

**Rowan-Salisbury Schools**  
**Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan**  
**Effective 2016-2019**

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 30-JUN-16

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Rowan-Salisbury 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 to align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 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, Rowan-Salisbury Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Rowan-Salisbury Schools Vision for local AIG program:** VISION

Where every day, everyone discovers and achieves the extraordinary

**MISSION**

To Inspire and provide opportunities for innovative and engaging learning

**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>
<b>\$1033623.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department publicizes procedures and processes for all stakeholders throughout the district. The AIG plan is housed on the district web site along with procedures for AIG screening and testing. It is our plan to host parent nights and create a flowchart for student identification.

### **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:** The Rowan Salisbury School System employs the following multiple criteria to identify students for the AIG program: student achievement, student aptitude, teacher observation of a student, and student performance. This process includes all efforts to review the entire school population to determine which students may need further assessment and/or placement in differentiated services for gifted education. The screening process will take place annually and will be an ongoing process throughout the year. A recommendation for AIG referral can come from multiple sources including parent, teacher or principal. Additionally, we recognize and accept all AIG identified students transferring into Rowan County from another district within North Carolina utilizing the NC EOG or a nationally normed test for AIG identification.

To develop a comprehensive profile for each student referred for screening, AIG facilitators will gather current aptitude and achievement data on students to determine eligibility as Intellectually Gifted (IG), Academically Gifted (AG), or Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG). Initial aptitude testing will be conducted using the CogAT, a nationally normed aptitude test. A universal screening of all third grade students' aptitude is conducted each year. Current practice places students in a screening pool if total aptitude score is in the 80% or above based on national norms by grade level, or if the student has any subtest score of 90% or higher based on national norms by grade level. Additional aptitude screening will occur each spring in grades 4-8 on students who are referred for screening to ensure that every student has multiple opportunities to qualify for AIG services. Achievement standardized testing data will be reviewed from state EOGs and/or ITBS, a nationally normed achievement test, to determine students who may need additional aptitude testing after the third grade universal screening.

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In an effort to increase AIG student identification of under-represented populations, a new pathway for identification has been created to include additional screening criteria for those students unable to qualify through traditional pathways but with baseline aptitude and achievement scores >80%, Pathway 3 can include, in addition to aptitude or achievement scores >93%, student's semester or yearly grade A in the subject areas of reading and/or math, a performance task, and teacher observation rating. By gathering this information, we can develop a comprehensive profile to determine gifted potential. Identified students will be matched with the program service options that best meets their individual academic and affective needs. Multiple indicators of giftedness are considered. Information from these indicators will be used to develop a plan for AIG services.

Other aptitude measures available for use include the OLSAT and the Naglieri, a non-traditional, nonverbal aptitude assessment. The Naglieri is used as an alternative assessment to reveal aptitude in potential students whose ability may not be discovered with traditional measures. Moving forward, our district will use the CogAT nonverbal subtest to meet the needs of a non-traditional standardized test. Performance-based tasks are also utilized as another non-traditional measure to provide students with a more authentic assessment to show their potential giftedness.

The identification process involves data collection on all students who may show a need for differentiated services. The formal identification process for the Academically and Intellectually Gifted Program does not typically begin until third grade. In August 2016, the district hired an AIG nurturing teacher to consult with K-3 teachers as needed to meet the needs of advanced learners in grades K-3. For the 2016/2017 school year services provided by this nurturing teacher include whole class kindergarten enrichment provided at every school. Moving forward, services provided by this nurturing teacher will include nurturing (whole and small group) and providing resources to enrich and accelerate the curriculum to teachers in grades K-3. The needs of those K-3 students who consistently demonstrate a strong need for differentiation and achieve on an advanced level when compared to their grade level peers may be addressed through a referral to the school's Gifted Education Team for further screening. Identification criteria is available for K-2 students on an individual basis.

The Rowan Salisbury School System currently identifies students in grade 3-8 using multiple pathways. For the 2016-17 school year the following three pathways will be used to identify gifted students in grades 3-8:

Pathway 1 ~ Intellectually Gifted (Aptitude Only)- Must meet one of the following:

98th or higher percentile Composite

98th or higher percentile Verbal Subtest for Reading identification

98th or higher percentile Nonverbal and Quantitative Subtests for Math identification

Pathway 2 ~ Academically and Intellectually Gifted (Aptitude + Achievement)- Students must meet criteria for math and/or reading:

Sum of aptitude and achievement percentiles of 183 or higher.

Pathway 3 ~ Academically Gifted (Multiple Criteria)- Students must meet 3 out the 5 criteria for math and/or reading:

Aptitude 93rd percentile or higher

Achievement 93rd percentile or higher

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Grade A in specific subject area for year/semester  
Student motivation 30+ on teacher observation checklist  
Performance Task rubric score 3 out of 5

\*Must have a minimum aptitude test score of 80th percentile for consideration.

High school identification will be done using existing assessment data or Pathway 3 on an individual basis, dependent on student need.

We understand the need to develop a screening process to our K-2 students showing need. Our goal moving forward is to create and implement a comprehensive identification process for select K-2 students showing clear need for gifted services. We will develop criteria to support a referral that may include achievement indicators showing consistent work 2-3 years ahead of grade level; mCLASS data, student work samples, Lexile levels. Additionally sources for use may include documentation of students who have grade skipped, teacher recommendation, and data collected from administration of the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS). Screening for K-2 students referred for testing may include administration of the Cogat, OLSAT or Naglieri to obtain an aptitude score. Criteria for identification will be developed to include an aptitude and achievement component.

### **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:** Multiple screening information on referred students is collected from all appropriate sources. If the screening pool does not reflect the minority population of the school, care is given to collect the names of the highest achieving minority students in the school for screening. Assessment instruments reflect sensitivity to economic conditions, learning differences, and diversity of students so that equal opportunity is provided to all students.

The implementation of a new, non-traditional pathway along with peer and self-nomination procedures, it is our goal to identify a greater percentage of under-represented students.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** All AIG teachers have access to online screening, referral and identification documents and the process is clearly defined each year. Professional development is provided as needed to ensure consistency throughout the LEA.

In addition, we will develop a video to assist schools with the screening, referral and identification processes.

It is our goal to implement student-led conferencing district-wide, which will allow students to facilitate

their own learning goals and objectives as well as share what they have already learned.

### **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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System's current AIG Plan is posted on the district website available to all parents to ensure access to our district's procedures for AIG screening and services. Additionally, it is the expectation that every identified AIG student in Rowan-Salisbury School System will have an AIG record containing paperwork documenting identification and service delivery. Paperwork in the AIG folder includes the Permission to Test letter and the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), both of which include a parent signature of consent. The DEP is created in collaboration with the AIG facilitator, parent and student to outline service options and delivery to the student. Beginning in the Spring of 2017, AIG facilitators will begin using a new DEP designed to enhance student and parent collaboration. Student interests, learning styles, social/emotional functioning will be discussed, as well as academic proof of mastery and student growth.

Elementary and Middle School—Once placement in AIG is determined, a DEP will be created for the student. The DEP will remain in place for the current academic year. It will be created in collaboration with the AIG facilitator, classroom teacher (when applicable), parent and student. A conference will be held at the beginning of the year via face to face meeting, video conference, or telephone to outline, create and obtain parental consent on the DEP for the current school year. Another conference will be held at the end of the school year to conduct a DEP Annual Performance Review to document annual progress and make a recommendation for service delivery for the following year. AIG folders will be maintained in a secure location by the AIG facilitator. Transition of records from elementary to middle school will take place at the end of each school year. Elementary AIG facilitators will personally deliver records to middle school AIG teachers or other designated personnel. Documentation will be retained by elementary AIG facilitators verifying delivery of AIG records.

High School—AIG students transitioning to high school will create a four-year high school academic plan collaboratively with their eighth grade AIG teachers and parents. This plan will incorporate course aligned with college and career readiness. This plan will be reviewed each year by either an AIG facilitator or certified high school guidance counselor.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** We will implement a new, alternative, non-traditional pathway for IG/AIG identification. This pathway will employ multiple criteria including performance tasks and teacher observations.

We will create a flowchart and a parent handbook highlighting screening/identification processes.

**Sources of Evidence:** AIG Plan  
Website

Parent Handbook  
Flowchart

## **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:** The NC SCOS is extended in a variety of ways. In grades 4-8 implementation of William and Mary curriculum units, Socratic seminar, and Singapore Math are all part of the extension of the SCOS. In addition, along with the district's one-to-one implementation, all teachers are trained and practice CCRP (collaborative, connective, relevant and personal instruction).

Acceleration occurs through the implementation of early entrance to kindergarten, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery and Math compacting in the middle grades.

Enrichment is offered on a regular basis both during and after the school day personalized to student interests and skills. They include MakerSpace, Battle of the Books, author visits, Art showcases, Honors Chorus, Band and Genius Hour.

### **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:** The district will continue to enhance differentiation through the use of Blended Learning and flexible grouping. We utilize multiple digital tools to deliver the NC SCOS including problem-based learning, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. We will continue to implement best practices at all levels working in collaboration with instructional design coaches and support staff (media specialists, technology facilitators). Differentiation is implemented in various way including, but not limited to: problem-based learning, personalized student playlists, flipped lessons, thematic units, tiered assignments, choice boards and inquiry based seminars.

In addition to differentiation, all AIG teachers participate in on-going professional development to support gifted learners, as well as the district's digital transformation. Additionally, AIG teachers develop and share curriculum modeling best practices and strategies. All AIG teachers are trained and expected to utilize formative assessment (such as Discovery Education benchmarks, mCLASS, Reading 3D, IXL, etc.). Data results are used to further adapt and adjust instruction. Professional development is offered on the school and district level utilizing workdays and early release days.



### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** The district has recently undergone a digital conversion in which all students grades 3-12 have a personal device. We subscribe to multiple online resources that enhance and extend the professional development of teachers. Schoology provides the learning management system to afford a virtual professional learning community (PLC) for AIG teachers. PLCs also meet regularly to discuss research-based strategies for gifted learners and to share best practices. Teachers regularly attend workshops within and outside the district, as well as conferences (NCAGT, NCGT, NCMLE, NCRA, NCAEE).

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** All students in the Rowan-Salisbury School System have access to 21st century content and individual schools/teachers are able to select apps and others resources to better facilitate instruction based on individual student needs. Because of this, teachers are able to focus on the Blended Learning model and implement the 4C's of 21st century skills: Critical thinking, Communication, Collaboration and Creativity.

AIG teachers implement problem-based learning, socratic seminars/discussions, brain-based strategies, etc. on an ongoing basis.

Going forward, teachers will work together to create common teaching modules to enhance instruction.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** All schools in the district are required to use both formative and summative data to inform instruction and flexible grouping. All teachers utilize Discovery Education benchmark data at least once a quarter. In addition, AIG teachers use multiple assessment strategies including higher order thinking questioning, one-on-one conferencing, exit tickets, etc. Both teachers and students track individual performance data.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** We understand the social and emotional of gifted learners must be met. In an effort to recognize and meet those unique needs, AIG teachers are trained in social-emotional

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development of gifted learners. We have developed and implemented a new Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) that includes parent, student and teacher input in documenting and meeting the social and emotional development of learners. Some of the targeted strategies in place to meet those needs include, but are not limited to: bibliotherapy, student-led conferencing, personalized student playlists, and strategic heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping strategies. Teachers use blended learning tools along with formative assessment to ensure learning is personal and relevant.

**Practice G**

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

**District Response:** With the transition of elementary AIG service delivery to a homeroom model, nurturing services provided to K-3 students has diminished significantly. Service has been inconsistent across the district based on each school's chosen service delivery model. We realized that developing the potential of our young K-3 students is a district expectation and have hired an AIG Nurturing Specialist to provide K-3 nurturing services and research-based curriculum to students in the lower elementary grades. Our goal for this position is to not only provide enrichment whole group and for advanced level students in K-3, but also to provide support for classroom teachers with advanced level students by developing professional development focusing on skills and behaviors of younger gifted students and best practices for differentiated instruction and enhancement strategies.

For the 2016-2017 school year, the AIG Nurturing Specialist will focus nurturing services on kindergarten. The specialist will provide whole group instruction to each kindergarten classroom in district through a series of four lessons targeting the development of critical thinking skills and problem solving skills. Lessons have been created to provide specific, targeted instruction focusing on: classifying, sorting, analogies, logic puzzles, maker space and basic coding. Classroom teachers will be provided with an overview of lessons and targeted instruction prior to the first classroom visit and will be encouraged to observe lessons as they are modeled.

Moving forward, it is our goal to add additional AIG Nurturing Specialists to expand the nurturing services provided to grades K-3. A combination of whole group and small group nurturing will be provided to students in grades 1-3 using PETS (Primary Education Thinking Skills) and district created resources. Small groups will be formed using anecdotal notes and data collected through a behavior checklist compiled by AIG Nurturing Specialist during kindergarten enrichment services. Additional criteria for inclusion in small group nurturing may include teacher observation, under-represented populations, and transfer students. Our hope is by providing this early enrichment to advanced level students, along with providing whole group enrichment, we will ultimately see our number of identified AIG students increase.

The district also has a policy allowing entry to Kindergarten to four year old children meeting criteria pursuant to G.S. 115c-364(d). See appendix.

**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:** The district AIG teachers participate in collaboration among AIG personnel and other professional staff. This occurs within schools and at the district level. AIG collaboration is evident in the ongoing development and implementation of the curriculum.

We will begin AIG professional development on the district early release days.

We will continue to develop systems and processes for sharing information regarding AIG identified students as well as those that are on the screening pool list.

### **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:** All AIG students have a Differentiated Education Plan that is reviewed at least once a year with parents/families. We have created a new, up-to-date DEP and will begin a process of housing/sharing student data via an online platform.

We will work collaboratively with the district technology department to develop our online system.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** The Rowan-Salisbury AIG department will continue to expand the NC Standard Course of Study with new and research-based instructional strategies.

We will implement an accelerated math curriculum at all middle schools.

We will utilize a new DEP for all students.

We will develop an online system for AIG student data including DEPs.

We will hire a K-3 nurturing teacher to work system-wide.

### **Sources of Evidence:** DEP Sample

Lesson Plans

Math Curriculum

HR records

### **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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System employs the Director of Instructional Programs that oversees the AIG program and plan. The director is AIG certified.

#### **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:** Regularly scheduled AIG meetings for elementary and middle school personnel occur to discuss best practices and create allow time for collaboration. It is our belief that teachers learn best from each other and collaboration with like groups is essential for teacher capacity. All AIG teachers have opportunities to expand their curriculum and offer enrichment beyond the Standard Course of Study. All teachers are a part of regular data meetings following benchmark assessments.

#### **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:** School administrators often do not know what constitutes a gifted classroom; therefore, we will develop videos and/or learning modules to guide an awareness of best practices.

AIG teachers will continue to work with school personnel to ensure all stakeholders are knowledgeable of gifted behaviors and the screening/referral process.

AIG teachers will continue to work with counselors to ensure familiarity with service delivery options and screening procedures.

We will survey AIG staff to determine PD needs.

### **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:** It is the expectation that every AIG student be clustered and taught by an AIG licensed teacher (when available) or a teacher currently enrolled in an approved state licensure program. On the elementary level, eleven of twenty elementary schools are using a homeroom model of AIG service delivery, with AIG students being clustered with high-achieving students for math and reading instruction. Funds are being allocated to reimburse cost for those elementary teachers utilizing the homeroom model to obtain AIG add-on licensure from an IEH. Elementary and middle school administrators place AIG students with AIG licensed teachers. All cluster teachers, elementary and middle school level, receive annual AIG professional development on the district level. At the high school level, Honors and AP teachers are expected to meet district requirements overseen by the Director of Secondary Education.

Due to difficulty filling positions with AIG licensed teachers, the district will begin offering a one-day AIG Immersion Experience through AIG department, beginning in fall of 2017. This experience will qualify teachers to teach AIG students in a clustered grouping within the Rowan-Salisbury School district. It is the expectation that every teacher instructing AIG students (without AIG licensure and not currently enrolled in an AIG licensure) will participate in this program. This program will provide training on the following topics: local testing/identification procedure, social/emotional needs of gifted students, differentiation/teaching strategies for gifted students and an examination of our local AIG plan.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** All professional development in the district is based on the district strategic plan. We will offer AIG PD through several methods including our annual Back to School Conference, early release days and through the blended learning model.

We will continue to provide PD based on best practices in gifted education and our district strategic plan.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** The AIG Department will provide additional opportunities and time for teachers to plan and implement their professional learning. This will be accomplished during the summer, at our

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local Back to School Conference and on district early release days.

Teachers will also have the opportunity to attend state and other conferences/and participate in additional PD opportunities.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** Increase collaboration time  
Increase PD opportunities

**Sources of Evidence:** Meeting agendas  
conference materials  
PD rosters

## **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:** Since all services in the district are provided by AIG certified teachers, personnel is aware of the needs of gifted learners and have participated in institutes of higher learning certification programs as well as professional development on topics pertinent to gifted learners.

We will continue informal and ongoing K-2 PD to help inform instruction for higher learners.

We will implement a continuum rubric for identification. This rubric will be used as one component of our alternative pathway for identification.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** First and foremost, AIG teachers teach the standards in the standard course of study. Differentiation strategies and best practices are emphasized throughout the district.

We will implement vertical, lateral and horizontal collaboration with AIG staff.

### **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:** All instruction in the district is based on the strategic plan. There are eight main focus areas including:

1. professional learning communities
2. blended learning
3. CCRP
4. guided instruction
5. problem-based learning
6. rigor
7. data

8. balanced literacy

The role of AIG teachers is to build upon the NCSCoS and the district goals and enhance and engage high-level learners.

**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:** The AIG plan is available to all stakeholders via the AIG website. Hard copies are provided upon request.

AIG teachers work collaboratively within their school community to ensure differentiation and nurturing are common practices in the classroom.

The addition of a district nurturing teacher will strengthen this practice in the future.

**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 AIG department is working to strengthen communication among and between teachers and school especially at key transition points.

We will implement an online platform to house student data, which will enhance clerical procedures allowing more time for communication regarding service delivery.

Vertical meetings will be held annually.

**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:** All schools in the district have formed data teams and created data walls. All school staff are involved in the disaggregation of data; therefore, everyone is constantly aware of the needs of all students.

School personnel regularly meet to discuss student achievement and needs. AIG teachers/counselors have ongoing communication in regards to the social/emotional needs of the students.

Differentiated, blending learning models makes meeting the needs of students easier through a



personal approach.

### **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:** For a student to be considered for early admission to Kindergarten or grade-skipping, an aptitude of 98 percentile or higher is needed on a standardized test and on an achievement test for the grade level to which the student is being accelerated. In addition, a subject-specific EOG score and the year-end average must be 93 percent or above for acceleration.

A rubric is used Math I placement in middle school that considers achievement, aptitude, grades, and teacher recommendations.

The district participates in CDM and will begin implementation of middle school math compacting.

High School AIG students are encouraged to enroll in AP and Honors courses.

### **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:** The district AIG department is constantly seeking new ways to identify our under-represented students. Our goal is to identify no less than 10 percent of each school's population as gifted.

We will implement an alternative pathway for identification that uses non-traditional approaches to identification.

We will continue to advocate for dual enrollment and virtual school offerings.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** All schools in the district offer extra-curricular opportunities for all students, including AIG. Because each school's population is different, offerings differ from school to school. Some examples include Model UN, Battle of the Books, Geography Bee, and LEGO robotics.

### **Practice J**

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

**District Response:** Because the district has a strong focus on CCRP (collaborative, connected, relevant, personalized), teachers at each grade level are expected to make learning personal for all students. Many times, this requires flexible grouping within and across grade spans. All grouping strategies are based on ongoing, fluid formative assessment data.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** Improve vertical and horizontal alignment.  
Implement grade span transition meetings that are focused on instruction.  
Implement alternative pathway for student identification.  
Increase screening pool.  
Publicize extra-curricular programs/events.

**Sources of Evidence:** Meeting agendas  
Pathway documents  
Screening pool lists  
Website

## 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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department continuously strives to develop intentional and meaningful partnerships between the school/families as well as the greater community.

To better serve our students and families, we will create a parent handbook to outline basis policies and procedures for the AIG program. This handbook will highlight student services throughout the K-12 experience.

Additionally, we will maintain the school system AIG website and continue to add relevant resources for parents and other stakeholders.

Because our district has a strong emphasis on problem-based learning and real-world experiences, many AIG teachers work with members of the professional community. We will continue to foster and grow these relationships.

### **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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department currently shares with all stakeholders pertinent AIG information including the AIG plan, identification procedures and policies related to academically/intellectually gifted.

This practice is achieved through multiple modes of communication including:

1. District AIG website
2. Parent Nights for AIG families
3. Video(s) highlighting program
4. Social Media posts

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department understands the importance of involving all stakeholders in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the local AIG program and plan. To maintain and strengthen this practice, we will:

1. Maintain an advisory committee to implement and monitor the plan
2. Gather program feedback during annual DEP meetings
3. Administer annual surveys
4. Hold student 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 Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department informs parents/families and the community of AIG opportunities through an on-going process. Because communication can always be strengthened, we will continue to monitor and provide relevant AIG information through various formats including:

1. Communicate through district website
2. Utilize the district Connect Ed system
3. Translate forms and other materials for ESL families

### **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.

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department is fortunate to have access to several local colleges including Catawba College, Pfeiffer University, Livingstone College and Rowan-Cabarrus Community College. In addition, we have several local businesses that work with us on problem-based learning experiences for our students.

One of the primary focus areas of the district strategic plan is CCRP; collaborative, connected, relevant and personal learning. Many AIG teachers partner with the institutes of higher learning/local businesses to achieve this goal.

Moving forward, we would like to develop parent nights and Saturday enrichment experiences involving both colleges and businesses.

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**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** The newly created AIG parent handbook will strengthen Standard 5. This will be a go-to resource for both parents, teachers and other stakeholders to quickly find guiding and supporting information. The handbook will be digital; however, we will produce print copies when necessary.

We will create an AIG informational video that will be housed on the district website

The advisory committee will focus on ways to build stronger relationships with local colleges and businesses

**Sources of Evidence:** Handbook

Website

Teacher informational meetings

## **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:** The Rowan-Salisbury AIG department forms and utilizes a committee of stakeholders consisting of teachers, parents, administrators, and BOE members to develop a plan in accordance with state legislation. The committee surveys stakeholders, researches other district AIG plans and visits other districts to help strengthen the services provided to our students.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** The current AIG plan is available to all stakeholders both online and in print (upon request). Processes and procedures are in place to facilitate the implementation of the program and to oversee its' effectiveness. The AIG Director along with other central office administrators and school leadership teams are available to assist teachers and ensure that articles in the plan are being met. These individuals monitor program effectiveness and deliver new instructional and assessment strategies when necessary.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** State funds are used to supplement the AIG program through employing highly qualified AIG certified teachers. All AIG teachers in the district are either certified or working on certification from a college or university. State funds are also used to purchase supplemental material and assist in providing professional development for the latest trends/best practices in gifted education.

### **Practice D**

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

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**District Response:** Testing and accountability reports are received yearly and discussions are held to assist in the interpretation of data and how it may drive instruction. EOG data is disaggregated by district, school, grade, teacher, and student subgroups. Data teams exist in all district schools and both formative and summative data is analyzed and evaluated on an ongoing basis. All students are given benchmark tests throughout the school year so that adjustments may be made to their personalized instruction.

**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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department is aware of the need to identify more students from our under-represented populations. Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, the district will implement a new alternative pathway for AIG identification. In addition, we will increase our testing pool and create a self/peer nomination process.

We will hire an AIG certified teacher to begin nurturing our elementary students across the district as well as work with regular education teachers on the identification process.

**Practice F**

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

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System human resources department maintains highly qualified status for all employees, including AIG staff. In addition, the AIG Department monitors the certification process for all teachers that serve gifted students.

**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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System has a diverse committee that helps develop and write the local AIG plan. This committee will continue to monitor the AIG plan throughout the next three years. In addition, AIG teachers will meet annually with all parents during DEP meetings, student-led conferences, etc. to gather program input. We will begin meeting with students advisory groups in the 2016-2017 school year.

**Practice H**

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

comprehensive program evaluation.

**District Response:** The AIG department would like to strengthen the sources of data that is regularly reviewed as a way to better monitor the program. Currently, we survey parents and discuss students data. In addition, we will implement student advisory groups/surveys.

#### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** The AIG department will create a digital district AIG report card on a yearly basis to keep stakeholders up-to-date on plan and program updates. This digital report will show student growth as well as updates/changes to the 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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department protects the rights of all AIG students through ensuring that all policies, procedures and practices are followed with fidelity and confidentiality. AIG identification is carried following strict guidelines ensure all students receive equal access to services. AIG identified students transferring into the Rowan-Salisbury School System from another district that utilizes the NC EOG or a nationally normed test for AIG identification, will receive automatic identification in RSSS. Reassessment for possible screening and AIG identification will be done carried out with a yearly review based on new NC EOG data. Parents of AIG students in RSSS have the right to be informed of testing and service delivery with written consent being required prior to testing or change to service delivery. Forms and procedures are in place that safeguard the rights of the AIG students and their family. These include: Permission to Evaluate and/or Test, Differentiated Educated Plan for each grade level, Discontinuation/Refusal of Services, and Transfer of Records. All of the mentioned information will be included in the newly created district AIG parent handbook.

#### **Procedures to Resolve Disagreements Regarding Gifted Procedures:**

The Rowan-Salisbury School System has a formal procedure to resolve disagreements with the school system, including the right to petition for a hearing with an Administrative Law Judge. The Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Education Program abides by the document.

#### **Procedure to Resolve Disagreement :**

##### **Step I. Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team Conference**

1. Parent/guardian may make a request in writing to the school principal requesting a conference with the local school Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team.
2. A conference with the parent/guardian and the local school Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team will be granted within 10 calendar days of the request. Parent will



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be notified in writing within 5 calendar days.

If the disagreement is not resolved at the local school Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team conference, and the principal was in attendance, proceed to Step III.

**Step II. Principal Conference**

1. Parent/guardian may make a written request for a conference with the principal to review the decision within 15 calendar days of the local school Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team decision.

2. Principal will review the recommendation with the chairperson of the local school Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team.

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

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

**Step II. Principal Conference**

1. Parent/guardian may make a written request for a conference with the principal to review the decision within 15 calendar days of the local school Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team decision.

2. Principal will review the recommendation with the chairperson of the local school Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Needs Determination Team.

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

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

**Step III. Appeal to the Director of the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Program**

1. Parent/guardian may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the Director of the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Program within 15 calendar days of receiving the principal's response.

2. The Director of the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Program will review the grievance within 5 calendar days of receipt of the appeal.

3. Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the appeal, the Director of the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Program will schedule a conference concerning the appeal. A written summary of the appeal will be provided to the parent/guardian and principal within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

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

**Step IV. Appeal to the Associate Superintendent or Superintendent**

1. Parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Director of the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Program to the Associate Superintendent or Superintendent within 15 calendar days of receiving the response.

2. The Associate Superintendent or Superintendent will review the grievance within 10 calendar days of receipt of the appeal, and will send a written response to the parent/guardian and principal concerning the outcome.

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

Step V. Appeal to the Rowan-Salisbury School System's Board of Education

1. Parent/guardian may appeal to the RSS Board of Education in writing within 15 calendar days following the written response from the Associate Superintendent or Superintendent.

2. The board shall offer a final written decision within 30 calendar days.

In the event that the local grievance procedure fails to resolve the disagreement, then the state level grievance procedure will be implemented.

Step VI. State Level Grievance Procedure

1. Parent/guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of the review shall be limited to:

A. Whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically and/or intellectually gifted student, or

B. Whether the local plan has been implemented appropriately in regard to the child.

2. Following the hearing, the Administrative Law Judge shall make a decision that contains findings of fact and conclusion 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.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** During the implementation of this plan, we will regularly monitor each standard and update as necessary. We will create and share a parent AIG handbook for all parents along with a flowchart for student identification.

**Sources of Evidence:** Website

Monitoring Meeting Agendas

Parent Handbook

Identification Flowchart

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**Glossary (optional):**

**Appendix (optional):**

AIG Plan Appendix.pdf (*Appendix*)  
Parent Letter D.pdf (*Appendix*)  
AIG Screening Profile.pdf (*Other Forms*)  
Cluster Letter.pdf (*Other Forms*)  
DEP .pdf (*Other Forms*)  
DEP Annual Performance Review .pdf (*Other Forms*)  
EarlyK.pdf (*Other Forms*)  
Math Cluster Rubric .pdf (*Other Forms*)  
Parent Letter-I.pdf (*Other Forms*)  
Permission to Test.pdf (*Other Forms*)  
Procedure to Disagree.pdf (*Other Forms*)  
Reading Cluster Rubric .pdf (*Other Forms*)