to ensure success of our AIG program.

We will increase strategies and efforts to share information about our AIG program. We plan to use multiple media to disseminate information.

To increase support to the community and ensure that the needs of our AIG learners are met, Richmond County Schools will conduct seminars for parents and community. These seminars will focus on issues and concerns that exist among our AIG learners. We plan to provide annual seminars for parents and the community. These seminars foster collaboration and provide parents with information to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our gifted learners. Currently we are planning seminars on the following topics:

- high school planning
- College Foundation of North Carolina
- Advanced Placement
- New SAT
- Social and emotional needs
- Multiple Tiered System of Support

We also plan to schedule annual stakeholder meetings to discuss services for our gifted learners. These meetings will increase collaboration and provide feedback to help improve our gifted program.

The AIG Specialists will hold AIG Focus Committee meetings with parents, teachers, and administrators at individual schools to discuss the details of the current plan, share concerns, address questions, and make suggestions in order to improve the plan to better support the gifted students.

In addition to the AIG Focus Committees at individual schools, the AIG Coordinator and Specialists partner with a variety of parents, teachers and administrators to form the AIG Steering Committee. The AIG Steering Committee discusses information about the program, such as the referral process and the identification process in order to better serve the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of the gifted students.

We also plan to continue our partnership with NC Advanced Placement Partnership. This partnership has allowed us to improve our current Advanced Placement program. We hope that through this continued partnership, we will see better AP scores and more academic rigor in classrooms. In addition to the AP Partnership, we also have partnerships with the following to support our gifted learners:

- A Golden Leaf Grant has allowed us to partner with Discovery Education, supporting a blended environment to increase experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).
- A Quest Grant has allowed us to partner with the University of North Carolina at Pembroke to increase literacy in our middle schools.
- Discovery Place Kids is a partner with Richmond County Schools and provides hands on learning in science.
- Camp Millstone, a 4-H Camp, has a long partnership with our schools. Many experiences are provided such as hatching baby chicks for all our second graders and various field trips to the camp to explore nature. These endeavors strengthen curriculum areas for our gifted learners.
- Richmond Community College (RCC) is a strong community partner. This partnership has allowed us to increase the college courses that our high schoolers take as dual enrolled students. Each year the number of students taking these Career and College Promise courses increases. RCC recently received a grant, RCC Guarantee, which allows our high school students to continue RCC after graduating for free in order to earn an Associate of Arts or Science degree.

These partnerships allow Richmond County Schools to address academic, social and emotional needs of our students.

To continue to strengthen this standard, we will:

- Improve partnerships in our elementary schools
- Establish processes to develop consistency in our elementary programming with partnerships
- Continue our NC Advanced Placement Partnership
- Continue to meet with various stakeholders to support gifted learners
- Continue partnerships with RCC
- Continue to seek grants that strengthen learning in our schools

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Realizing that communication is imperative to the success of our program, the AIG specialists and coordinator work with classroom teachers, both directly and indirectly. Communication with stakeholders is achieved through PLCs, home/school communications, district newsletters, parent conferences, progress reports and nine weeks grade reports.

At the elementary and middle school levels, communication to parents is fostered through newsletters, report cards, progress reports, and school webpages. Twice a year, Richmond County Schools hosts conference days for parents and we plan to have student-led conferences in our AIG classes. We also have a Parent AIG Handbook that provides information about our gifted program.

Richmond County Schools has all school board meetings televised. We plan to make annual presentations to our local school board that provides updates on our implementation of the program standards and practices, as well as spotlight gifted students for their academic endeavors. This will also keep our community informed.

Classroom teachers are a critical group to share information about the implementation of our AIG plan. We will conduct beginning of the year training sessions on our AIG plan. This will inform teachers and administrators about our plan and how we support gifted learners. Throughout the year, we plan to conduct AIG Focus Meetings to gather information about the AIG plan and ways it can be improved.

In addition to the teachers, we have been working with our counselors to improve experiences for our gifted learners. Counselors not only support emotional and social needs of learners, they also work with them on classes and opportunities. The work with counselors helps them to plan educational experiences for our students. A major focus with middle school counselors over the last three years has been on creating four year high school plans. These plans include information on:

- Richmond Community College courses in high school
- North Carolina School of Math and Science – Residential and Virtual
- NCVPS – Online classes to offer courses that we currently do not offer face to face or courses offered in fifth periods or summer classes
- North Carolina Governors School
- CFNC – College Foundation of North Carolina

Not only do counselors meet with each student, they also hold parent seminars to inform parents of the various opportunities that are available to their child in high school.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- Continue our parent seminars for high school planning
- Use digital techniques to increase communication
- Continue support for gifted learners in PLCs with teachers and administrators
- Continue collaboration with stakeholders on the AIG plan

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Realizing that communication is imperative to the success of our program, AIG Specialists and Coordinator will work with an advisory group to develop, implement, and monitor the AIG program.

Currently, the AIG Coordinator is a representative on many advisory groups in the district. The following advisory groups are attended regularly in which periodic updates are given on the gifted



education program:

- School Improvement Advisory Group
- School Health Advisory Committee
- Career and Technical Education Advisory Group
- Exceptional Children Advisory Group.

These advisory groups have committee members representing various stakeholders. School administrators, teachers, community members, business partners, parents and other school personnel attend these advisory groups and assist in providing feedback on development and implementation of the AIG program.

The AIG Specialist at each school have an advisory group that meets to discuss the implementation of the AIG program. The AIG School Advisory Groups discuss students and the best instructional methods to increase achievement of our AIG students.

This is a practice that we will work to strengthen. We will have more frequent AIG Advisory Meetings. These meetings will be more formal than they are at the present time.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- Have a system advisory group that meets at least twice a year
- Improve communication that assists in the implementation and monitoring of the AIG plan
- Continue to meet and provide periodic updates in other advisory group meetings

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** The AIG department believes that a concentrated effort must be made to inform all parents/families of opportunities in their native language and make AIG services accessible to all.

The AIG program works to collaborate with classroom teachers, parents, and other specialists to meet the needs of the gifted learners. There are scheduled times for AIG Specialists to collaborate with ESL teachers in an effort to identify and place minority students. Parents are informed about the program through informational documents such as newsletters, student essays, Peachjar and AlertNow phone messages.

We will continue to communicate through multiple procedures and in multiple languages.

#### **Practice E**

Forms partnerships with institutions of higher education, local business and industry, and other stakeholders within the community to enhance and gain support for AIG programs and services.

7/7/2016

**District Response:** Involving the community in the AIG program creates a strong foundation to enhance and gain support for the students and program services. The higher education institutions and local businesses open new opportunities for the gifted students.

The AIG Specialists are instrumental in supporting community sponsored activities:

- Science Olympiad
- Beta Club
- Summer Enrichment
- Duke TIP
- Summer Ventures
- Governor's School
- Richmond Community College
- University of North Carolina at Pembroke
- Battle of the Books
- Battle of the Books and Beyond in Middle School

AIG Specialists have partnered and will continue to seek grants with Pee Dee Electric through the Bright Ideas Grants to fund innovative units to extend experiences of the gifted students. Local business leaders and experts in various fields of endeavor volunteer to share their expertise.

AIG programs also need volunteers that will provide information and learning experiences for gifted learners. The AIG Specialists will pursue volunteers to enhance units taught in gifted pull out classes. For example, when we are teaching our stock market unit, we will have community members come in to provide information to support the unit and provide students with critical information that is needed to understand the big ideas of the unit.

We also have a high school career day that is a collaborative project with the Chamber of Commerce. This career day allows community members to provide critical information on a variety of careers in our area. The purpose of this event is to allow students to gain information on careers and understand the requirements needed to pursue each career.

Another partnership that supports our AIG program is the collaboration with Richmond Community College (RCC). Our gifted students are taking community college courses under Career and College Promise. These courses increase students college experiences and provide them with experiences to prepare them for a four year university. RCC continues to add courses that allow our students to take rigorous courses that transfer to universities. This partnership is critical to our AIG program and services because it allows unique college experiences for our students.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- Continue to increase offerings at RCC
- Increase information sessions on activities like Summer Ventures and the School of Science and Math
- Seek grant opportunities with institutions of higher education that strengthen teachers instructional methods
- Continue community experiences that support gifted learners

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**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Ensure that parent advisories meet at least twice a year.

**Sources of Evidence:** Focus Meeting Agendas and Attendance

AIG Steering Committee Agendas and Attendance

Minutes from meetings

Parent, Teacher, Administrator & Student Survey

Seminar Information and attendance roster

Copy of home/school communication report

Copy of Newsletter

Sign in sheet from parent teacher conference day

Board Agendas

Parent Information Packet

PowerPoints from training sessions

List of parent/community participation in any capacity

Record of students recommended for/participating in community sponsored activities

## **Standard 6: Program Accountability**

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

### **Practice A**

Develops a written AIG plan to describe the local AIG program, in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy (N.C.G.S. § 115C-150.5-.8 [Article 9B]), which has been approved by the LEA's school board and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools has a comprehensive AIG plan describing the local AIG program in accordance with state legislation (article 9b).

Richmond County Schools' AIG Coordinator and AIG Specialists analyzed data and feedback to guide the development of the new plan. We will implement, monitor and evaluate the AIG plan by collecting data to ensure the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of the gifted learners are met effectively and efficiently.

The revision process began during a professional development day in fall 2016; AIG Specialists did the self-assessment to determine the rating of each standard. The team discussed evidence that supports our assessment rating in each standard.

Data collected from various stakeholders also ensures changes within the plan in order to meet the diverse needs of our community. Current EVAAS data reflects that 87% of our teachers meet or exceed expected growth. We realize that the strengthening of our core instruction has created the high growth that our schools are experiencing. However, we also know from our EOG / EOC data that we need to utilize more complex and rigorous instructional materials to increase our percentage of proficient students in all grades. Using this data will assist us in monitoring and evaluating our local AIG program.

Our AIG plan provides opportunities for various stakeholders to assist in plan development and monitoring. Evaluation methods will consist through the duration of the plan to assist in continuous improvement and our self-assessments.

In June 2016 this plan will go to the Richmond County School Board for approval.

### **Practice B**

Monitors the implementation of the local AIG program and plan in accordance with current legislation and state policies to ensure fidelity of implementation for all AIG program components.

**District Response:** The local program will be monitored to ensure the fidelity of its implementation in accordance with current policies and the NC AIG Standards. The District AIG Coordinator will consistently monitor each school's implementation of the plan. The implementation of the plan

throughout the district will be evaluated for effectiveness utilizing various data collected throughout each year. Current data reflects that our implementation of the plan has areas that need to be strengthened. One area that needs strengthening is scheduling of professional development opportunities for AIG Specialists and AIG PLCs.

The District AIG Coordinator will continue to work closely with the AIG Specialists to ensure that we are implementing the plan to fidelity. Scheduled AIG PLCs monthly will occur afterschool to examine the implementation of the local AIG plan. These PLCs will allow AIG specialist to discuss the services they are providing to our schools.

Data collection is instrumental in assisting with monitoring the local AIG plan. We will annually collect data from our stakeholders to identify improvement opportunities. Utilizing professional development sessions, Principals' meetings, grade level PLCs and School Improvement Team meetings are groups that we will encourage discussion and feedback of the local AIG plan implementation. We will then annually report to our Steering Committee the strengths and areas to improve in our current plan.

The District AIG Coordinator will review and collect evidence on the implementation of our AIG plan. This documentation will reveal how each school is implementing the local AIG plan as well as state standards.

Each school site will have flexibility for services as they make decisions and plan for their advanced learners, as the district team recognizes the diversity in our county. The monthly AIG PLC meetings will assist us with ensuring consistency in the implementation of our AIG plan.

For 2016 – 2019, the process to monitor the local AIG plan will:

- require monthly AIG Specialists PLCs
- collect annual data through surveys and google forms
- require school monitoring visits each semester
- analyze test data in reading, math and science
- conduct parent and school personnel surveys
- require meetings with school determination teams and advisory groups

The District AIG Coordinator and AIG Specialists will analyze data collected to monitor the implementation of the plan and ensure that all practices align with current legislation and state policies.

### **Practice C**

Uses and monitors state funds allotted for the local AIG program according to state policy.

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools continues to appropriately use and monitor state funds allotted to provide services for our gifted population. A majority of these funds cover AIG Specialists' salaries. Remaining funds are closely monitored through the district's Departments of Finance and Human Resources and the District AIG Coordinator. These funds are utilized to support our gifted program and ensure that the plan is implemented with fidelity.

The District AIG Coordinator is provided with the state AIG allotment. A budget is then developed based on the local AIG plan.

Our first priority is to have K – 8 AIG Specialists in our schools to provide direct services for gifted students. Many service options in our plan require AIG Specialists to provide differentiated experiences for our gifted students in a resource setting. It is critical to allot funds for these positions. In addition to these positions, materials are provided to the AIG Specialists that allow them to provide rigorous, challenging instruction to our gifted learners.

Another priority for funding is creating K – 12 differentiated units that are complex and rigorous. We focus on "Standard 2: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction" and evaluate annually our units based on data to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our learners.

Funding is also allotted to develop strong service options at the high schools. We have increased our Advanced Placement offerings and ensure that teachers receive materials and training to provide rigorous instruction in these Advanced Placement courses. We are also part of the North Carolina AP Partnership. This partnership provides training and support. This funding allows us to send teachers to AP trainings in the summer. With the support from the AP Partnership, we are able to send more teachers each summer.

The state funding and partnerships will allow us to continue meeting the needs of our gifted learners and provide them with experiences needed to be College and Career Ready.

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Monitoring and sharing student performance data on growth to assess individual needs is imperative to the success of the gifted program in Richmond County. Annual disaggregation of data from multiple sources is completed to determine the needs of our students.

June data meetings are conducted with all schools. Each principal presents their collection of data to the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum, Executive Directors, and Curriculum Directors. The data presentations include data on identified gifted students. The principals include the EOG / EOC scores of the gifted students and if the AIG student's scale score showed positive or negative growth. During this presentation the principals also express ideas about improving instruction for gifted students based on data.

After each district create common exams or benchmark assessments, the academic coaches in each school creates a data presentation that is shared with the Curriculum Directors and AIG Specialists. A major focus is on how each individual child does on the assessment. The data is analyzed by examining what the student's EOG / EOC score is and their percentage correct on the assessment. This helps to inform instruction and ensures stakeholders that our gifted students are receiving appropriate differentiated instruction in order to show growth.

Data will be discussed with the AIG Specialists during our monthly PLCs. They will also work with the classroom teachers to analyze the unit common exams and performance tasks to determine the progress of our gifted students and instructional changes that may need to occur.

Data from Advanced Placement exams are also analyzed to determine the percentage of students who score a three or better on each test. As we analyze this data, some students are not demonstrating scores on the assessments that are reflected by their semester class grade. This has created conversations about rigor and requesting support from our AP Partnership in analyzing rigor in our AP classes.

The District AIG Coordinator works closely with the Director of Accountability and Testing to analyze all data. The coordinator receives data on all state tests and performance indicators that determine each school's accountability.

The data from the 2014 – 2015 school year reflects that 87% of our teachers met or exceeded expected growth. Our proficiency is also increasing at all grade levels. Our high school graduation rate has also increased to 89.3%.

In January of each school year, the district invites the top thirty students from the previous graduating class to a luncheon. The students are asked a series of questions about their preparedness for college. Over the last couple of years, the students claim that they are prepared for college but would like to see more writing experiences in their high school classes. They consistently discuss how much writing they are required to do in college. As a result of these meetings, a writing plan has been created that will provide more writing opportunities while in high school.

Although achievement for all students is increasing, under-served populations are an area we are closely watching. We have an increasing gap with the identification of students from under-served populations. Current data reflects that the AIG program is serving 28% nonwhite students when the total enrollment population is 56% nonwhite students. This is an area of concern that will require consistent data collection that will monitor the trends. The plan will be to look at identification each quarter instead of the two headcount times, fall and spring.

The current system of data analysis will continue for 2016-2019. To improve our already strong practices, we will:

- continue data presentation made by school administrators
- continue to analyze data with academic coaches
- continue to work closely with the Director of Accountability and Testing
- continue support with differentiated instruction
- increase rigor in AP classes through continued professional development
- increase the monitoring of AIG identified students from under-served populations
- continue collaboration with all stakeholders

## **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** It is important to continue to explore strategies and alternative identification methods that accurately assess under-represented populations for gifted services. Consistent monitoring is critical to ensure that we are actively seeking and exploring ways to identify and serve our under-represented populations.

Students will be identified through a comprehensive profile process that includes:

- test data
- giftedness scales
- referrals
- portfolio options

Annual data reports, such as screening rosters and headcount, will reveal diverse populations, identification numbers, growth numbers and services.

Current data reflects that the AIG program is serving 28% nonwhite students when the total enrollment population is 56% nonwhite students. This is not a trend that is observed in all Academically Gifted areas. At our high school, Governor's School is more than 50% nonwhite applicants.

To ensure that we are monitoring these under-served populations, we will:

- collect and review the number of students from under-represented populations that are identified as Academically Intellectually Gifted at least twice a year based on the headcount
- collect screening rosters twice a year to analyze screening procedures
- analyze and monitor trends in screening and identification of under-served populations
- analyze and monitor Advanced Placement representation by diverse students

## **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools currently employs five AIG Specialists, who are under obligation to be licensed or in the process of receiving an AIG add-on license, in order to serve our gifted population. Future candidates who are hired must also adhere to these same guidelines.

To encourage teachers who are not AIG certified, Richmond County Schools offers reimbursement funds to teachers who wish to earn this add-on license. They must verify that they have completed the appropriate coursework and have an overall B average or higher. This opportunity is offered in hopes that we can grow our list of certified AIG teachers in Richmond County Schools.

Collaboration with the Sandhills Region has provided us with many gifted licensed teachers. Since the region is collaborating with UNCP, we hope that they continue annual AIG licensure courses for



our classroom teachers.

Annually, the AIG Coordinator examines the teachers that have an AIG license. This allows for assisting principals with cluster grouping students with personnel that understands gifted learners based on their coursework. These reports are provided by our Human Resources Department.

The AIG Coordinator will also monitor Advanced Placement training for high school teachers. The goal is for all teachers who teach an AP class to receive the week long summer training prior to teaching the course and then attend annual training sessions that provide updates to support their knowledge and pedagogy in an AP course.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- continue to collaborate and pay for gifted licenses
- continue to ensure that AP courses are taught with trained teachers
- continue to hire gifted licensed teachers to provide direct pull-out instruction for gifted learners

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** Revision and reflection on maintaining a quality program for academically and intellectually gifted learners is ongoing in an effort to provide optimal gifted services. We will utilize the Continuous Improvement Cycle to analyze, evaluate and improve our AIG program.

The Continuous Improvement Cycle will be used to review and revise our local AIG program. This ongoing cycle will allow us to collaborate and gather feedback on processes that need to be strengthened.

The Continuous Improvement Cycle utilizes multiple sources of data for continuous program improvement. It includes but is not limited to the following:

- Yearly program surveys
- Established and maintained focus group minutes
- AIG Advisory Group

Once we collect the data, we examine our vision to determine if this is the direction that we want to go based on the alignment with the Richmond County Schools' vision and mission.

After we determine the vision alignment, we put action plans in place to explain what we are going to change or implement. The action plans will be monitored and evaluated by the district coordinator to determine if this action plan is in the best interest of our AIG students.

We will then evaluate the change to ensure that the result is our desired outcome. Decisions will be made to either continue to move forward or to readjust our action plan.

The District AIG Coordinator will provide information about the successful implementation of the AIG

plan.

Feedback from our graduates is also currently used to gather information. This feedback has created changes in our courses and implementation of the AIG program in our middle and high school.

To improve this practice, we will:

- consistently utilize annual surveys for parents, teachers and students
- gather more feedback from various groups on the AIG program

### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools consistently utilizes data to ensure AIG programming meets the needs of our AIG learners. Data is gathered from sources such as surveys, focus groups, social media platforms, and parents / community meetings. These sources of data allow us to gather critical information used to revise our AIG plans.

Data from student focus groups currently have an emphasis on the need for more rigorous writing and coursework at the high school level.

Middle school focus groups want more AIG services. They currently spend time in groups utilizing literature circles to focus on reading standards.

To improve this practice, we will:

- focus on data sources from elementary students
- provide more experiences for all AIG students
- continue to have focus groups that provide feedback on the AIG plan

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Richmond County Schools Board of Education expects transparency with all decisions regarding the students in our schools. All board meetings are videoed and aired live on a local channel. The newspaper is also at all board meetings. We have had opportunities to discuss the AIG plan at board meetings and will continue to provide regular updates and information.

The District AIG Coordinator will review all aspects of the AIG program with school administrators, the local school board, and parents. Richmond County Schools will maintain and refine our collection of data to make consistent data-informed decisions.

To strengthen this practice, we will:

- create an AIG fact sheet that explores programming from elementary to high school
- provide regular updates to stakeholders on the implementation of our AIG plan

### **Practice J**

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

**District Response:** In order to meet the individual needs of our gifted learners; we honor the policies and procedures that safeguard their rights in accordance to Article 9B. The primary goal is to ensure that gifted learners receive the academic services that enable them to maximize their potential.

Article 9B drives the development, improvement, and implementation of the Richmond County gifted program as evidenced by our AIG plan. The Richmond County AIG Program mirrors the state policies and procedures governing the administration of gifted programs and services.

We realize that Due Process rights protect our AIG students and help resolve disagreements.

Richmond County Schools has the following Review of Disagreement process:

#### **Local Administrative Unit**

If a parent or guardian disagrees with the local school administrative unit when 1) a child is not identified as an academically or intellectually gifted student or 2) concerning the appropriateness of services offered to the academically or intellectually gifted student the parent must submit to the AIG Team, through the principal, a letter stipulating specific areas of concern. The parents may request a conference to discuss the concerns and seek resolution. The members of the AIG Team and the principal will review the specific areas of concern and respond to the parent or guardian.

#### **District AIG Coordinator**

If the concerns have not been resolved, the parent may appeal the principal's decision and request that the disagreement be reviewed by the District AIG Coordinator. The Coordinator will review the specific areas of concern regarding identification and/or services. The District AIG Coordinator will respond to the principal and parent.

#### **Associate Superintendent for Curriculum**

If the Coordinator and parent cannot resolve the disagreement, the parent may appeal in writing to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum. The Superintendent for Curriculum or his designee shall review the areas of disagreement and a written response shall be made to the parent or guardian and the principal.

#### **Superintendent**

If the disagreement is still not resolved, the parent or guardian may appeal the Superintendent for Curriculum decision to the Superintendent in writing. A panel will review the decision and offer a final written decision.

#### **Contested Case Hearing**

In the event that the procedure developed under G.S. 115C-150.87 (b)(7) fails to resolve a

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disagreement, the parent or guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of review shall be limited to i) whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically or intellectually gifted student or ii) whether the local plan developed under G.S. 115C – 150.7 has been implemented appropriately with regard to the child. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains finding of fact and conclusions of law. Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, the decision of the administrative law judge becomes final, is binding on the parties, and is not subject to further review under Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

At any point in the hierarchy of discussions, the school system may consider the possibility of mediation with an impartial facilitator.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Continue to collect data on under-served population and develop ideas of ways to ensure they are being identified for AIG.

Develop support for the high school to ensure that students are not dropping out due to social and emotional issues.

**Sources of Evidence:** Student rosters

Staff development rosters

Meeting agendas

DEP's

Newsletter

Parent/student survey results

AIG specialist communication logs

Steering Committee

Budget

Data reports

**Glossary (optional):**

**Appendix (optional):**

AIG 2016 Board Letter.pdf (*Local Board Approval Document*)