

**Alleghany County Schools**  
**Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan**  
***Effective 2019-2022***

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 09-JUN-20

**LEA Superintendent's Name:** Chad Beasley

**LEA AIG Contact Name:** Melissa Fitzgerald

**Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on:** 12-JUN-19

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Alleghany County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). 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 2019-2022. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

***For 2019-2022, Alleghany County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Alleghany County Schools Vision for local AIG program:** The Alleghany County School System's Academically or Intellectually Gifted Education Program is part of a continuum of services that promotes and supports the academic achievement of all students while emphasizing appropriate educational opportunities for the academically/intellectually gifted child. The AIG program believes that students from all cultural and socioeconomic populations can exhibit exceptional abilities and is committed to providing an appropriately differentiated instructional program responsive to the abilities and needs of all gifted learners to prepare them to be future-ready in a globally competitive world.

**Alleghany County Schools instructional staff will actively work together to further strengthen our program at all levels to be more comprehensive, challenging, enriching and effective as defined by Article 9B, guided by the North Carolina AIG Program Standards and reflected in nationally-accepted best practices in gifted education. The district level team will work with school-level instructional teams to strengthen the program.**

**Alleghany County Schools will focus on leveraging a high-functioning instructional team to help build teacher capacity in terms of pedagogy and best practices for gifted learners. Our AIG Coordinator will be a critical member of this district-level team as we move forward and transform our program. We believe that every teacher should have the tools, strategies, and**

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support necessary to advance learning opportunities for our AIG student population.

**Sources of funding for local AIG program (as of 2019)**

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$75073.00</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**

Develops screening and referral processes that lead to AIG identification at all grade levels.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools AIG screening and referral processes rely on multiple indicators of giftedness. Through the process of using multiple indicators, Alleghany County Schools ensures that identification is equitable and that all students are included.

K-3:

In grades K-3, due to students' rapidly changing academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development, students are not formally identified. The talent development process in these grades provides the AIG Coordinator a regular opportunity to interact with all K-3 students and their teachers to observe potential gifted characteristics. Through this process, the AIG Coordinator utilizes student work samples, student academic interest, teacher and/or principal recommendations, and formal observation scales completed by the classroom teacher or AIG Coordinator to indicate a need for referral.

4-12:

For rising fourth graders the data is collected through a mass aptitude test in the spring prior to entering fourth grade. This information along with the following data points helps determine placement:

- >Cognitive Abilities Aptitude Test (CogAT) scores (e.g. 90% and above);
- >Third-grade EOG (90% and above);
- >Student performance (e.g. grades);
- >Observation Forms (e.g. Teacher Checklist that includes student behaviors, motivation, and interests);
- >Teacher recommendations;
- >Nominations by staff members or parents.

Beyond fourth grade, multiple indicators are utilized to determine a need for services including:

- >Cognitive Abilities Aptitude Test (CogAT) scores (e.g. 90% and above);
- >Summative test data (e.g. EOGs, EOCs, NCFEs 90% and above);
- >Student performance (e.g. grades);
- >Observation Forms (e.g. Teacher Checklist that includes student behaviors, motivation, and interests);
- >Teacher recommendations;
- >Nominations.

Data gathered from students who indicate possible giftedness is analyzed by the AIG Coordinator and the school's Student Success Team. This helps ensure that those who are identified are matched to appropriate services.

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**Practice B**

Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels that provides multiple opportunities to reveal a student's aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve. The criteria may include both qualitative and quantitative data in order to develop a comprehensive learner profile.

**District Response:** The AIG Coordinator works with all classroom teachers to identify students who demonstrate a need for gifted services. A variety of qualitative and quantitative data points are utilized to determine giftedness including student work samples, student academic interest, formal observation scales, summative test scores, classroom performance indicators, and checklist data (e. g. student motivation, behaviors).

**K-3:**

Students in grades K-3 are not formally identified as gifted due to their rapidly changing academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development. However, based on observation during talent development opportunities as well as the following qualitative and quantitative data points, students whose results indicate two or more years above grade level may be considered for acceleration through nurturing (pull-out) groups:

- >Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEA);
- >iReady;
- >Aptitude and achievement scores >97% (Administered by a school psychologist);
- >WIDA/ACCESS;
- >Cross grade-level work samples;
- >Teacher recommendation;
- >Student Success Team recommendation.

**IDENTIFICATION 4-12:****Academically Gifted in Reading**

Students must meet the following minimum requirements:

- >90th percentile or greater composite score on a Standardized Aptitude Test (CogAT);
- >90th percentile or higher in reading on the NC EOG test or End-of-Course (EOC) subject area tests or >PreACT/ACT subtests;
- >Grade A or B in reading (the most recently completed semester or year);
- >Teacher recommendation.

**Academically Gifted in Math**

Students must meet the following minimum requirements:

- >90th percentile or greater composite score on a Standardized Aptitude Test (CogAT);
- >90th percentile or higher in math on the NC EOG test or End-of-Course (EOC) subject area tests or >PreACT/ACT subtests;
- >Grade of A or B in math (the most recently completed semester or year);
- >Teacher recommendation.

**Academically Gifted in Reading and Math**

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Students must meet the following minimum requirements:

- >90th percentile or greater composite score on a Standardized Aptitude Test (CogAT);
- >90th percentile or higher in reading and math on the NC EOG test or End-of-Course (EOC) subject area tests or PreACT/ACT subtests;
- >Grade of A or B in reading and math (the most recently completed semester or year);
- >Teacher recommendation.

#### Intellectually Gifted

Students must meet the following minimum requirement:

- >97th percentile or greater composite score on a Standardized Aptitude Test (CogAT);
- >Average or below-average subject-area achievement as shown by course grades and EOG/EOC or PreACT/ACT scores.

#### Academically and Intellectually Gifted

Students must meet the following minimum requirements:

- >97th percentile or greater composite score on a Standardized Aptitude Test (CogAT);
- >95th percentile or higher in reading and math on the NC EOG test or End-of-Course (EOC) subject area tests or PreACT/ACT subtests;
- >Grade of A in reading and math (the most recently completed semester or year);
- >Teacher recommendation.

The responsibility of gathering the screening information will be that of the Academically Gifted Coordinator. Parents and teachers may also nominate students whose names do not appear in this screening pool (potential). Supporting documentation such as work samples, grades and/or checklists should accompany these nominations.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Through an understanding of district-wide demographics, Allegheny County Schools will continue to examine characteristics of giftedness with teachers in all curriculum areas with special emphasis given to identification of characteristics within minority and low socioeconomic groups.

Our LEA consists of three K-8 schools and one high school. The average daily attendance for the 2018-2019 school year was 1507 and the demographics were as follows:

#### Gender

- >Females-51%
- >Males-49%

#### Race/Ethnicities

- >Asian-.1%

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- >Black of African American-.4%
- >Hispanic-27%
- >American Indian/Alaskan Native-.1%
- >Two or More-2.1%
- >Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander-.06%
- >White-70.2%

#### Subgroups

- >Economically disadvantaged-70%
- >English Language Learners-8%
- >Hispanic-27%
- >Exceptional Children-15%
- >Gifted-9%

Of the 9% who were identified as gifted:

- >Females-52%
- >Males-48%
- >1.4% were Asian
- >11% were Hispanic
- >87.6% were White
- >0% were English Language Learners
- >0% were Exceptional Children

While this data shows equitable access among gender, overrepresentation among white students and under-representation among ELLs and EC students is apparent.

Due to the confidentiality of free and reduced lunch forms, representation of economically disadvantaged students is unknown.

As part of our effort to respond to under-represented populations of the gifted population highlighted above, we utilize EOG and EOC performance data on student subgroups during the AIG screening process. Alleghany County Schools Testing and Accountability Coordinator provides a list of the top 10% of students' scores in the following categories:

- >ELL students;
- >EC students;
- >Economically disadvantaged;
- >All ethnic groups;
- >The district as a whole.

Using the results from the top 10%, students are screened using the following indicators to determine those who are gifted and in need of differentiated educational services:

- >Gifted behavioral characteristics (e.g. Gifted Behavior Scale);
- >Classroom performance (e.g. Formative assessment data, grades);
- >Classroom observations completed by trained school personnel;
- >Documented recommendations from appropriate sources verifying exemplary achievement within and/or outside of school;
- >Demonstrated performance through academic products, contests/competitions, and other opportunities for exemplary achievement;

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- >Standardized test scores: aptitude, achievement, intelligence, and other tests;
- >Anecdotal information appropriately documented and verified.

Once students have been screened and are determined to need further assessment, standardized testing, apart from state testing, is used in the formal identification of students. AIG personnel, trained in the administration of various tests, complete this portion of the identification process for students referred to them. Once parental consent for testing is obtained, the diagnosticians will administer a battery of tests which may include:

- >An aptitude test;
- >A nonverbal aptitude test;
- >Achievement tests.

When testing is complete the results are presented to the Student Success Team for consideration. When appropriate, the team may invite relevant personnel to assist in the decision-making process (e.g. Lead ESL Teacher, EC Teacher, Student Services staff).

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools screens, refers, and identifies all students based on a democratic review of all pertinent information gathered from multiple sources, students who think with more complexity and abstraction, and who learn/perform or show potential for learning/performing in academic disciplines at a significantly faster rate and/or higher level of proficiency than their age/grade peers.

Because of the unique size of our district, we have one AIG Coordinator. This staff member, as well as school-based Student Success Teams, are responsible for gifted identifications. The continuity of these teams as well as the leadership of one AIG Coordinator aids in the consistency of screening, referral, and identification processes among all four schools within Alleghany County. The teams at each school are responsible for:

- >Implementing the AIG Plan;
- >Gifted identification procedures;
- >Identifying needed services;
- >Knowledge of the characteristics of gifted students;
- >Screening, referral, and identification processes.

To further promote consistency, the AIG Coordinator:

- >Conducts reviews for the Student Success Team on the above-referenced responsibilities at the beginning of each school year;
- >Engages teachers, support staff and administration in professional development at the beginning of each school year focused on screening, referral, and student identification;
- >Provides a flowchart to school staff to aid in the understanding of the AIG processes.

#### **Practice E**



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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools communicates screening, referral, and identification processes in a number of ways to all stakeholders.

Parents/guardians are given a letter regarding the screening, identification, and referral processes prior to the CogAT given in the spring to 3rd-grade students. This letter is provided to families in both Spanish and English. Meetings are also held at the beginning of each year as a method of communicating with parents and students who are already identified or for those who want additional information. In addition, our district maintains an AIG website that includes all information pertinent to the AIG program.

At the beginning of each school year our district's AIG Coordinator conducts training at all schools which includes the following:

- >The definition of giftedness;
- >Characteristics of gifted learners;
- >The needs of gifted learners (e.g. academic, behavioral);
- >Best practices to meet the needs of gifted learners;
- >AIG identification and nomination procedures.

### **Practice F**

Documents a student's AIG identification process and evidence which leads to an identification decision. This documentation is reviewed with parents/families and maintained in student records.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools' AIG Coordinator ensures that documentation is maintained throughout the screening, referral, and identification processes. Parents have an opportunity for input about their child's specific needs and are informed of the recommendations made by the AIG Coordinator, classroom teachers, and the Student Success Team. Parents, being partners in their children's education, must be kept abreast of academic progress and placement for appropriate services. Currently, documentation is maintained and parental involvement is solicited. The partnership between the school and the parent(s) is critical for the continued success of our academically gifted students.

If AIG placement is recommended:

- >The AIG Coordinator, in collaboration with teachers and support staff, create a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) for the student identified as AIG. Conferences are held with the parent(s) or guardian(s) for initial placement to review and sign the student's DEP;
- >The AIG Coordinator creates an AIG student folder containing all relevant identification documents (e.g. referral form, parent permission, an eligibility form, DEP, other sources of data) for the student. This folder is kept on file at the school in which the identified student is enrolled;
- >Conferences are then held on an annual basis to review, revise, and/or rewrite the student's current DEP.

All non-identified student records are maintained at the school in which the student is enrolled. The records for students in which placement wasn't recommended may need to be considered in future

evaluations.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

- >Provide stakeholders clear descriptions regarding referral and identification procedures for all categories of giftedness;
- >Creation of an AIG Handbook that will be made available to all stakeholders;
- >Require Student Success Teams to make equitable decisions using both objective and subjective measures annually.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- >AIG district webpage with FAQ section;
- >Updated brochure;
- >Multiple criteria check sheet;
- >District-wide cognitive abilities screening in 3rd grade;
- >Individual ability test at other grade levels when necessary;
- >Evaluation of district-wide 3rd- 8th-grade EOG scores;
- >Teacher evaluations of students recommended for identification;
- >DEP's created and updated annually;
- >Student AIG folders with paper documentation;
- >Student Success Team documentation and notes (school and district levels);
- >Parent meeting documentation and notes;
- >Translation of plan/documents in languages other than English available upon request.

## **Standard 2: 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 an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and learning environments. These services are aligned to a student's AIG identification.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools provides a comprehensive service delivery system for advanced, gifted, and highly gifted learners through our district adopted Multi-Tiered System of Support. This framework is used to guide the academic and social-emotional services that our gifted students receive as well as the setting that those services are received in.

A service delivery plan that is divided into two major sections (academic development and talent development) is established within our LEA. This plan addresses the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and settings. When students are identified as AIG the service delivery plan is matched to the student's identification area (AGM, AGR, AG, IG, or AIG) and documented within the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP). To ensure a continued appropriate service delivery match, the AIG Coordinator reviews all DEPs and IDEPs on an annual basis.

Alleghany County Schools service delivery is outlined in three segments, primary (K-3), elementary (4-8) and secondary (9-12). These settings may include services within the general education classroom or services in the AIG Coordinator's classroom during intervention/FLEX time as part of Alleghany County Schools Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

#### **K-3**

All students in K-3 receive talent development services from the AIG Coordinator through their general education classroom. These services foster the development of gifted characteristics and allow the AIG Coordinator the opportunity to observe students who may be gifted. Primary (K-3) services rely on a strong partnership with the AIG Coordinator, teachers, and instructional coaches. The AIG Coordinator and instructional coaches work closely with K-3 teachers to develop and implement classroom differentiation strategies used within the general education setting.

In addition to services within the classroom, students who are deemed as potentially gifted also receive:

Pull-out services through talent development centers (30-45 minutes every 2 weeks).

#### **4-8**

Elementary (4-8) services are met with flexible cluster grouping within the regular education classroom. The AIG Coordinator co-teaches with the general education teacher to ensure that a rigorous and differentiated classroom experience to meet the needs of advanced learners is provided

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for gifted students. Every effort is made to ensure that students who are identified as gifted are clustered with other like-gifted students in their identified areas. Because we are a small LEA, having 3-5 students clustered together is sometimes difficult in our smaller schools. Intellectually Gifted (IG) students are clustered based on their strengths and needs.

Identified students also receive pull out services based on their identification area during scheduled FLEX time. Service times may vary but are typically 45 minutes one time per week.

In addition, students in 4-8 may also receive:

- >Accelerated subject or grade;
- >Online coursework (NCVPS);
- >Interest-based clubs;
- >Competitions (e.g. Math Olympiad, Battle of the Books, Duke TIP, Odyssey of the Mind, Career and
- >Technical Education (CTE));
- >Advanced courses (e.g. 8th Grade-Math I).

9-12

Allegheny County Schools secondary (9-12) service model focuses on students choosing classes that meet their needs for future education. Special attention is paid during the 8th-grade year to previously identified AIG students as they prepare to transition to high school. The AIG Coordinator attends transition meetings to discuss possible opportunities (listed below) for gifted students as they transition to the high school setting.

- >Honors and advanced placement classes;
- >Dual enrollment;
- >North Carolina School of Science and Math;
- >Governor's school;
- >Credit by Demonstrated Mastery;
- >Online coursework (NCVPS);
- >Interest-based clubs;
- >Competitions (e.g. Battle of the Books, Odyssey of the Mind, Career and Technical Education (CTE));
- >Apprenticeships, internships, and job shadowing.

Counselors and the AIG Coordinator are involved in referring underachieving AIG students for social/emotional support and goal setting.

### **Practice B**

Integrates and connects AIG services with the total instructional program and resources of the LEA in policy and practice.

**District Response:** Allegheny County School's comprehensive gifted plan articulates programs and services designed to identify and meet the needs of advanced and gifted students. Basic to the success of an integrated program is the alignment between gifted education and general education services.

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Ultimately, a successful delivery model results in increased school/system-wide student learning. Opportunities for rich content, high expectations for critical and creative thinking and problem-solving are objectives shared by general and gifted educators. These collaborative structures are delivered through:

- >AIG Director serves on the District Leadership Team;
- >AIG Director serves on the District MTSS Team;
- >AIG Coordinator attends grade-level and PLC meetings;
- >AIG Coordinator attends teacher and grade-level planning meetings;
- >AIG Coordinator serves as a SIT member;
- >AIG Coordinator serves on school-level MTSS Teams.

Through the above structures as well as collaborative conversations with other district stakeholders (e.g. Instructional Coaches, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Technology Director, Accountability Director, Media Coordinators, etc), the teaching/learning process of identified students aren't isolated; but a connected effort of the total instructional program. As educators become aware of the strengths and needs of students, an academic program that responds to the unique learning styles of students is built that delivers a curriculum outlined in the NC Standard Course of Study, as well as linked to and supported by the LEA's total instructional program.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools recognizes that flexible grouping and pacing strategies are inherent to the program. Flexible grouping practices allow educators the opportunity to support the learning needs of students with similar achievement/ability levels and common interests/passions'. Research is clear: gifted and high ability students' learning increases significantly when offered opportunities to work with intellectual peers. Our practices of grouping students include:

- >Cluster grouping within individual classrooms;
- >Flexible grouping within and between individual classrooms or within and between teams;

Alleghany County Schools uses a variety of formal and informal evaluations that provide the necessary data to appropriately place students in flexible groups for optimal success and growth. On-going formative and summative assessment data is used in all grade levels throughout Alleghany County Schools to provide educators with detailed information about students' progress in assimilating and expressing knowledge and skills. The following data are used by the AIG Coordinator and general education teachers as well as within PLCs to determine flexible groupings:

- >Student strengths and needs;
- >iReady data;
- >EVAAS;
- >Classroom formative assessments;
- >Work samples;
- >Teacher observations;
- >Summative assessments.

### **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:** Service delivery for gifted and advanced students is most effective when deemed a priority and embraced by all teachers, school and system administrators, and support staff who develop and deliver programs for advanced and gifted students. A clearly articulated expectation of differentiated services and instructional delivery serves to communicate to all stakeholders the importance of the practice. A description of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students and AIG program regulations embedded in the local AIG plan serves to inform all stakeholders of the program's purpose. Allegheny County School's local AIG Plan, as well as contact information and additional resources (e.g. FAQ document, brochure), is located on our district website.

In addition to our district website, the AIG Coordinator and AIG Director keep all school staff abreast of instructional services, regulations pertaining to gifted education and the local AIG program and plan through:

- >AIG Coordinator-Annual beginning of year training for teachers, support staff, and administrators on
- >AIG regulations and procedures;
- >AIG Coordinator-Utilizes a Google Classroom to share AIG program information and services with school staff;
- >AIG Coordinator-Grade-level meetings that review procedures for identification of AIG students;
- >AIG Coordinator-Provides updates to school staff following NCDPI provided webinars and conferences;
- >AIG Director-District Leadership Team meetings where attendees are informed of regulations and components of the local AIG program and plan;
- >AIG Director-The local AIG Plan is presented to the Board of Education and approved at the beginning of each planning cycle;
- >AIG Director-Updates regarding instruction, regulations, and the local plan is provided to Allegheny County Schools Board of Education on an as-needed basis.

### **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:** Effective communication among and between teachers, schools and central office administrators is essential to the success of the AIG program and the services it provides. A plan to articulate the aligned and integrated services ensures seamless transitions between grades and schools so as to provide for the continuation of services, K-12. A proactive approach with the intent of transitioning advanced differentiated plans for identified gifted students further ensures the continuation of services. Teachers collaborate proactively by providing and receiving academic and social-emotional information on students so as to better understand and plan for student success. Misconceptions are eliminated; a base of understanding is established. Program goals and long- and short-range plans can be developed in advance with a better understanding of students' performance levels and needs for potential growth.

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Alleghany County Schools is directed in its efforts to communicate the many and varied learning styles and characteristics of gifted students within a school population, K-12. A firm commitment to meeting the needs of advanced students is continually being reinforced in the schools. Effective communication among and between teachers and schools is critical when planning programs that address students' strengths and needs. Throughout the year, instructional staff and building administrators communicate to align program content with specific student needs. At transition points, opportunities for pedagogical dialogue is planned within professional learning communities so as to reduce/eliminate misconceptions, misunderstandings, and confusion with students transferring from one grade to the next, or from one school to another. In a sensitive and respectful environment, discussions are open and remain confidential; student learning profiles are shared to promote and ensure the continuation of the K-12 service delivery program to meet the needs of advanced students.

**Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools is committed to providing a system-wide approach that addresses the social and emotional needs of gifted students. In order for gifted students to reach their full potential, social and emotional needs must be purposefully included in programs and services for this population. A proactive support structure is established when school systems make provisions for effective services.

Alleghany County Schools is proactive in approach by utilizing the MTSS framework to guide social-emotional services and supports for all students including those identified as gifted. Our district recognizes that the social and emotional needs of gifted students warrant an approach that is supported by counselors, general education teachers, gifted education specialists, and parents/families. System-wide SEL services and supports are addressed through:

- >Core instruction-2nd STEP, Leader in Me, Global Education, guidance classes, GRIT lessons;
- >Supplemental Support-Small group intervention (e.g. 2nd STEP, social stories, character education, resiliency, mindfulness) provided by the school counselor that targets SEL skill deficit(s);
- >Intensive Support-One-on-one intervention (e.g. individual counseling support, Functional Behavior
- >Assessment/Functional Behavior Plan) provided by school counselors and/or psychologists that target SEL skill deficit(s).

School-wide differentiated services such as those provided at the supplemental and intensive levels are designed to address particular social-emotional needs and provide opportunities for students with common interests, abilities, and motivation to work together on appropriately challenging tasks. These differentiated services are determined through the analysis of data related to students' social-emotional needs (e.g. observations, SEL surveys). School staff discuss students' needs during their weekly PLC meetings and problem-solve to match student need(s) to appropriate interventions. If a student is not responding with core and supplemental instruction the PLC makes a referral to the school-based MTSS team (administrator, instructional coach, counselor, psychologist, general education teacher, EC teacher) for further problem-solving and differentiated services.

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**Practice G**

Develops policies and procedures for a variety of acceleration opportunities, including compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, subject and/or grade acceleration.

**District Response:** A variety of service delivery options ensures that student need is matched with the appropriate service option(s). Differentiated services within and across a variety of settings where instruction is appropriately advanced, extended and/or accelerated promote student success.

Our current service delivery array includes inclusive supports, resource pullout, project-based learning, distance learning offerings, curriculum compacting, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery and subject or grade acceleration where appropriate. Some students achieve remarkably well and may require a subject or grade advancement, in addition to other differentiated services. For these students, a case study is prepared using specific criteria for subject and grade advancement. This service option may be used at any grade level; however, students contemplating early high school graduation must meet the North Carolina graduation requirements. This option requires careful consideration.

Subject/Grade Acceleration:

>A student may be considered for grade acceleration by meeting the criteria below:

>Aptitude (IQ) percentile: 98% Total Battery;

>Achievement: 98% as measured on standardized achievement test;

>Performance: work samples, portfolio;

>Teacher Inventory and Recommendation;

>Motivation Inventory;

>Social/emotional assessment completed by the school psychologist.

These measures are combined with the Student Success Team and regular education teacher recommendation and submitted to the school principal who then may provide his/her own written recommendation.

If an AIG student requires subject or grade acceleration or parents of an AIG student requests acceleration, the AIG teacher and school must follow the procedures outlined in the local plan. If, however, the request is for a student not identified as AIG, the school may use the AIG procedures but is not required to do so. Principals or school-based committees may have other procedures in place for such a request, but generally, they seek advice from the AIG Program.

Student Success Teams must adhere to the following procedures for AIG student acceleration requests:

>Request a written statement from the parent(s) requesting subject or grade acceleration;

>Check records to determine if the student has achieved at maximum class performance in the subject for more than one year (if subject acceleration) or all subjects for more than one year (if grade acceleration). If the student has not met these criteria, the Student Success Team should request a parent conference to share that information and conclude the acceleration procedure at this point. If the records indicate that the student has met the class performance criteria, the Student Success Team will discuss the request with the site principal;

>After obtaining the parent statement, the Student Success Team will request recommendation letters from both the student's classroom teacher and the principal to accompany their own Student



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Success Team recommendation;

- >Submit the packet to the school psychologist for an assessment of social/emotional appropriateness;
- >After the psychologist completes this review, the Student Success Team will meet with the psychologist, student, parent, and principal to discuss the results and social/emotional development. At this time the Student Success Team should make a recommendation to the school principal who will determine grade placement;
- >Submit to the principal and superintendent for final approval.

Non-Acceleration Procedures:

If a student does NOT meet the acceleration criteria, the Student Success Team should follow these procedures:

- >Complete documentation to denote "No Acceleration Recommended";
- >Send the parent a copy of the decision with due process procedures;
- >Place a copy of acceleration documentation in the AIG record for the student.

Acceleration Procedures:

If the student meets the acceleration criteria, the Student Success Team will follow these procedures:

- >Complete a DEP with the parent and obtain parent signature for subject or grade level acceleration;
- >Place copies of the Acceleration packet in the AIG record;
- >Conference to share information and conclude the acceleration procedure at this point;
- >If the records indicate that the student has met the class performance criteria, the Student Success Team will discuss the request with the site principal;
- >After obtaining the parent statement, the Student Success Team will request recommendation letters from both the student's classroom teacher and the principal to accompany their own Student Success Team recommendation;
- >Submit the packet to the school psychologist for an assessment of social/emotional appropriateness;
- >After the psychologist completes this review, the Student Success Team will meet with the psychologist, student, parent, and principal to discuss the results and social/emotional development;
- >At this time the Student Success Team should make a recommendation to the school principal who will determine grade placement;
- >Submit to principal and superintendent for final approval.

Compacted Curriculum

Compacted curriculum is available for students who require this service to meet their identified need (s). In determining whether a compacted curriculum is needed, the AIG Coordinator consults with the classroom teachers and looks at the following data points:

- >Grades in the subject area;
- >Achievement scores (e.g. iReady, EOG, EOC, formative classroom assessments);
- >Students interest and motivation;
- >Social-emotional well-being of the student;
- >Students in grades 4-7 who receive a level 5 on the previous year's math EOG will be considered for compacted curriculum.

Alleghany County Schools AIG Coordinator utilizes iReady and released test items provided by NCDPI to determine mastery of content that would be missed due to the compacting of the subject curriculum. If students do not demonstrate a level of knowledge sufficient for success, other services

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are considered.

#### Credit by Demonstrated Mastery

Alleghany County Schools offer Credit by Demonstrated Mastery to students in grades 9-12. CDM is only available to students that demonstrate a deep understanding of content and can apply knowledge of the new material. Credit will be earned to fulfill graduation requirements but grades will not be received and will not apply to students' GPA.

#### Credit by Demonstrated Mastery Process:

- >A student must score a level 5 on an EOC or >90% on a local course assessment or CTE post-assessment;
- >The student artifact is reviewed and scored by a content expert and team. A minimum score must be obtained for credit to be received;
- >Results are shared with students/parents.

The following courses are excluded from CDM:

- >Honors and AP courses;
- >CTE work-based courses;
- >CTE Advanced Studies courses;
- >CTE courses that are clinical in nature;
- >English Language Learner courses;
- >Healthful Living courses.

### **Practice H**

Implements intentional strategies to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities for under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional. These strategies may include talent development efforts.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools AIG program provides services that make advanced learning more attainable for our under-represented populations including English language learners, economically disadvantaged, twice-exceptional and highly gifted. These services begin in our primary grades (K-3) with talent development. All students, including under-represented populations in K-3, receive talent development services from the AIG Coordinator through their general education classroom. These services foster the development of gifted characteristics and allow the AIG Coordinator the opportunity to observe students who may be gifted.

Every effort is made throughout the referral and identification processes to ensure that under-represented populations are given opportunities for advancement. These efforts include:

- >Alleghany County Schools AIG Coordinator conducts annual training for all school staff which includes characteristics of giftedness in under-represented populations;
- >School staff that serves under-represented populations (e.g. Exceptional Children teacher, English Learner teacher, school social worker, school counselor) serve as a team member on the Student Success Team when gifted nominations for these populations are discussed;
- >The AIG Coordinator works closely with all teachers including instructional coaches and support

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staff;

- >Attending PLC meetings when grade-level teams analyze student data helps with the identification of under-represented students who may be in need of advancement;
- >Regular communication with school counselors and administration in grades 9-12;
- >An AIG Consultant position at the high school whose role includes efforts to broaden access for under-represented populations including first-generation college students.

EOG performance data is disaggregated to include the top 10% of students in under-represented populations. Using these results, students are screened using the following indicators to determine those who may be gifted and in of advanced learning opportunities:

- >Gifted behavioral characteristics (e.g. Gifted Behavior Scale);
- >Classroom performance (e.g. Formative assessment data, grades);
- >Classroom observations completed by trained school personnel;
- >Documented recommendations from appropriate sources verifying exemplary achievement within and/or outside of school;
- >Demonstrated performance through academic products, contests/competitions, and other opportunities for exemplary achievement;
- >Standardized test scores: aptitude, achievement, intelligence, and other tests;
- >Anecdotal information appropriately documented and verified.

Once students have been screened and are determined to need further assessment, standardized testing, apart from the state testing, is used in the formal identification of students.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Enrichment and extra-curricular programs and events, enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG students. When gifted students' social and emotional needs are met, learning is maximized and positive self-esteem is developed.

Allegheny County Schools AIG Coordinator works alongside school staff members to design a consistent, appropriate program for each school that identifies extra-curricular/extended learning opportunities that will enhance student learning. These activities may include:

- >Duke TIP;
- >Odyssey of the Mind;
- >Jr. Beta Club;
- >Battle of the Books;
- >Math Olympiad;
- >MathCounts;
- >TSA Competitions;
- >STEM Expos;
- >Internships;
- >College trips.

Extra-curricular programs are determined at each school based on availability and student interest.

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Possible opportunities are communicated to students to gauge interest. Based on feedback from students, programs and events are chosen and communicated prior to and throughout each school year.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

Allegheny County Schools will maintain a focus on the following AIG service arrays:

- >K-3 services focused on differentiation and talent development provided by AIG personnel and instructional coaches;
- >4-5 curriculum focused enrichment and talent development provided by AIG personnel through inclusion and pull-outs;
- >6-8 differentiation in all courses, content specific competition opportunities and clustered STEM enrichment opportunities;
- >9-12 Career path focused DEP, monitoring of challenging level courses, and content-specific competition opportunities.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- >Employment of specific AIG personnel;
- >Increased guidance services for the gifted population;
- >Improved scheduling that lends itself to competition preparation;
- >Improved scheduling that ensures AIG students are placed with intellectual peers;
- >Improved communication between AIG team and other instructional staff;
- >DEPs;
- >AIG webpage;
- >Grouping practices;
- >Data analysis
- >Professional development;
- >Student ePortfolios;
- >Student Independent Studies;
- >Student Service Projects;
- >Increased competition and internship opportunities at the high school level;
- >Increased use of College & Career Promise programming for high school students.

### **Standard 3: 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:** Alleghany County School seeks to provide appropriate educational opportunities through an array of service delivery options designed to provide a stimulating and challenging curriculum so as to ensure that student potential is developed. AIG services are integrated with the general education program, K-12, where flexible grouping is used to ensure that highly able and gifted students reach their full potential and experience intellectual, social and emotional growth.

Differentiated services take place in a variety of settings and provide the most positive effects when students are grouped for instruction. The effect of grouping for gifted students is most productive and effective when instruction is appropriately advanced, extended and/or accelerated or when challenging enrichment activities are offered.

AIG students are provided access to AIG services within the regular classroom, as well as in extended learning opportunities at the school and district level. This ensures increased access and immersion in applicable and appropriately differentiated curriculum. Extended learning opportunities are developed, assessed and coordinated by the AIG team members to provide equity across the district.

Alleghany County Schools Academically or Intellectually Gifted Education Program is purposefully designed to provide learning opportunities that promote the growth of skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary for gifted students to reach their potential. Instructional programs provide a steady challenge without frustration or excessive pressure.

Strategies for the teaching/learning process are designed to respond to the unique needs of students. As educators become aware of the strengths and needs of students, an academic program that responds to the unique learning styles of students is built that delivers a curriculum outlined in the NC Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) and Essential Standards. Differentiation of curriculum and instruction is paramount in an educational program that seeks to address, meet and challenge each individual student's potential. Educational personnel involved in providing learning opportunities for gifted students must possess the knowledge and skills to meet and support the needs of these students.

Content differentiation strategies that may be seen in general education classrooms include the following; instructional technology, integrated units, curriculum compacting, differentiated instructional units, literature circles, learning centers, interdisciplinary thematic units, Socratic Seminars, tiered assignments, learning contracts. Inherent to the program's content are teaching/learning strategies

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that foster reasoning and problem-solving skills. Students are expected to represent their thinking and solutions to tasks in speaking and in writing. In math, students use diagrams, models, and graphs to communicate reasoning skills. In an effort to meet the needs of the gifted learner, specific tasks draw attention to deeper and broader concepts of various investigations.

Content differentiation strategies are used to modify the curriculum for gifted students within each environment and include:

- >Content Acceleration - the use of advanced materials that match the student's level of performance regardless of their grade placement.
- >Content Sophistication - the use of complex material, presented with a higher level of abstraction, from a more complex viewpoint, using multidisciplinary material that allows students to see the larger system of ideas and concepts related to the core content.
- >Content Novelty - the use of completely different materials not necessarily provided in the general curriculum, often selected from students' interests and involves independent or small group investigations.

Talent development is provided through enrichment services that focus on the development of interests and special talents. At the elementary and middle school levels, interest development might occur through classroom centers, special activities, projects, mini-courses, and enrichment clusters. At the secondary level, interests and talents are further expanded through special elective courses and opportunities for independent investigations of topics of interest through seminars, mentorships, and internships. Most of these programs are offered through general education, distance learning courses or co-curricular opportunities, dual enrollment courses; some are available from community resources.

### **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:** Allegheny County Schools ensures that diverse and effective instructional practices are being employed according to students' abilities, readiness, interests, and profiles. Content delivery is tailored through variations of the following:

- >Individual/small group learning;
- >Enrichment/Extension Activities;
- >Curriculum compacting;
- >Project-based learning;
- >Internships;
- >Alternative course delivery;
- >Tiered assignments;
- >Technology-enhanced activities;
- >Varied texts;
- >Learning contracts;
- >Interest-based independent study projects.

Allegheny County Schools staff receive professional development focused on differentiation strategies from our AIG Coordinator in addition to other instructional support staff (e.g. instructional

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coaches, MTSS Coordinator, Exceptional Children's teachers, English Learner teachers). These staff members also support staff through the modeling of differentiation strategies within the classroom setting.

In addition, outside providers are contracted to provide professional learning on differentiation techniques when needs arise. These needs are based on data collected through needs assessments, walk-throughs, and formative assessment data.

### **Practice C**

Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that enhance student learning.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools Curriculum Team (e.g. K-5 Director of Curriculum and Instruction, 6-12 Director of Curriculum and Instruction, AIG Director, EC Director, Associate Superintendent, MTSS Coordinator, Instructional Coaches) adopts and approves high quality evidence-based instructional resources to enhance instruction for all students including those that are gifted. During the approval process, core and supplemental instructional materials are examined for appropriateness in supporting our gifted learners. The AIG Director and Coordinator augment core instructional materials with evidence-based resources aimed at enhancing student learning (e.g. Jacob's Ladder, Engineering kits from the Boston Museum, Imagine Learning (Reading and Math), FOSS and Science Research Associates (SRA) reading laboratories). While these resources are utilized in classrooms to enhance North Carolina State Standards, they also serve to support the unique needs of our gifted population while taking into account student interest and evidence of successful implementation.

In addition to purchased resources, the AIG Director and Coordinator share evidence-based practices and resources obtained during state and national conferences.

### **Practice D**

Fosters the development of future-ready skills including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and leadership.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools' gifted education program promotes future-ready thinking by providing opportunities for students that foster the growth of skills, knowledge, and the understanding necessary for gifted students to reach their potential in a competitive global society. Through direct collaboration between the AIG Coordinator, classroom teachers, and instructional specialists, student development of future-ready skills in classrooms is promoted. Examples of experiences include students taking on leadership roles not only in their classrooms but in the school and district. Students have opportunities to lead parent-teacher conferences, school assemblies and participate in school board meetings to share school-wide accomplishments. In addition, integrated units are designed that encourage thinking, questioning, and problem-solving. All students including our gifted population, as part of our district's core instructional design, engage in educational experiences that encourage them to find problems and speculate on possible solutions.

Gifted students are also involved in numerous clubs and competitions that focus on critical thinking,

communication, collaboration, and creativity. These include Battle of the Books, Math Olympiad, Robotics, Soil and Water, Envirothon, Mock Trial and STEM. Our schools also offer enrichment courses that incorporate coding, multimedia and web page design, marketing, engineering and project management.

Alleghany County Schools' is focused on ensuring that all students graduate from high school globally competitive for work and post-secondary education and prepared for a productive life in the future.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** On-going formative and summative assessment data is used in all grade levels throughout Alleghany County Schools to provide educators with detailed information about students' progress in assimilating and expressing knowledge and skills. Well-designed formative assessments assess student progress and understanding of concepts and skills so that teachers are able to tailor instruction to enhance learning. Summative assessments, i.e. NC End of Grade and NC End of Course tests provide useful information to educators on how students display their knowledge for comparative purposes.

Formative and summative data provides teachers with the ability to monitor what students know and how they demonstrate skills and comprehend content. Based on student performance, students are clustered in instructional groups and differentiated instruction is planned and delivered as reflected in the students' plans. Teachers and administrators use student, class, school and district reports to monitor progress; early intervention and enrichment activities become routine means of differentiating curriculum and instructional strategies for all learners.

### **Practice F**

Addresses the social and emotional needs of AIG students through affective curricular and instructional practices.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools' recognize the impact that a well-functioning MTSS can have on the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional well being of students. Our district MTSS team includes the AIG Coordinator, AIG Director, Exceptional Children's Director, Curriculum and Instruction Director, and the Director of Student Services. This team collaborates to support and strengthen system changes. In addition, each school has a Multi-Tiered System of Support team in place that includes the AIG Coordinator, instructional specialists, the school psychologist, and counselors. These teams collaborate to support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students including those that are gifted. Tiered support for our gifted population is provided within the core classroom, enrichment pullouts, and the school as a whole.

The social-emotional needs of gifted students must be met in order for students to positively adjust to



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the learning environment. Students who understand themselves and others function effectively, productively and appropriately in social environments and are able to express themselves in an appropriate manner. Approaches and strategies must be specific to the needs of high-potential students and be sensitive to culture, socio-economic status, and gender. Alleghany County Schools' utilize the following approaches within core instruction to meet the unique social-emotional needs of our gifted population:

- >High-quality guidance classes;
- >SEL curriculum (e.g. Second Step, Everfi, and Sanford Harmony);
- >Flexible, clustered grouping arrangements with peers of similar achievement levels and interests;
- >Flexible pacing of curriculum;
- >9th-grade Freshman Seminar;
- >Appropriate challenge levels.

In addition to core, supplemental and intensive social-emotional supports are in place and include:

- >Affective lessons focused on asynchronous development, peer relations, college and career planning, multiple intelligences, multiple perspectives, gifted traits, and growth mindset;
- >Counseling services that are sensitive to diversity with interventions that recognize the challenges related to cultural, language and socio-economic variances;
- >Small group and individual counseling services that are tailored to address common concerns that specific groups of gifted students share (e.g. perfectionism, anxiety, peer relationships and coping with stressors).

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools recognizes that when high-ability children are identified in the early grades, an advanced differentiated education program designed to meet their unique needs will greatly enhance strengths and identify areas for potential growth. Experiences/Activities that involve rigorous curricular work at a very young age enhance opportunities for acceleration and enrichment in later grades. In each of our schools, the AIG Coordinator works alongside classroom teachers to plan for and provide talent development services for all K-3 students to include activities that foster curiosity, problem-solving, creativity, and advanced thinking (e.g. Genius Hour, project-based learning). Through the implementation of these differentiated instructional activities/strategies, potential giftedness is fostered and early indicators of giftedness can often be identified.

As these early indicators of giftedness become evident in students, the AIG Coordinator and classroom teachers make a recommendation for students to join a K-3 nurturing group. Students who exhibit these advanced skills receive small group instruction provided by the AIG Coordinator for 30 to 45 minutes every two weeks. The focus of instruction is on strengthening problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Due to students' rapidly changing academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development, the groups are fluid.

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**Practice H**

Develops and implements differentiated curriculum and instruction through collaboration among regular education teachers, AIG personnel, and other related instructional staff.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools' AIG Coordinator collaborates with classroom teachers, school support personnel (e.g. Exceptional Children's teachers, English Learner teachers, Media Coordinators), and instructional specialists to help plan for the academic needs of gifted students. The coordinator also works alongside classroom teachers during PLCs to analyze data and assist teachers with reflecting on their differentiation practices.

In addition to planning, data analysis, and reflection of practices with teachers, support staff, and instructional specialists, the AIG Coordinator collaborates with stakeholders to plan for differentiation in the following ways:

- >Modeling, coaching, and following-up with teachers on differentiation practices;
- >Collaboration with K-3 classroom teachers (e.g. talent development services, nurturing groups);
- >Collaboration with the guidance department to plan for differentiated social-emotional learning;
- >End of year transition meetings (e.g. third to fourth, fifth to sixth, and eighth to ninth).

At the district level the AIG Director meets with the following stakeholders to allow for meaningful conversations in regards to advanced learners needs:

- >Curriculum and Instruction, Leadership, and MTSS teams to advocate for differentiated curriculum;
- >EC Director to ensure twice-exceptional students' needs are not overlooked;
- >AIG Coordinator on a monthly basis to provide updates on gifted education, review of best practices, and program implementation.

**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:** Alleghany County Schools differentiates instruction for gifted students within the regular classroom and seeks extended learning opportunities as appropriate.

The match between student need and appropriate service delivery option(s) are based on the data gathered during the student search and nomination process. Decisions of the Success Team are documented. Parents and nominating teachers are notified of the recommended student-to-service match and invited to participate in the development of a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). The DEP articulates the goals and objectives of the service option(s), the service delivery implementation plan and the manner in which student progress will be assessed. Signatures documenting participation in the development of the DEP includes parent, AIG team member, and student's regular teacher. Copies are provided to the students' parents and teachers.

The AIG Coordinator supports and collaborates with the regular classroom teachers to address the needs of gifted students by providing additional resources, concept-based units of study, co-teaching and/or professional development in advanced differentiated instruction, high-end teaching/learning

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strategies and social-emotional issues of gifted students. Differentiation within the regular education classroom is documented within the DEP.

**Annual Review:**

The progress of each student participating in advanced differentiated services is reviewed at least annually through ongoing discussions/conferences with teachers, progress reports, report cards, and North Carolina End-of-Grade Test scores. Where evidence reflects a positive growth in student performance, parents are notified and continued placement is recommended in those options.

Should an increase in differentiated services be warranted, the AIG and regular education team may amend the Differentiated Education Plan. In the event that student performance is not satisfactory, the AIG team will reevaluate its decision concerning advanced differentiated services. Caution is taken when using grades to determine discontinued eligibility for gifted service options. Grades alone, unless specifically requested by parents or students, are insufficient criteria for exiting students from program services. The parents and student, along with the Success Team determine the continued need for services. Decisions might result in the development of an amended Differentiated Education Plan or may conclude that advanced differentiated services are no longer appropriate for the student.

Rising ninth-grade students and parents are invited to attend a College and Career Ready meeting with high school personnel to discuss high school gifted education options. The educational plan outlined during this meeting allows students to graduate with advanced courses, increased course credit, and CTE certifications.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

The schools within our district will utilize an inclusive, collaborative, instructional team approach to maximize student achievement through differentiated instruction for gifted students within the regular classroom and extended learning opportunities as appropriate. Priority will be given to evidence-based practices that will maximize student success.

AIG students will be provided access to AIG services within the regular classroom, as well as in extended learning opportunities at the school and district level, to ensure increased access and immersion in applicable and appropriate differentiated curriculum.

Social-emotional learning resources will be readily available for use with AIG students at all grade levels.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- >Evidence-based differentiated instruction in classrooms;
- >Enrichment opportunities;
- >Guidance counselor involvement with the AIG population;
- >DEPs.

## **Standard 4: 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 AIG Coordinator position is "housed" in the Student Services Department. The Director of Student Services and the AIG Coordinator work collaboratively with the school staff, administrators, the district level instructional support team and community members to create a system-wide comprehensive AIG program.

The AIG Coordinator has completed all requirements for licensure.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools believes that a comprehensive education plan for gifted students is only as effective as the AIG staff that lead the program's design and implement the service delivery plan. All professionals who are assigned to work with gifted students must possess the skills and requisite knowledge to implement the advanced differentiated program designed to respond to the students' academic and social-emotional needs.

Licensed AIG teachers and specialists understand the metacognitive processes of the AIG learner and appreciate the impact that external factors such as development, culture, language proficiency, socioeconomic level, etc. affect the learning process. The AIG Coordinator assists teachers in locating and adapting resources to meet the needs of advanced students. The AIG Coordinator, along with the school level instructional staff, collaborate to develop and apply strategies to ensure a rigorous and relevant program of study for advanced students.

Key personnel is required to implement a comprehensive program for gifted students. A comprehensive understanding of and proficiency in the following tasks which explicitly address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners is expected among all AIG staff:

- >Collaborate with classroom teachers on the referral process for AIG program;
- >Facilitate meetings with parents and teachers to develop the Differentiated Education Plan;
- >Articulate with school personnel characteristics of gifted children using assessment criteria and observations of learning behaviors;
- >Develop professional development designed to meet the unique academic and social-emotional needs of gifted students;
- >Collaborate with teachers on integrating advanced learning activities for advanced learners;

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- >Evaluate student success using formative and summative data and adjust/modify curriculum where necessary;
- >Model strategies and techniques and coach teachers in the use of integrated gifted education methods and modifications;
- >Collaborate with instructional specialists regarding the needs of gifted learners and the resource materials required to meet those needs;
- >Facilitate the programming, including flexible cluster-grouping options in heterogeneously or homogeneously grouped classrooms;
- >Provide and/or plan academic services that are specifically designed for the identified academic needs of gifted students;
- >Participate in ongoing professional development for the advancement of gifted education;
- >Communicate with parents regarding services and opportunities for gifted children;
- >Lead discussions with parents and teachers on developing the DEP's.

### **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:** In order to ensure the quality of Alleghany County Schools' educational personnel, the school system is committed to providing an ongoing and comprehensive plan for professional development. The district considers professional development a key feature of its plan for expanding options for gifted/advanced students and understands its importance for the successful implementation of the gifted program.

Efforts toward the development of AIG licensed professionals through ongoing personnel preparation in gifted education is encouraged and supported. In collaboration with NWRESA, educators are provided the opportunity to obtain AIG certification. This opportunity is funded and encouraged by Alleghany County Schools.

In addition, Alleghany County Schools offers in-service opportunities for all educators who serve AIG students, including, but not limited to classroom teachers, Exceptional Children's personnel, counselors, and school administrators.

Professional development for teachers of gifted learners are designed to include the following:

- >Expansion of teachers' backgrounds in content areas;
- >Infusion of rigor throughout the curriculum;
- >Increase in investigative, problem-based learning opportunities;
- >Increase in methods of differentiation and strategies appropriate for gifted students;
- >Generate enthusiasm for programs that provide differentiated learning opportunities for a wide range of student abilities and needs;
- >Contribution to an overall purpose of renewal and revitalization throughout the total school program.

Alleghany County Schools is committed to improving the quality of services that our gifted population receives by engaging staff in professional development opportunities both in-service as well as

through collaboration with outside organizations. The following professional development offerings are provided to expand the staff's knowledge of the unique needs of gifted learners:

#### Teachers

- >Identification-Awareness of potential advanced learners through recognition of unique characteristics of the giftedness;
- >Nomination process-Through in-service PD teachers will understand the nomination process for students who display characteristics of being gifted;
- >Differentiation-Understanding of differentiation and how to implement best practices within the classroom;
- >Co-teaching strategies within clustered classrooms in which the AIG Specialist "pushes" into;
- >Serving and meeting the needs of underrepresented students (e.g. English language learners, twice-exceptional);
- >Gifted education within a Multi-Tiered System of Support.

#### Support Teachers (e.g. Exceptional Children, English Language Learners)

- >Serving and meeting the needs of underrepresented students (e.g. English language learners, twice-exceptional);
- >Identification-Awareness of potential advanced learners through recognition of the unique characteristics of giftedness;
- >Gifted education within a Multi-Tiered System of Support.

#### School Counselors, School Social Workers, and Psychologists

- >Recognizing the social-emotional needs of gifted learners and providing services that meet those needs.

#### Administrators

- >Gifted education within a Multi-Tiered System of Support;
- >The role of administrators in the implementation of the local plan and how to successfully implement the plan within their schools.

### **Practice D**

Provides general education services by personnel who have earned an AIG add-on license or have met the LEA requirements for that position.

**District Response:** Special attention is given to AIG student schedules to ensure they are placed with like ability peers in courses taught by educators who have met Alleghany County School's professional development requirements; add-on license from an IHE or completion of certification courses through NWRESA. These teachers and support personnel require specific knowledge and skills to provide developmentally appropriate, differentiated, and challenging instruction in classrooms.

Alleghany County Schools program for gifted students continues to develop and support a cadre of well-prepared teachers and a school and district instructional support team to meet the needs of talented, advanced, and gifted students. In order to provide effective services for meeting the unique needs of gifted learners, Alleghany County Schools' focus relies on identifying highly qualified

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personnel whose responsibility is to provide instructional services to gifted students. In order to assure the quality of educational personnel, the school system is committed to providing an ongoing and comprehensive plan for staff development.

Our district considers staff development a key feature of its plan for expanding options for the highly able students it serves and its importance for the successful implementation of the Gifted Education Program. Professional qualifications guide the hiring practices of personnel who are assigned to work with gifted and highly able students. A focused and deliberate effort is in place to create a large pool of teachers who can skillfully educate and serve AIG students in the following ways:

- >Differentiated instructional services;
- >Talent development strategies in K-3 classrooms;
- >Co-teaching with the AIG Specialist in clustered classrooms;
- >Providing unique service needs to under-represented populations;
- >Supplemental services within a Multi-Tiered System of Support;
- >Social-emotional services;
- >Honors and AP classes;
- >Acceleration through a compacted curriculum.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Allegheny County Schools' gifted education professional development opportunities are aligned with district initiatives and are designed to increase the effectiveness of all educators. Sessions are planned to reflect relevant knowledge and integration of evidence-based skills and strategies that offer a variety of differentiated options to meet the needs of varied learner profiles. A collaborative relationship between the AIG Coordinator and instructional support staff allows for tailored PD opportunities that integrate best practices for gifted learners into district provided sessions.

The AIG Program, in collaboration with the Curriculum and Technology Departments, participate in in-service training opportunities to enhance instruction for all students, including our gifted population. These opportunities are based on feedback from the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, formative and summative test data, Allegheny County Schools Strategic Plan, and state-led initiatives.

Our current professional development opportunities are focused on total school improvement within a Multi-Tiered System of Support. Through this framework, opportunities are provided for teachers to strengthen core instructional strategies for all students including providing differentiation tailored to meet the needs of gifted learners.

### **Practice F**

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

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**District Response:** Professional learning sessions provide educators opportunities for professional growth. Provisions for reflection, planning implementation and refining applications among educators provide an opportunity for the sharing of ideas and further intellectual dialogue that extends and customizes the content of the session. The AIG Coordinator plans and implements alongside other staff members via:

- >Professional Learning Communities are formed to ensure content discussion and to promote the implementation of professional development learning;
- >Attends grade-level meetings to stay current with instructional goals;
- >Collaborates with co-teachers to plan lessons and units;
- >Provides consultation services to classroom teachers;
- >Assists classroom teachers with the planning of differentiated activities;
- >Google Classroom to share resources with classroom teachers;
- >Meets with the AIG Director on a monthly basis for any updates regarding the AIG Program.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

Allegheny County Schools will maintain a licensed AIG professional to lead the program under the district Director of Student Services/Exceptional Children's Program. Our school system will work toward employing specific AIG personnel to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of our AIG student population.

In addition, the district will provide and/or encourage teachers to participate in AIG professional development including, but not limited to:

- >AIG certification through a partnership with NWRESA;
- >Evidence-based differentiated instruction;
- >Enrichment opportunities for AIG students;
- >Social and emotional needs of AIG students;
- >Identification of AIG students.

Appropriate and specific professional development will be offered for teachers and school administrators; counselors and exceptional children's personnel are invited/encouraged to attend. Professional development will be focused on evidence-based differentiation strategies, problem-based learning strategies and technology integration best practices will be delivered, for the most part, through the district level instructional support team and will be personalized for individual teacher needs as much as possible.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- >Employment of specific AIG personnel;
- >Increase in AIG certified teachers;
- >AIG Google Classroom for staff;
- >Increase in professional development that lends itself to AIG services and programming;
- >Encourage attendance at the Regional AIG Meetings and NCAGT Conference;
- >Cluster AIG students (homeroom groups at high school level and class groups at the elementary and middle school levels) with AIG personnel or with teachers that possess the ability to meet gifted



student needs.

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## 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 that are intentional and meaningful to support the following needs of AIG students:

- \* academic and intellectual
- \* social and emotional

**District Response:** Parental involvement is an essential component of Alleghany County Schools AIG Program. The AIG Coordinator builds and maintains partnerships with parents of gifted students. The following are ways in which communication occurs:

- >Input is solicited through parent meetings and annual reviews;
- >Information is provided to parents and community members through newsletters, newspaper articles, and an AIG Program web page;
- >Brochures are available at each school and on the district website;
- >Meeting with parents on an annual basis to review and update the DEP;
- >Sharing information with parents regarding special events (e.g. Math Counts, College trips, Duke TIP, competitions, apprenticeships).

In addition to frequent communication, our program relies on input that is gathered from parents/families. The following are ways in which input is gathered:

- >Surveys are administered for the purpose of improving AIG programming and services including the planning for competitions, projects, parent nights, and community projects;
- >Parent Advisory meetings provide opportunities to share information, gather feedback, and give parents a voice, laying a platform to both develop and strengthen two-way partnerships.

### **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:** Alleghany County Schools recognize that clear information with regard to program goals, the AIG plan, and other policies is a critical aspect of gifted education programming. Articulated information regarding the program's strengths and areas of need shared with all stakeholders results in greater advocacy for gifted services. Research clearly indicates that effective communication is critical to the success of any program.

Information about all aspects of the program and its services are communicated to all groups of constituents: students, parents, general educators, gifted educators, administrators, the board of education members, and the Department of Public Instruction. Various means of electronic, print and verbal communications ensure that mechanisms for giving and receiving information/input are in

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place. In this way, a base of understanding, appreciation, and collaboration is formed and maintained. Methods used to share information to all stakeholders includes:

- >Local AIG Plan posted on the district website;
- >Staff meetings to share information (e.g. Local AIG Plan, the nomination process, AIG Program updates);
- >Printed brochures are available at all schools as well as on the AIG Program website;
- >Newsletters;
- >Emails;
- >Parent meetings;
- >School hosted parent nights (e.g. Back-to-School Open House, STEM Expo, Literacy Fair);
- >Parent Advisory Council;
- >School board presentations.

### **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:** Alleghany County Schools Parent Advisory Council is led by the AIG Director and Coordinator. Members include parents from each of our four schools, administrators, community members, and general education teachers. Alleghany County Schools AIG Program ensures that our Advisory Council includes stakeholders who reflect the diversity of AIG parents/families and community. This leads to council members who are better prepared and more strongly committed toward ensuring the equity of programs and services through the collaborative development of the Local AIG Plan.

Parent representatives volunteer to serve on the council by responding to a request sent by the AIG Coordinator. Because Alleghany is a small LEA, all parents who volunteer are typically included. In a situation in which we have too many volunteers, parents would be selected based on the need for grade level representation.

The AIG Director and Coordinator actively seek individuals from the community who represent a diverse group of community-based individuals that will actively participate in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the local AIG Program and plan (e.g. Director of the Alleghany Campus Wilkes Community College, local employers).

Alleghany County Schools Parent Advisory Council meets two times per year to provide feedback on the local plan and to assist in guiding the AIG Program.

### **Practice D**

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

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**District Response:** Communication of opportunities available to AIG students, articulated on an ongoing basis in parents'/families' native language, is essential to the success of a gifted education program. Information regarding programs and services for gifted learners that are shared among all stakeholders is required in order for AIG students' needs to be addressed and met.

Formal and informal communications, verbal and written/text communications articulate program initiatives and services as they become available. Annual review meetings, held at least yearly, provide ongoing, scheduled opportunity to inform parents/families, by phone or face-to-face of programs, initiatives, services, learning opportunities, etc. available to students on an ongoing and scheduled basis.

A translator is provided during meetings when necessary; all documents/ pertinent and verbal communications to parents of gifted students are translated in their native language upon request.

### **Practice E**

Partners with community stakeholders, such as institutions of higher education, local business and industry partners, and others to enhance and gain support for AIG programs and services.

**District Response:** Community volunteers, IHE's, business and industry partnerships as well as other resources available regionally and via the web, broaden educational programming and support our district's AIG Program.

Alleghany County Schools recognizes the value of partnerships with parents/families, institutions of higher education, local businesses and industry, and other stakeholders within the community. These partnerships enhance Alleghany County Schools AIG program and it's services. We currently partner with community stakeholders in the following ways:

- >Partnership with our local IHE, Wilkes Community College, Alleghany campus to provide College and >Career Promise classes to 9th-12th grade identified students who qualify;
- >Partnership with regional colleges to provide college field trips;
- >Partnership with local stakeholders to provide college scholarships for qualifying identified students (e.g. Alleghany Education Foundation, local businesses, community members).

Although district outreach initiatives are currently in place, our focus continues to be on strengthening bonds with the local college and community businesses to continue to enhance and strengthen Alleghany County Schools AIG programs and services.

### **Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

- >All AIG communication will be translated into Spanish and posted on our district website;
- >The AIG Director and Coordinator will seek additional community members to serve on our Advisory Council.

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**Sources of Evidence:**

- >Electronic communication with stakeholders;
- >Stakeholder surveys;
- >Updated district AIG webpage;
- >AIG advisory Council;
- >AIG documentation translated into a language other than English is available upon request;
- >Increase in opportunities for taking college courses;
- >Increased publication of student accomplishments.

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## 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 local board of education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools AIG Plan is developed every three years with the input of our AIG Programs Advisory Council. Our council includes the AIG Director and Coordinator, regular education teachers, school administrators, district administrators, and parents. Based on the feedback gathered from the council, the AIG Plan is revised, submitted to Alleghany County Schools Board of Education for approval, and then submitted to the Department of Public Instruction for review. After the initial development of the plan, the council meets throughout the year to evaluate the plan and provide feedback for the next revision cycle.

Alleghany County Schools AIG plan is aligned with state and local legislation and policies which include:

- >A definition of giftedness;
- >Criteria for identification;
- >Use of multiple criteria (e.g. achievement and aptitude assessments, performance, behaviors/characteristics);
- >Identification and placement recommendations matched with appropriate service delivery programs;
- >Provisions for an appropriately rigorous differentiated curriculum in specific area(s) aligned with students' needs;
- >Equitable decisions for identification and placement that address special needs of typically under-represented populations of gifted students;
- >Procedure to resolve disagreements.

### **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:** Alleghany County Schools AIG Program relies on continuous monitoring for program improvement. Implementation of the AIG Plan is monitored by the AIG Director in collaboration with other key stakeholders (e.g school administrators, district administrators, AIG Coordinator). The AIG Director monitors implementation in the following ways:

- >Collaborates with the AIG Coordinator to provide periodic professional development sessions that reiterate and reinforce current legislation and state policies;
- >Facilitates meetings with the AIG Advisory Council;

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- >Provides updates on the program to stakeholder groups (e.g district leadership team, MTSS teams, the board of education, AIG Advisory Council);
- >Conducts regular meetings with the AIG Coordinator;
- >Ensures school schedules adhere to the implementation of the AIG Plan.

In addition, the AIG Coordinator participates as a member of the district level instructional team. They monitor school-level compliance and fidelity and utilize the Student Success Team as a vehicle for communication and feedback to the program.

### **Practice C**

Develops and monitors a budget using allotted state funds, and local funds if applicable, to address the needs of the local AIG plan in accordance with state policy.

**District Response:** The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the Alleghany County School system recognize the importance of both state and local funds for our AIG Program. The AIG budget is one of the most critical components to support the efforts of gifted education programming. Budgets are developed and monitored by the Director of Student Services in conjunction with the Director of Finance. All budget expenditures align with state policy to assist in accomplishing the program's goals and objectives, reflecting integration with the total school curriculum. The budget aligns completely with the program's gifted services and is monitored regularly for accuracy and accountability. The overwhelming majority of AIG funds are used for AIG certified teacher positions.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools maintains, analyzes, and shares student performance growth reports. Since all general and gifted education teachers and administrators are focused on increased student achievement for all students, including gifted education students, formative and summative assessment reports are disaggregated to ensure growth among gifted and advanced student sub-populations. Formative assessments are scheduled regularly throughout the year and summative assessment data is collected annually across all grade levels beginning with grade three. Results are analyzed and used in making curricular and program decisions. Individual student score reports are analyzed in order to ensure an appropriate service match.

The AIG Director monitors AIG students who are at-risk for dropping out through close collaboration with high school counselors and at-risk reports available in PowerSchool. When students are identified as potential drop-outs, intervention efforts are made to keep these students in school. In addition, when test data is released, the AIG Director works alongside the Director of Testing and Accountability to analyze dropout data for our AIG population. Data analysis includes looking for trends and identifying potential risk factors.

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**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:** Alleghany County Schools AIG Program recognizes that underrepresented populations are often overlooked for gifted identification. Because of this, our program conducts purposeful monitoring to ensure that underrepresented populations are served.

Alleghany County Schools is a small LEA consisting of an 18-19 student enrollment of 1507 students. Demographic data gathered from PowerSchool breaks the demographics into the following:

- >Females-51%
- >Males-49%
- >Asian-.1%
- >Black or African American-.4%
- >Hispanic-27%
- >American Indian/Alaskan Native-.1%
- >Two or More-2.1%
- >Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander-.06%
- >White-70.2%
- >Economically disadvantaged-70%
- >English Language Learners-8%
- >Hispanic-27%
- >Exceptional Children-15%
- >Gifted-9%

Of the 9% who were identified as gifted:

- >Females-52%
- >Males-48%
- >1.4% were Asian
- >11% were Hispanic
- >87.6% were White
- >0% were English Language Learners
- >0% were Exceptional Children

While the data above shows equitable access among gender, overrepresentation among white students and under-representation among ELLs and EC students is apparent. We will continue to closely monitor data in an attempt to work towards equitable services among under-represented populations.

Alleghany County Schools' data analysis procedures require the use of data pulled from Powerschool. The AIG Director and Coordinator analyze the ratio of the total student population in comparison to the AIG headcounts that are conducted in November and April of each year. The information gleaned from these counts gives us a good look at the demographics of the AIG students in Alleghany County Schools. Headcount data related to gender, race, and ethnicity are reviewed. Prior headcounts are used to look for trends in these areas to help ensure equitable services are being offered for under-represented populations. During this process, student rosters are verified as



correct in PowerSchool and the counts are submitted to the Department of Public Instruction for approval. This process as well as the analysis of trends from year-to-year help Alleghany County School's AIG program work toward equity within our program.

In addition, the AIG Coordinator, Director, and Instructional Specialists closely monitor academic performance through data gathered from a continuum of both formative and summative assessments (e.g. iReady, benchmark assessments, classroom assessments, EOGs, EOCs). Results from these data sets assist in monitoring the performance of underrepresented populations. Using these results program practices are altered as needed.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Collaboration between Alleghany County Schools Human Resources Department, administrators, and the AIG Coordinator ensures fidelity in maintaining and monitoring the credentials of teachers instructing AIG students. The personnel department maintains current records on each employee and encourages additional certifications in all areas including AIG.

### **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:** Communication among stakeholders (e.g. students, parents/families, general education teachers, building administrators, gifted education teachers, central office administrators, local Board of Education members and DPI) are open and transparent. The following strategies are utilized to gather feedback in regards to the implementation and effectiveness of Alleghany County Schools AIG Program:

- >Feedback via face-to-face meetings (e.g. open house, DEP annual meetings);
- >Email messaging between parent(s) and the AIG Coordinator;
- >AIG teacher meets with classroom teachers on a regular basis to gather instructional feedback;
- >Surveys conducted with students, teachers, and parents;
- >Feedback from district team members (e.g. Curriculum and Instruction Team, District MTSS Team, and District Leadership Team).

Alleghany County Schools and the AIG Program staff fully recognize that stakeholder feedback is an integral part of the program development cycle.

### **Practice H**

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

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**District Response:** The Alleghany County Schools AIG Program employs evaluative procedures at various intervals to substantiate and/or modify program identification, curriculum service delivery models, and other program components. Through theoretical-based study, each program component has been planned, revised, evaluated, and monitored for effectiveness and impact on student academic performance and social/emotional growth.

Based on the Alleghany County Schools mission and philosophy, the AIG Program goals, policies and procedures reflect evidence-based practices for gifted students. North Carolina EOG/EOC test scores, benchmark scores, grade performance, AIG performance, AIG administered tests, portfolio submissions and numerous other indicators are collected and reviewed as indicators to assist with program improvement.

On the school level, the instructional support team serves as an essential source of feedback. At the district level, the leadership team serves as a "checks and balances" team. Monitoring and adjusting is often imperative at the district level. Testing and placement data are examined to ascertain the nature and compliance of placements, providing insight into the number of students who fall below acceptable performance levels and require academic advisement.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Alleghany County Schools disseminates data required by NCDPI to the public. Additional evaluation data will be collected and publicized via the district AIG webpage, local Board of Education meeting minutes and other forms of communication.

### **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:** INFORMED CONSENT REGARDING IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT  
Parent(s) or guardians who have reason to believe that their child may be gifted should discuss this with the classroom teacher and AIG Coordinator. After the meeting, if the data indicates possible giftedness a referral is made to the Student Success Team.

When students are identified as gifted by the Student Success Team, the AIG Coordinator develops a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) and meets with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the AIG Program and develop a service plan. Meetings are held on an annual basis to review the DEP and make service changes as needed.

### **REASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

During the screening and referral process, Student Success Teams may require additional

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assessment data in order to make an informed decision regarding a student's placement into the AIG Program. This may include readministering the same form of assessment as a student has previously taken. Prior to an evaluation, parents will be notified and given a consent to evaluate form. Parents have the right to refuse the evaluation. If, after all data is gathered, the Student Success Team does not believe gifted services are appropriate, the parent(s)/guardian(s) may choose to proceed with the Procedures for Resolving Disagreements listed below.

#### TRANSFERS FROM OTHER LEAS

Students who transfer into Allegheny County Schools with a gifted identification must meet the criteria presented in the ACS AIG Plan for formal identification. Student Success Teams will review all documentation and the AIG Coordinator will present the decision to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

#### PROCEDURES TO RESOLVE DISAGREEMENTS

According to Article 9B, governing the screening, identification and placement of students into services for the academically or intellectually gifted, a procedure for resolving disagreements between parents or legal custodians and the local school administrative unit shall be developed. A disagreement might arise when a child is not identified as an academically or intellectually gifted student.

If the student was self-nominated or nominated by a parent/guardian but not identified as needing differentiated services by the Student Success Team, inform parents/guardian of this decision by providing them the following:

1. Copy of Referral/Summary of Data Form
2. Copy of Due Process Procedures

If the student was identified, and the Student Success Team recommends a Differentiated Education Plan, inform parents/guardian of this decision by providing them the following:

1. Copy of Referral/Summary of Data Forms
2. Copy of Differentiated Education Plan
3. Copy of Due Process Procedures

If parents have disagreements regarding the nomination, identification, or service options, they are guaranteed the following due process procedures:

#### DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES

##### STEP I-Student Success Team

>The parent(s)/guardian may make a request for a conference with the Student Success Team to discuss the concerns about the recommendation;

>Student Success Team reviews the student's record and their previous nomination, identification, and service option decisions. The committee may gather additional information about the student from teachers and/or parents as needed. The Referral/Summary of Data Form may be updated;

>Student Success Team grants the conference within five school days of request and responds to parent/guardian in writing within five school days of the conference;

>If the disagreement is not resolved at the Student Success Team conference, then proceed to Step II-Principal Conference (unless the principal of the school was in the SST meeting).

##### STEP II-Principal Conference

>The parent(s) may make a written request within 30 days for a conference with the principal;

>Principal reviews the recommendation with the Student Success Team chairperson;

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- >Principal grants the conference within five school days of request and responds in writing within five school days of the conference;
- >If the disagreement is not resolved at the principal conference, then proceed to Step III-Appeal to the AIG Director.

#### STEP III-Appeal to the AIG Program Director (Director of Student Services)

- >The parent(s)/guardian may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the AIG Director within five days of receiving the response;
- >AIG Director reviews the grievance within five days of receipt of the appeal;
- >AIG Director responds in writing to the parent and principal concerning the outcome of the review within 10 school days;
- >If the grievance is not resolved at STEP III, then proceed to STEP IV-Appeal to the Superintendent.

#### STEP IV-Appeal to Superintendent

- >The parent(s)/guardian may appeal the decision of the AIG Director to the Superintendent within five days of receiving the response;
- >The superintendent reviews the grievance within five days of receipt of the appeal;
- >The Superintendent responds in writing concerning the outcome within ten school days to the parent/guardian and principal;
- >If the grievance is not resolved at STEP IV, then proceed to STEP V-Appeal to the Board of Education.

#### STEP V-Appeal to the Board of Education

- >The parent(s)/guardian may appeal the decision of the Board of Education within five days of receiving the response;
- >The Board of Education reviews the grievance within five days of receipt of the appeal;
- >The Board of Education responds in writing concerning the outcome within ten school days to the parent/guardian and Superintendent;
- >In the event that the local grievance procedure fails to resolve the disagreement, then the state level grievance procedure would be implemented.

#### State Level Grievance Procedure

The parent(s) 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 whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically or intellectually gifted student, or whether the local plan has been implemented appropriately in regard to the child. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains findings 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

#### **Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

- >Greater monitoring of the representation and retention of underrepresented populations;
- >Continued input from stakeholders to drive program improvement.

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

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- >Administration and analysis of stakeholder surveys;
- >Changes in programming and services to meet the needs of AIG students;
- >Data regarding referral and identification trends based upon demographics and subgroups;
- >Analysis of enrollment data of upper-level coursework;
- >Follow-up interviews with AIG drop-outs;
- >AIG Coordinator licensure;
- >AIG Coordinator schedule;
- >Formative, benchmark, and summative assessment data;
- >Stakeholder communication;
- >AIG Headcount.

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**Glossary (optional):**

**Appendix (optional):**

AIG Referral Form.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)

Identification Requirement for Placement into the Academically\_Intellectually Gifted Program.pdf  
(*Appendix - Standard 1*)

AIG Program Survey - 3-8 Students - Google Forms.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 5:6*)

AIG Program Survey - Teacher Survey - Google Forms.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 5:6*)