

Overview: Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

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Cherokee County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2021). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide Public School Units (PSUs) to develop, implement, and monitor thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs. The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs aligned to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C150.5). These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what a PSU should have in place, and guide PSUs to improve their programs. In an effort to continue to transform AIG programs and align to the NC AIG Program Standards, each PSU has participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, involving multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process has guided PSUs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2022-2025. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's local board of education or charter school's board of directors and sent to NC DPI for comment.

For 2022-2025, the Cherokee County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

\* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

Cherokee County Public Schools' mission is for every student to graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary education, work and life in the 21st century.

The success of our school system depends on the commitment of all staff (administrators, teachers and support staff)

to high quality standards, expectations and performances. Students need not only develop a deep understanding of essential knowledge and skills, but also need to develop a capacity to apply their learning, and to reason, solve problems and produce quality work. The goal of our educational programs is to prepare all students to become contributing members of society.

**FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2022)**

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 156,021.65	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

**Standard 1: Student Identification**

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

**\* Practice A**

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

In keeping with our state motto of AIG All Day, Every Day -- CCS believes that AIG services should be integrated and supported both within the regular classroom and through extension and enrichment opportunities.

The AIG screening and referral process aims to support instructors in recognizing when a student is likely to need advanced academic services and to set a standard of measure that will provide equity and opportunity for all students. The primary goal is to ensure that all students with demonstrated advanced academic needs receive instruction and enrichment opportunities to meet their academic needs. Even before an official placement in the AIG program, AIG strives to recognize and support the learning needs of students who may not be placed in the AIG Program but who demonstrate academically advanced learning needs (those who consistently perform at least one grade level above their same age/ grade-level peers). All student assessment data is screened by the AIG specialist, at minimum, yearly, and schools are provided a list of students with potentially advanced academic abilities. In addition, the AIG specialist will provide classroom teachers with supplemental resources for advanced learning opportunities that teachers may deliver within the regular classroom. Students who consistently perform and/or display academic and intellectual needs consistent with the criteria outlined below.

In addition to the regular screening process, instructional staff or family who believes a child should receive advanced academic services may refer a student for services by following the steps below:

Steps for Initiating a Referral for AIG testing:

- Step 1. Parents or Guardians should discuss their request with their child's classroom teacher. The teacher will review the AIG program requirements with the parent/guardian and inform the school principal of the request.
- Step 2. After a review of required placement criteria to ensure the student demonstrates advanced academic need, if deemed appropriate to proceed with the referral, the instructional staff should complete a referral request form and submit it to the school AIG liaison or AIG specialist.
- Step 3. After gathering the appropriate documentation, the AIG specialist and/or liaison completes the [AIG request for Screening, Google Form](#).
- Step 4. After thoroughly reviewing the referral documentation, the AIG testing coordinator will contact the parent/guardian to share the recommendation and obtain consent for AIG testing.

**\* 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.

**AIG Screening Criteria to be tested for AIG placement outside of a universal screening year:**

Grades K-3 - Student Achievement on state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers  
AND/OR

- According to the collection and document of an evaluated student portfolio, a teacher or parent provides evidence that the student demonstrated advanced learning needs.

Grades 4-8 - Student achieves level 5 rating on a State Required Assessment. (EVAAS predictions accepted),

And one or more of the criteria below

- Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas),
- Student is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers on progress monitoring assessment,
- Student's teacher provides a completed and qualifying Gifted Rating Scale measurement.

Grades 9-12 - Student achieves level 5 percentile rating on a State Required Assessment or meets the cut score for a Nationally normed assessment. (EVAAS predictions accepted)

And one or more of the criteria below

- Student achieves high academic marks (GPA of 4.0 or above)
- 90th percentile rating or prediction on a State Required Assessment
- Student's teacher provides a completed and qualifying Gifted Rating Scale measurement.

### **Criteria for Talent Development and Universal Screening**

Students who perform or who are predicted to perform at least one grade level above their same age/grade level peers will be included in our talent development program and will receive targeted support services to cultivate and develop academic and intellectual talent and abilities.

Universal Screening will occur in grades 4, 7, and 9. AIG staff will review each student's academic records for AIG eligibility based on talent development criteria during these school years. When a student meets the talent development criteria, the AIG testing coordinator will contact the school principal and the parent/guardian to share the recommendation and obtain consent for AIG testing. Upon receipt of parent/guardian consent, the AIG specialist will include students in our Grade 4 and 7, and 9 Universal Screening Group for AIG Testing. (Please see the [CCS AIG Screening Rubric](#)).

### **AIG Placement Criteria by Service Area:**

### **Academically Gifted - Reading only**

Grades K-3 - Student Achievement on a state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading, AND a student portfolio demonstrates exceptional academic ability as measured by the Academic Product Portfolio rubric in the area of Reading Language Arts

Grades 4-8 - Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments in the area of reading AND student achievement on a state-approved progress monitoring tool is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading or Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas).

Grades 9-12 - Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments (or a nationally normed assessment) in the area of reading, AND student achievement on a state-approved progress monitoring tool is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading or Student achieves consistently high academic marks (GPA 4.0 or above).

### **Academically Gifted - Math only**

Grades K-3 - Student Achievement on a state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Math, AND a student portfolio demonstrates exceptional academic ability as measured by the Academic Product Portfolio rubric in the area of Mathematics.

Grades 4-8 - Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments in the area of Math AND student achievement on a state-approved progress monitoring tool is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Math or Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas).

Grades 9-12 - Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments (or a nationally normed assessment) in the area of Math, AND student achievement on a state-approved progress monitoring tool is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Math or Student achieves consistently high academic marks (GPA 4.0 or above).

### **Academically Gifted - Reading and Math**

Grades K-3 - Student Achievement on a state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading and Math, AND a student portfolio demonstrates exceptional academic ability as measured by the Academic Product Portfolio rubric in the area of Reading and Mathematics.

Grades 4-8 - Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments in the area of Reading and Math AND student achievement on a state-approved progress monitoring tool is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading and Math or Student achieves high academic marks (mastery or grade letter A+ in 3 out of 4 core academic areas).

Grades 9-12 - Student scores a level 5 on two or more state assessments (or a nationally normed assessment) in the area of Reading and Math, AND student achievement on a state-approved progress monitoring tool is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading and Math or Student achieves consistently high academic marks (GPA 4.0 or above).

### **Intellectually Gifted**

Grades K-12 - Student scores at or above 90th %tile on a nationally recognized aptitude test.

### **Academically and Intellectually Gifted**

Grades K-3 - Student scores at or above 90th %tile on a nationally recognized aptitude test AND the Student's Achievement on a state-approved academic assessment is 2+ grade levels above their same age-peers in the area of Reading AND Math.

Grades 4-8 - Student scores at or above 90th %tile on a nationally recognized aptitude test AND Student scores a level 5 on two or more state or national assessments in the area of Reading AND Math

Grades 9-12 - Student scores at or above 90th %tile on a nationally recognized aptitude test AND Student scores a level 5 on two or more state or nationally normed assessments in the area of Reading AND Math.



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**\* Practice C**

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

CCS has historically experienced a somewhat homogeneous student population as a small rural school system. However, as in most communities throughout North Carolina, we are beginning to see increased diversity in our school system. The AIG department celebrates and welcomes this increase in diversity. The total minority population noted in the previous AIG plan (written in 2016) equaled 11%. CCS now has a 15% minority population. As noted in the Demographic Reporting and Comparison CCS v AIG (see appendix), in most reported categories, CCS AIG is within range for proportionally representing our minority population. AIG believes we will more comprehensively address student learning needs by using a more inclusive universal screening process, push-in classroom support, and the option of identification based on a portfolio submission. Using these methods, AIG has already identified 100 additional students to include in our talent development program, screened over 124 new students for indicators of gifted

behavior, and 25 students who are not currently in our program whom we will recommend teachers screen and perhaps refer for testing. In the groups mentioned, 20/100 and 8/25 are minority students. Our AIG specialist and ELL coordinator/teacher work together to ensure that students with gifted abilities are recognized and identified.

With respect to gender representation, CCS does quite well in consistency with district numbers. We have a nearly 50/50 representation in both our overall population and in our AIG student population. Another area we want to be mindful of is our representation of our economically disadvantaged population. Although we do not have a 1:1 comparison, we know that CCS is a Title 1 district and that we consistently serve a student population of which 80% or above qualify for free or reduced lunch. Our recent efforts to work collaboratively with the 21st-century program will ensure that we make improved strides to provide enrichment and talent development opportunities to this targeted population.

**\* Practice D**

Monitors the screening, referral, and identification processes for consistent implementation across the LEA.

AIG provides the CCS AIG Placement Rubric and Referral Process Chart (see appendix) for Schools and teachers to follow and make decisions regarding placement procedures. Information, Charts, and updates are collected in a shared Google Drive that is available to all principals and AIG personnel. Principals and district leaders are kept apprised of procedures during bi-annual leadership planning sessions. Any changes or updates of procedures are shared during monthly leadership meetings. As a small district, one individual, the AIG specialist, monitors the implementation of our procedures. In collaboration with the AIG liaisons, the AIG specialist monitors distinct data and advises the group to ensure consistent standards. In the instance of inconsistencies, the AIG specialist alerts the program director, and corrections to procedures are addressed.

**\* Practice E**

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

The CCS AIG department is small. Still, we have creatively increased our footprint by offering stipends to personnel at the school level to ensure AIG has a professional presence at each school location. A significant portion of the AIG

liaisons' responsibilities relates to sharing AIG communicating with principals, teachers, parents, and students. We ensure consistency of message by housing our information documents in a shared Google Team drive where AIG forms and reference guides are housed and readily available. The program has also developed an easy-to-follow flowchart that describes our screening, referral, and identification process. This chart is included in student handbooks and distributed to parents and teachers.

The presence of AIG Liaisons has significantly improved the communication network between the district, teachers, and schools since the role's inception. As the wider community becomes increasingly aware of the liaisons and their role within the school community, we foresee an increase in contacts and our ability to remain present and active in the schools. In addition, the job expectations of our liaisons include that each liaison maintains their school's social media presence for the AIG program and that the liaison contributes to our district's quarterly update/newsletter for the AIG program. This communication ensures that parents and the community know AIG procedures and are aware of student opportunities for placement and academic support.

**\* 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.

**Student placement process**

- Instructional staff reviews and gathers required documentation and contacts the school principal and the AIG Liaison or Specialist to refer a student for AIG testing\* (in universal screening years, the AIG specialist will review criteria)
- After thoroughly reviewing the referral documentation, the AIG Liaison or Specialist notifies the parent/guardian of the student's referral, provides information regarding AIG testing, and requests consent for AIG testing.

- With collected parent/guardian consent, the AIG specialist will work with the school testing coordinator to schedule a time for the AIG assessment and notify the parents/guardians of the scheduled testing date.
- After all assessments are complete, if appropriate, the AIG testing coordinator will recommend placement based on the AIG Placement Criteria by Service Area for advanced Academic and Intellectual Learners and begin developing a service plan information packet for parents/guardians.
- Based on input from the teacher, parents/guardians, and AIG Program Plan criteria, the AIG specialist will record the student's placement category and document the student's DEP plan in PowerSchool.

**\* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard

- Add an additional year to our universal screening group.

We have already added 7th (we may add 9th for a time to ensure we have not missed any students) Adding 9th grade to our universal screening group will ensure that more students (especially students who may have moved into our district) will have an opportunity to demonstrate advanced academic abilities and will be able to receive needed services.

- Review our assessment choice for testing.

We will continue to assess our online test option for testing students for placement. OLSAT online looks to be a great option as it provides information and online guides for parents as well as digital results and analysis. However, we recognize that there are some limitations to the format. Nevertheless, having the ability to review and retain this digital copy of the student assessment will improve our ability to communicate student needs and retain copies of student results.

- Participate in BOY meetings and then quarterly progress meetings with core four teachers and instructional staff.

Setting a meeting to review the goals and needs of our AIG students and academically advanced students will highlight and bring a greater sense of urgency to the needs of our students. These meetings will also allow AIG staff to support teachers with differentiation strategies.

- Review student data with schools to increase awareness of academically advanced students, especially those in underrepresented groups.

During the review of our demographic representation, several areas of weakness were highlighted that should be reviewed with schools to ensure that students who should be identified or students who may need additional support are highlighted and discussed with classroom teachers.

**Planned Sources of Evidence**

- \* CCS AIG Placement Rubric.pdf
- \* CCS AIG Data Review (Shared with Principals and District staff)
- \* CCS Website > Student Services > Academically and Intellectually Gifted
- \* PowerSchool and SchoolNet Student Profiles
- \* AIG information section Student/Parent Handbook

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

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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**Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community**

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

**\* Practice A**

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

CCS believes that AIG services should be integrated and supported both within the regular classroom and through extension opportunities. The CCS AIG program supports the advanced learning needs of all students grades K-12 placed in the AIG program in the following ways:

- CCS requires that students receive adapted instruction, resources, and materials as well as class assignments based on cluster grouping.
- CCS offers the option of a compacted math curriculum for students and provides academic acceleration and enrichment activities for all Academically Gifted and Advanced students.
- Teachers are provided supplemental resources to support students' academic acceleration and to allow students to move quickly through the required curriculum content and onto more advanced material.
- CCS has implemented a multi-level and multi-dimensional curriculum that provides lesson support and activities for extending learning opportunities for advanced learners.

- As a Learning Focused (LF) school district, CCS has developed LF standards-aligned pacing guides for all teachers in grades K-8 (9-12 guides are in development). Guides provided unpacked “Do” learning goals for students that extend and vertically align standards so that learning can extend to address differences in the rate, depth, and pace of learning.
- The CCS AIG Specialist supports a flexible approach to the curriculum. Taking advantage of real-life experiences, the specialist provides small group face-to-face and virtual “pull-out” opportunities to engage in problem-solving academics.
- In pull-out learning groups, the AIG specialist supports opportunities for students to pursue independent projects based on their individual interests. Independent projects encourage creativity and original thinking among gifted students.
- The AIG specialist also provides and hosts opportunities for students to participate in academic contests and extracurricular activities that involve academic skills.
- With AIG Liaisons, school counselors, and the AIG specialist, students are encouraged and given opportunities to discuss their aspirations and set individual goals in both small group and individual settings. Focusing on the student's individual needs, including the growth of the student's academic, social, and emotional well-being, is a priority in these goal settings sessions.

### **Grades K-5**

In addition to the services listed above, K-5 students are provided academic acceleration and enrichment opportunities via the Cherokee County AIG and Advanced Learners Canvas course. Students are provided access to state-designed AIG Learning Labs, PBL Project resources, and access to the Study.com course library. Classroom teachers and parents with support from the AIG specialist are provided guidance and support to utilize these resources to accelerate, expand, and extend students’ learning opportunities.

### **Grades 6-8**

In addition to the comprehensive services and the Cherokee County AIG and Advanced Learners Canvas course. Students in grades 6-8 also receive academic advisory services from a school-level AIG liaison supported by the school guidance counselor and/or middle school career coordinator. In advisory sessions, students are provided

academic acceleration and enrichment opportunities to enroll and earn high school level course credit via the Cherokee County Virtual School (CCVS) or the North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS).

### **Grades 9-12**

Finally, besides including all the above resources, Academically Advanced High school students' advanced academic needs are supported through comprehensive accelerated programming offerings on their campus. These supports include Honors and Advanced Placement courses and Credit by Demonstrated Mastery options. Students will receive academic advisory services from a school-level AIG liaison supported by the school guidance counselor and high school career coordinator. Through these advisements, students are informed of and provided opportunities to enroll in virtual school classes with Cherokee County Virtual School (CCVS) or the North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS). In a small district with limited funds and teaching positions, CCVS and NCVPS offer programming to our students that may otherwise not be available at their school campuses. These virtual services allow our students to pursue more advanced and diverse courses such as Mandarin Chinese, AP Psychology, AP Computer Science, and many others. In addition, based on student placement recommendations and community college requirements for college-level courses, AIG-identified students may enroll in courses at our local community college if qualified.

### **Intellectually Gifted students:**

The abilities and needs of the IG student are widely varied. The AIG specialist will review and inventory the gifted classification for IG students to determine service options. A focus on the student's individual needs, including the student's academic, social, and emotional growth, will be a priority. When students are identified as twice-exceptional, the AIG specialist will partner with an EC specialist to develop an individualized education plan representative of the student's exceptionality.



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**\* Practice B**

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

As active participants in the district strategic planning committee, the AIG department contributes to selecting resources to support our students' holistic social and emotional needs. Through the articulation of the AIG Liaison's responsibilities to monitor students' areas of interest and progress toward personal goals as well as their classroom behavior and social/emotional developments, a special emphasis has been placed on addressing the needs of the whole student, not just student academics. Liaisons, teachers, and specialists are directed to meet with students at the beginning of each school year to review academic and individual goals and social-emotional needs. Once a month, the liaison or the AIG specialist will conduct a "wellness" check with students individually or in small groups. In these wellness checks, students can discuss their progress toward established goals or revise them to include new criteria and address changes or updates in students' social emotional needs. AIG staff are directed to communicate goals and concerns with our counseling staff at each school to ensure that students receive support from various stakeholders. We have also reached out to our local communities to develop partnerships with community organizations, and we are working to place a new emphasis on service and community development as we believe that service is an integral component of leadership, emotional efficacy, and intelligence.

The Restorative Justice Practice, "Circles," is often used as an opening or closing activity with students. During this time, the AIG specialist or classroom teacher will pose a topic/question about a social or emotional issue or how students feel about a current learning/school situation. During this time, the specialist will guide students through the "circle," and students are able to share their feelings and voice concerns. During the weekly visit with each school, the AIG specialist will share findings or concerns with classroom teachers or the AIG liaison.

**\* Practice C**

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

A goal for the AIG program during the new plan cycle is to build our connections and communication with each instructional department. Following the strategic plan for the district, AIG will work to support the Learning Focused goals as outlined in the district plan. AIG will request data information and resources from Testing and Accountability, build cooperative professional development events with Curriculum and Digital Teaching/Learning/STEM, provide guidance and resources for MTSS committees, and increase our students' access to career and future-ready skill development with the support of our CTE Department.

We have requested that the AIG Liaison is included on each MTSS committee to ensure that the needs of advanced learners are not overlooked. We understand that academic risk is not always an easily identified metric for advanced learners. Often AIG students' continued ability to meet proficiency or college/career readiness on state assessments means that risk indicators are missed. We encourage data conversations to include a review of expected growth for AIG students and encourage schools to review instructional practices to ensure that instruction and resources meet the goals of accelerated learning. To avoid prolonged neglect of risk factors, we believe it is essential to have the liaison serve as an advocate and advisor who can alert instructional staff to possible risk factors for advanced learners.

Through district-provided testing reports, AIG can analyze our data to recognize students who show advanced academic potential and share these findings with schools, liaisons, and teachers who may screen students for potential testing and include students in our talent development groups. We can also use these reports to guide teachers and to help provide intervention strategies and resources for students who are not achieving at anticipated levels.

**\* Practice D**

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

CCS AIG recommends that schools and teachers follow a blended learning model and utilize EVAAS school growth predictions to create a 5-level grouping system to support flexible grouping practices. Instruction designed to meet accelerated learning components of the content standards and the specific needs of advanced learners should be adapted or enriched to meet advanced students' needs. In addition, AIG recommends that when appropriate, AIG and advanced learners are provided access to accelerated content through curriculum compacting, placed in honors course options, and provided access to advanced course placement (next grade or next level options). In addition, AIG students will receive opportunities to work with like peers on enrichment opportunities provided by the AIG specialist. (See the Academic Achievement by Proficiency Group PDF and the CCS Blended Learning Model in the appendix).

**\* Practice E**

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

AIG informs and shares information in a variety of ways. We participate in district principal and administrator meetings monthly and are always afforded an opportunity to share information with leadership in those meetings. We share a Google Team Drive where we house AIG plans, information, and resources (we also share this information on our website). Common language and resources are shared with all schools, and we actively participate in the district strategic planning committee. These practices allow our department to share goals, resources, and contribute to the district planning process. The comprehensive AIG plan and supporting documents are shared with schools via a shared Google Drive, and links to the plan and our resources are available on our district website.

**\* Practice F**

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

In addition to sharing information, as noted in Practice E, the AIG specialist provides schools and classroom teachers with information regarding updates to AIG identification and resources for adapting instruction to meet the needs of their students. This information is provided to all teachers yearly and updated as new students are identified.

**\* Practice G**

Develops policies and procedures for a variety of acceleration opportunities, including compacted content, Credit by

Demonstrated Mastery, dual enrollment, subject and/or grade acceleration.

CCS offers the following acceleration options for students who demonstrate the need for advancement beyond their grade-level:

- > Compacted Content Differentiation including an emphasis on “leveling-up” vertical standard alignment and accelerated Lexile and Quantile alignment for students with acceleration needs (K-12 utilizes [www.hub.lexile.com](http://www.hub.lexile.com) for access to guided resources)
- > Credit by Demonstrated Mastery options for students who request or demonstrate a need for accelerated pathways in specific subject areas (see CDM Documentation)
- > Advanced Academic Course (face-to-face and virtual) options include honors, AP, Career and College Promise/Dual Enrollment options based on student placement recommendations and community college requirements for high school students; middle school students have opportunities to enroll in high school level course through our virtual school (see CCVS/NCVPS Documents)
- > Grade-Skipping, in exceptional circumstances student at any grade-level may be considered for grade-skipping based on tested intellectual ability and academic need (see CCS Considerations for Subject Acceleration)

**\* Practice H**

Develops mindsets, policies, and practices to promote equity and excellence by broadening access to advanced learning opportunities through a variety of intentional efforts, including talent development, at all grade levels.

AIG regularly broadens access to advanced learning opportunities by expanding AIG services into the regular classroom and inviting all students to participate in AIG opportunities. Through team planning efforts, the AIG specialist designs curriculum-aligned project-based learning opportunities and models accelerated learning strategies for all students by planning “push-in” learning events in general education classrooms. These learning events include all students and are designed to demonstrate the advanced learning abilities of all students.

**Criteria for Talent Development**

Students who perform or who are predicted to perform at least one grade level above their same age/grade level peers will be included in our talent development program and will receive targeted support services to cultivate and develop academic and intellectual talent abilities. These students will be included in AIG enrichment activities.

**\* Practice I**

Enhances and further develops the needs, talents, and interests of AIG students through extra-curricular programming.

CCS AIG is currently building partnerships within school clubs and expanding our partnerships with CTE, STEM, Safe and Healthy Schools, and 21st-century coordinators. These partnerships currently and will continue to build around a common goal that our students work as leaders and active participants in community service learning partnerships and engage in real-world learning opportunities. In these partnerships, students may explore how they can leverage their academic and social interests to contribute to their greater community. These activities also explore the interconnected nature of public, private, and non-profit organizations. As we continue to develop these relationships, we hope to partner with the MAC (our local art council), Murphy School of Dance, and the John C. Campbell Folk School to offer our students a greater variety of artistic opportunities. In addition, we will continue to host showcase opportunities and support our STEM/STAC, SmartTank, and Science Olympiad programs. The program will continually seek additional opportunities to develop AIG students' needs, talents, and interests through extracurricular programming

**\* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Increase the number of AIG Staff.

In order to best meet the needs of our student population, AIG would like to see the county increase the number of AIG Liaisons in our higher population schools and we would love to have an elementary and middle school AIG teacher to serve the district. We would also like to have a differentiation specialist to serve our middle and high school population. This individual would work with teachers and instructional staff on the core four subjects to help with planning, data analysis, and blended learning and differentiation strategies.

- Continue to grow our resources and guides for teachers.

Utilize the OverDrive digital library to provide content and information regarding the needs of our students. Continue to provide and increase the number of AIG digital resources for teachers and instructional staff.

- Continue to partner with the Digital Teaching and Learning department in order to reinforce our emphasis on personalized and the CCS blended learning model.

The Digital Teaching and Learning PPRC framework, personalized learning goals, and blended learning goals fit harmoniously with AIG learning and student support goals. Combining resources and efforts will help to send a cohesive message and ensure the success of the vision.

- Develop a condensed version of the AIG plan to share with teachers and principals.

Although the full AIG plan provides the most comprehensive vision of the AIG program and plan, we realize that many may not invest the time to read a lengthy detailed plan. Therefore we will work to condense and share an abbreviated version with staff.

- Create a unified CDM Phase 2 process.

With five high schools, we often have a variety of methods for completing various course requirements. Developing a cohesive process for CDM would strengthen the communication and quality of our CDM credits.

- Increase frequency of extra-curricular activities.

We believe that offering opportunities for social gatherings and events that will allow our academically advanced students from across the county to meet up will increase our students' opportunities to share their academic curiosities and to develop their social and emotional skills.

Examples of Evidence

- Academic Achievement by Proficiency Group PDF

- Liaison Responsibilities Document

- Study.com Contract
- OverDrive Content
- CCS Blended Learning Model
- CDM Documentation
- CCS Considerations for Acceleration

**Planned Sources of Evidence**

- \* Academic Achievement by Proficiency Group PDF
- \* Liaison Responsibilities Document
- \* CCS Considerations for Acceleration, CDM Documentation

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

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

**Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction**

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

**\* Practice A**

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

CCS believes that AIG services should be integrated and supported within the regular classroom and through extension opportunities. The CCS AIG program Adapts the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) K-12 to support students' advanced learning needs in the following ways:

- CCS offers the option of a compacted math curriculum for students and provides academic acceleration and enrichment activities for all Academically Gifted and Advanced students.
- Teachers are provided supplemental resources to support students' academic acceleration to allow students to move quickly through the required curriculum content and onto more advanced materials and extension activities to provide cross-curricular investigations
- CCS has implemented a multi-level and multi-dimensional curriculum that provides lesson support and activities for extending learning opportunities for advanced learners.
- As a Learning Focused (LF) school district, CCS has developed LF standards-aligned pacing guides for all teachers in grades K-8 (9-12 guides are in development). Guides provided unpacked "Do" learning goals for

students that extend and vertically align standards so that learning can extend to address differences in the rate, depth, and pace of learning.

- The CCS AIG Specialist supports a flexible approach to the curriculum. Taking advantage of real-life experiences, the specialist provides small group face-to-face and virtual “pull-out” opportunities to engage in problem-solving academics.
- In pull-out learning groups, the AIG specialist supports opportunities for students to pursue independent projects based on their own individual interests. Independent projects encourage creativity and original thinking among gifted students.
- The AIG specialist also provides and hosts opportunities for students to participate in academic contests and extracurricular activities that involve academic skills.

**\* 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.

Following the research-based recommendations developed by the NCDPI Digital Teaching and Learning division, CCS AIG encourages a personalized approach to learning that incorporates the use of Learner Profiles (SchoolNet), Individual Learning Pathways (DEPs), and Flexible Learning Environments (Virtual Learning Options CCVS/NCVPS) to meet the diverse learning needs of our advanced learners. As we continue to develop our program, we plan to also incorporate Competency Based Progression as a new learning option for our students. This strategy will provide our learners with access to rigorous content and the ability to progress through content and pursue learning objectives that align with student interest and advanced abilities.

- The use of SchoolNet Learner profiles will allow AIG Staff and Classroom teachers to share a “digital conversations” about the skills/strengths, interests/passions, and struggles or potential barriers our advanced

learners may face in their learning journey. The ongoing “conversation” can be added to and reviewed by all who have instructional responsibility for our AIG students.

- The Individual Learning Pathways (DEPs) will help teachers to know the learning goals, milestones, and learning styles that are preferred by our AIG students. These pathways can help teachers to customize the learning in their classes to fit the needs of our advanced learners.
- Finally, providing access to flexible learning environments through virtual learning options enables our students to add value to their education and to access courses that CCS, as a small rural district, may not have personnel or resources to offer at each school location.

#### **\* Practice C**

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

Working in collaboration with the district curriculum, accountability, and digital teaching and learning department, CCS AIG contributes, encourages, and supports the acquisition of a variety of digital, supplemental, and supportive programs that enrich and enhance the differentiated learning needs of our advanced learners. Our current curriculum for Math (ReadyMath) and ELA (Wit and Wisdom) are both evidence-based and highly effective curricula designed to support the needs of diverse learners. Our district purchases curriculum enhancement programs such as ActivelyLearn, and NoRed Ink to support advanced adaptive content for all including advanced learners. These resources, along with other digital and traditional programs (Edmentum Courseware, ExactPath, iReady, Study.com, etc) enhance our curriculum support options and promote critical thinking strategies to provide teachers a variety of resources that clearly defines instructional strategies that they can use to differentiate their instruction.

#### **Specific Recommendations**

AIG supports the accelerated learning model of our Learning-Focused programming and supports teachers in their use of the grade level pacing guides to extend and accelerate learning.

AIG recommends teachers use online Quantile and Lexile Frameworks to support their understanding of the state assessment measure, to gain a more in-depth understanding of the individual learning needs of the advanced learner,

and aid in the teachers' ability to provide instruction at the appropriate developmental level. We also encourage teachers to incorporate the ISTE standards for students in their instructional design. The ISTE standards encourage teachers to consider how students think and communicate their learning and challenge students to take personal ownership of their learning.

#### Quantile

CCS AIG encourages teachers to use the Quantile Teacher Assistant and the Quantile Math Skills Database to understand and leverage the interconnectedness of the math standards in order best to meet the learning needs of the advanced learner. The Math Skills Database helps teachers dig deeply into their focus standards and locate resources to support student learning. The Quantile Teacher Assistant provides teachers with an adjustable quantile range for each state standard, thus enabling teachers at all levels to understand how to best support and extend the learning for their advanced learners. The Quantile Teacher Assistant also links teachers to resources that enable them to customize their instruction based on student needs.

#### Lexile

CCS AIG encourages teachers to use the Lexile framework to help students locate books of interest, analyze the Lexile level of classroom texts, and locate an appropriate interest level book using the Lexile codes. The Lexile framework also aids teachers in extending student learning by helping teachers build customized summer reading lists and guiding students to take ownership of their reading choices.

AIG support personnel, including school-based liaisons, will work with grade-level/subject-specific teams and the MTSS teams at their schools to explore recommended resources, inventory current curriculum resources to determine how to best meet the needs of our advanced learners, and reflect upon and research potential programs that may enhance our current programs to meet the needs of their current population.

**\* Practice D**

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

CCS AIG partners with the Digital Teaching and Learning (DTL) Program to encourage the integration of the PPRC framework into classroom instruction. The PPRC framework for CCS schools guides teachers in planning lessons incorporating Personalized, Progressive, Real-World, and Collaborative learning throughout the instructional day. In this planning cycle, we are beginning to build more partnerships with our stakeholders both within and outside of the school system. We are also beginning work with our DTL program that will strengthen the digital citizenship elements of our Virtual School (a platform utilized to meet the advanced academic needs of our advanced learners). AIG wishes to work more closely with the DTL program to incorporate a comprehensive SEL program within the digital citizenship units included in each virtual course.

**ISTE**

Following seven standards (empowered learner, digital citizen, knowledge constructor, innovative designer, computational thinker, creative communicator, and global collaborator) to encourage deep and comprehensive thinking, AIG recommends that teachers enhance their curriculum content by incorporating the strategies described within the ISTE standards. ISTE also provides an opportunity for teachers to consider their students' social and emotional learning needs as they encourage learners to consider their global citizenship and responsibilities as a learner.

Discussions with our 21st Century afterschool Director, have inspired a collaborative planning process that we hope will enable our elementary and middle school AIG students (especially our underserved populations) to participate in afterschool future-ready programs such as STEM Club, Robotics and Design, Green Screen film productions and many other technical, creative, future-ready, and real-world learning opportunities. Our high school students will be encouraged to participate as creativity coaches leading and planning group activities for our students.

In addition, AIG is working to develop a partnership with our CTE department, particularly with our Middle and High School Career Development Coordinators, to provide opportunities for our academically advanced students. AIG plans to take a more active role in supporting the talent development and real-world preparation our students need to be successful throughout their time with CCS and after high school. Plans with our CTE department, NCWorks Career Development Center, and Tri-County Community College will offer opportunities to increase student curiosity and

interest in emerging career pathways for our Middle and High School students. These activities will include opportunities to learn more about community planning and to participate in community enrichment events.

**\* Practice E**

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

Cherokee County Schools uses the iReady progress monitoring tool for Reading and Math in grades k-8 and Edmentums Exact Path program for grades 9-12. As personalized, adaptive learning tools, iReady and Exact Path provides practice and acceleration opportunities for all learners. The district also utilizes state Check-ins for Reading, Math, and Science to identify learning gaps or acceleration opportunities.

AIG is able to utilize our district testing reports to identify students who show advanced academic potential. We share findings that inform the flexible grouping practices desired by schools, liaisons, and teachers. We may also provide data to elicit the collection of qualitative data to help inform instructional practices. Reports also help guide teachers as they provide intervention strategies and resources for students in the regular classroom.

For the past several years, the DTL director has provided an Academic Achievement Chart with Achievement breakdowns (see appendix) for each School Growth Group as outlined by EVAAS (Level 5 = student predicted to score at the 80th percentile or above on a state or a nationally measured assessment). These groupings include the highest level 5 group (our advanced learners), outlining expected proficiency rates connected to EOG achievement along with the corresponding Lexile and Quantile levels for students in these ranges. AIG encourages teachers to utilize these charts to measure our advanced learners' progress and growth and assess whether adequate growth and progress are met. In addition, the AIG director has requested that the AIG teacher and school liaisons be included in each school MTSS meeting to provide guidance and recommendations for supporting the unique growth and learning needs of our academically advanced students.

**\* Practice F**

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

As mentioned in Practice D, AIG recognizes the interconnectedness of community health and involvement, social-emotional learning, digital citizenship, and a personalized approach to student learning. In this planning cycle, we will continue to work with our Safe and Healthy Schools district partners and strengthen our networks of communication to provide avenues for our advanced learners to participate and contribute to our safe and healthy school coalition as youth task force advisors. Safe and healthy schools advocate for and provide support to students in the areas of drug prevention and healthy life choices and encourage our students to speak out regarding their experiences and struggles during our annual “PRIDE” survey. AIG Liaisons at each of our schools have been provided with information and a contact list for organizations that contribute to and support the wellness of our community and student body -- this includes Safe and Healthy Schools.

Several of our AIG Liaisons meet monthly with our district SEL coordinator to assess SEL practices and obtain resources for addressing student needs. AIG is also working with our Liaisons to create a more visible presence during our beginning of the year open house events and during our “move-up” day events in our Middle and High Schools. Our plan is to ensure that each school liaison creates an information booth or session for parents and students and shares the resources, events, and opportunities the school offers for our advanced learners. In addition, we offer a digital resource library for classroom teachers with access to materials specifically aligned to AIG's social, emotional, and learning goals.

**\* Practice G**

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

K-3 student services will include adapted instruction, resources, and materials and a focus on cluster grouping with pull-out services as needed. In addition, our K-3 students are nurtured through a talent development program where an AIG specialist works with students and teachers to develop Higher Order, Creativity, and Critical Thinking skills to cultivate a love of learning and inspire our students' intellectual curiosity. Utilizing programs such as Primary Education Thinking Skills, early digital learning, citizenship, coding and robotics programs to challenge students to think creatively and develop a wide array of soft skills needed for future success.

**\* Practice H**

Develops and implements differentiated curriculum and instruction that addresses the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners, across all grade levels, through collaboration with a variety of personnel based on student needs.

Through our district's systematic integration of MTSS, an AIG representative will advise, provide data, and offer support for our students' specific differentiated academic and intellectual needs during quarterly school-level MTSS meetings. During these meetings, the AIG representative along with classroom teachers, parents, and other stakeholders, will collaborate to design instruction that will meet the individual intellectual and academic needs of the student. Through collaborative lesson planning, individualized instruction will be implemented within the regular classroom with the assistance of the AIG teacher as needed. Working with curriculum, digital teaching and learning, and the exceptional children's department, AIG provides funding for substitutes and organizes opportunities for our teachers to develop their instructional and pedagogical skills as related to academically and intellectually advanced and gifted students.

**\* 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/guardians to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

AIG will maintain student identification documentation and support information via PowerSchool's AIG Program documentation. We will increase our communication footprint with classroom teachers through Learning Plan notes included in the SchoolNet Student Profile. The SchoolNet Learning Plan section allows teachers and AIG personnel to share specific student strengths and potential barriers as well as shared goals and comments regarding students' learning needs and interests. Specific student information will guide instruction and academic support and can be printed and digitally shared with parents/guardians through the PowerSchool Parent application.

AIG develops the differentiated education plan for CCS based on a national/state normed assessment, academic records, teacher observations, and information gathered from a student and parent learning style and interest inventory, which the AIG specialist sends home before the program placement. In the survey, students and

parents/guardians will communicate the strengths and needs of the student providing the AIG teacher an opportunity to communicate with parents/guardians and develop an effective DEP.

### **\* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard

- Improve communication with teachers between various grades and subjects by creating a district practice of utilizing SchoolNet Student Profiles.

Common practice and shared communication methods lead to clear expectations. Housing student information and documentation in a common easily located digital space will help to reinforce the practice of recording this information and will help teachers to gain insight into the needs of the student.

- Continue to focus more on “push-in” services and co-teaching opportunities.

Push-in and Co-teaching strategies allow for an increase in high impact instructional strategies including explicit instruction and collaborative learning opportunities. In addition, with more time spent in the regular classroom, AIG teachers can make a greater impact on student learning as they can pull from prior learning to activate prior knowledge and make connections to real-world learning opportunities (information the teacher may not be aware of if they are not in the classroom with students).

- Continue to advocate to be included on district curriculum committees and to serve as active participants on school MTSS committees.

Since AIG students are likely to perform in the upper range of proficiency on state assessments it is important to have a voice for our academically advanced students when the curriculum and instructional decisions are being made so that our students are reaching the apex of their ability and not simply progressing year to year with minimal academic growth.

## Planned Sources of Evidence

- \* Learning Focus PD Calendar
- \* AIG Canvas Course and Facebook
- \* Digital Resource Library, PPRC Framework

### Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
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AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	
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Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

**Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development**

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

**\* Practice A**

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

The current AIG Director/Coordinator was appointed full-time in the Spring of 2019. The director holds a Masters's Degree in Executive Leadership, a K-12 principals' license and is AIG certified. The AIG Specialist is AIG certified. Currently, the district requires an advanced degree in educational leadership and a principal's license to serve as the AIG Director/Coordinator but encourages and provides resources for an individual to earn AIG licensure.

AIG Director/Coordinator:

- > Provides leadership and organizational structure, at all levels, for the needs of AIG learners
- > Monitors, supports, and evaluates staff in the implementation of the program goals
- > Participates in regional and statewide professional development opportunities to support gifted learners
- > Develops systems and processes for screening, referral, and identification of gifted learners
- > Provides guidance for maintaining documentation of student identification, differentiation needs, and services

- > Provides professional development and resources to engage and support educators, at all levels, ability to meet the needs of advanced learners
- > Develops partnerships with stakeholders both school and community members
- > Develops, monitors, and evaluated the success of the AIG program

**\* Practice B**

Engages AIG-licensed specialists in tasks that explicitly address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of K-12 gifted learners.

Qualifications/Education and Experience:

1. Has a Professional License with an endorsement in Middle Grade or Secondary Education Endorsement and in Gifted Education and Master of Education or related Masters Degree is preferred.
2. Has a minimum of four years of teaching experience.
3. Has demonstrated the professional and personal characteristics for working effectively with students, school personnel, and community members.

Nature of Work

The District AIG Lead Teacher/Specialist works under the general supervision of the AIG Director and performs a variety of professional work to address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of all gifted learners. The District, AIG Lead Teacher will serve as a Differentiation Specialist and act as teacher, leader, collaborator, and manager to ensure that high quality differentiated instruction is provided, and learning is maximized for all students.

District Level Responsibilities:

The minimum performance expectations include, but are not limited to, the following functions/tasks:

- Implements the AIG Program as defined in the Cherokee County Schools Plan.
- Coordinates AIG referrals, screenings, and identifications for elementary, middle and high school students
- Consults with principals, teachers, and school MTSS team to develop and oversee appropriate academic programs and goals for AIG students.
- Oversees communication and reporting of goals to parents of AIG students.
- Develops comprehensive knowledge of the NCSCOS and middle grades curriculum to collaborate and consult with teachers to provide differentiated instruction in the classroom.
- Plans and provides professional learning for teachers in the areas of AIG identification and differentiation of instruction.
- Collects, organizes, manages, interprets, and uses data effectively to guide differentiated instruction in the school.
- Works collaboratively with AIG Liaisons and the AIG Director to coordinate and implement the AIG program.
- Models traits of efficacy, flexibility, consciousness, interdependence, craftsmanship, and positive relationships (including effective communication with others).
- Frequently participates in activities that foster personal learning and growth as an educator as well as school and division growth.
- Develops relationships with district, school and local stakeholders and seeks out opportunities for AIG students and families; Shares noteworthy events and opportunities with the AIG Director
- Coordinates/disseminate routine surveys to program participants and stakeholders and serve on the Advisory Council for AIG

School Level Responsibilities:

- Provides weekly AIG services for students in each assigned schools
- Maintains regular communication with AIG students and families
- Establishes a weekly schedule to share with AIG director and the school principal(s)
- Co-teaches, plan lessons and shares instructional support with classroom teachers (ELA and Math focus)
- Organizes, prepares and/or attend key AIG events and stakeholder meetings
- Maintains communication with principals, guidance counselors, and AIG liaisons concerning the needs of AIG students and AIG initiatives and programs
- Shares noteworthy events via newsletter and/or social media presence for the AIG programs and activities
- Promotes state AIG opportunities and initiatives ([Duke Tip](#) program, Governor’s School, AIG/academic competitions, etc.)

**\* Practice C**

Establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, instructional specialists, student services personnel, and school administrators.

Our professional development goals are to work with and support Curriculum, Exceptional Children, Digital Teaching and Learning and STEM in their PD efforts both through goal setting, topic recommendation and by providing financial means to support teachers ability to attend training. AIG utilizes a district <study.com> account to provide self-guided, online, just-in-time professional development for teachers. Some examples of course options include: “Using Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom,” “Teaching Gifted Students,” “Implementing Competency-Based Education,” “Using Data for Improvement,” and 73 other multi-lesson, just-in-time course options. In addition, we have worked with our Technology Department to provide an online resource library through the “OverDrive” application. This resource allows the AIG department to purchase text resources in a virtual environment. These resources are available to

teachers at all of our 13 schools.

Our professional development goals are to work with and support Curriculum, Digital Teaching/Learning, and STEM in their PD efforts through goal setting, topic recommendation, and financial means to support teachers' ability to attend training. AIG annually purchases a district account for <study.com>. These resources provided self-guided, online, just-in-time professional development for teachers. Some examples of course options include: "Using Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom," "Teaching Gifted Students," "Implementing Competency-Based Education," "Using Data for Improvement," and 73 other multi-lesson, just-in-time course options. In addition, we have worked with our Technology Department to provide an online resource library through the "OverDrive" application. This resource allows the AIG department to purchase text resources in a virtual environment. These resources are available to teachers at all of our 13 schools.

CCS requires all staff who work with AIG students to attend quarterly staff meetings.

Staff meetings include three elements:

1. Reporting of AIG events and upcoming opportunities
2. Student Data and Growth, successes and concerns
3. AIG Booster Shot
  - AIG Staff are charged with participating in student data meetings at the school level
  - The AIG Coordinator should, at minimum, attend two regional and/or state AIG meetings and is provided opportunities to attend state and regional curriculum meetings.
  - The AIG specialist is required to attend a least one regional or state level meeting/training and must seek at least 2 hours of continuing education in the area of gifted/advanced learning.

Liaisons are required to attend quarterly updates with the AIG specialist. These meetings include guidance for the implementation of the student's DEP. The district coordinator will work within the district improvement plan to provide professional development opportunities in the area of gifted/advanced learning for the liaison and all classroom teachers. Liaisons are required to complete two hours of continuing education in the area of gifted/advanced learning.

Individual instructional support staff who work directly with AIG students will be included in updates and goals setting. In addition, all administrators, instructional staff, and any other student service personnel will be invited to AIG professional development opportunities.

**\* 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.

CCS AIG staff works with the school administration to create a schedule that will promote effective distribution of AIG services. AIG encourages the administration to create cluster grouping for AIG and Talent Development groups that will ensure time together for academic exploration and offer the most effective academic instruction. Liaisons and counselors are encouraged to highlight our advanced course offerings and provide academic guidance for our AIG students to help match students to the most appropriate academic offerings and services. AIG staff, including liaisons, are required to provide quarterly reports, and teachers are required to provide a schedule for school and district-level administration. The School MTSS team will monitor student placement and progress, and an AIG representative will serve as a consultant to the MTSS committee.

AIG liaisons and other qualified teachers are encouraged and are provided resources to pursue AIG certification to increase student access to needed services. Newly certified staff will be recognized in the superintendent's report during the board meeting the month following certification.

**\* Practice E**

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

With limited funding, the AIG department is small. Still, we have creatively increased our footprint by offering stipends to personnel at the school level to ensure AIG has a professional presence at each school location. A significant portion of the AIG liaisons' responsibilities relates to sharing AIG communicating with principals, teachers, parents, and students.

### **AIG Liaison Job Description**

#### **Nature of Work**

The AIG Liaison works under the general supervision of the AIG Director and performs a variety of professional work to address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of all gifted learners. In addition, this individual will support the AIG students at the school level and coordinate with the objective and goals of the AIG Director and the AIG program.

#### **Key Responsibilities**

- Maintain regular communication with AIG students and families (at least one per month)
- Distribute and collect AIG documents and paperwork
- Monitor and document the AIG students:
  - Academic goals and progress (benchmarks, grades, etc.)
  - Classroom behavior and social/emotional development
  - Areas of interest and progress toward personal goals
  - Career and college plans and objectives ([cfnc.org](http://cfnc.org))
- Develop relationships with local stakeholders and seek out opportunities for AIG students and families

- Meet with principals and school guidance counselors to determine school needs in regards to the AIG program areas.
- Communicate weekly with teachers of AIG students to ensure system-wide implementation of the local AIG plan and accountability of the AIG program.
- Conduct weekly checks with school guidance counselors for updates on scholarships, internships, and or other potential opportunities for AIG students
- Communicate learning and experiential opportunities with AIG students and families
- Share noteworthy events and opportunities with the Secondary AIG director and maintain a social media presence, along with a quarterly update/newsletter for the school's AIG program and activities.
- Organize, prepare and/or attend key AIG events and stakeholder meetings
- Serve on the Advisory Committee for AIG.
- Coordinate/disseminate routine surveys to program participants and stakeholders.

**\* Practice F**

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

CCS AIG will utilize the NCDPI's Educational Equity and Significant Disproportionality Webinar Series to provide professional learning opportunities for our staff.

**\* Practice G**

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

AIG collaborates with other academic departments, including curriculum, digital teaching and learning, exceptional children, and CTE, to offer professional development opportunities that strengthen our district's strategic goals.

These goals include:

- > Building competence with reviewing, reflecting, and appropriately responding to student data,
- > Building competence with the delivery of updated standards, curriculum, and high-impact teaching standards,
- > Developing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and improving our positive behavior reinforcement strategies, especially those that will empower students to develop capacity and to take ownership of their social and emotional well being.

AIG has purchased a district <study.com> account to provide self-guided, online, just-in-time professional development for teachers. Some examples of course options include: “Using Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom,” “Teaching Gifted Students,” “Implementing Competency-Based Education,” “Using Data for Improvement,” and 73 other multi-lesson, just-in-time course options. In addition, we have worked with our Technology Department to provide an online resource library through the “OverDrive” application. This resource allows the AIG department to purchase text resources in a virtual environment. These resources are available to teachers at all of our 13 schools. AIG is also actively involved with the district leadership team in planning and implementing our District Improvement Plan through Indistar, the North Carolina planning program that guides leadership teams to evaluate and plan for effective educational practices. As part of this team, AIG collaborates with other leading departments to lead, plan, and design professional development resources and events that align with both the district and AIG PD initiatives and goals. AIG also has a representative on the district MTSS team. During MTSS meetings, AIG will continue to provide PD to each school-level MTSS coordinator to present and use as guidelines for support for teachers and instructional staff.

Quarterly meetings for AIG staff, MTSS team meetings, and weekly scheduled planning time for individual AIG teachers serve to provide time for teachers to plan as well as for AIG staff to be included in school-level and district-level planning sessions. AIG staff are also welcome and encouraged to attend all district-driven professional development initiatives regardless of which district department sponsored the event. A professional development calendar is shared with staff and posted on the Cherokee County School website.

As previously stated, AIG is also actively involved with the district leadership team in planning and implementing our District Improvement Plan through Indistar, the North Carolina planning program that guides leadership teams to evaluate and plan for effective educational practices. As part of this team, AIG collaborates with other leading departments to lead, plan, and design professional development resources and events that align with both the district and AIG PD initiatives and goals. AIG shares a Google Drive folder with all AIG staff which houses professional development resources and information. This information is available for individual use or for group training.

**\* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Increase the number of staff who are AIG certified.

CCS currently has a shortage of staff who are AIG certified. We recognize that this is a need and we will work during this planning cycle to recruit and encourage more teachers and administrators to pursue certification.

- Increase the presence of AIG focused staff in our schools.

The implementation of the AIG liaison position this school year has helped to bring a focus back to our AIG students. We would love to add an additional teaching position for the district.

- Advertise and invite principals to quarterly meetings.

Having principals attend AIG meetings would help to bring greater accountability and increase our visibility.

**Planned Sources of Evidence**

\* CCVS/NCVPS documents

\* MTSS goals

\* Curriculum Programing and pacing guides

**Documents**

**Document Template**

**Document/Link**

**Type**

AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources

N/A

Standard 5: Partnerships

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

**Standard 5: Partnerships**

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

**\* Practice A**

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

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

The AIG department works to contribute and to support the holistic social and emotional needs of our students by providing clear AIG Liaison responsibilities that focus on maintaining regular communication with AIG students and families (at least one per month). The Liaison is to advocate for the student and ensure the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of all gifted learners is a top priority. Through the student/liaison relationship, we set the intention to be proactive in the needs of our students. We understand that gifted students may have issues regarding anger, boredom, bullying, delinquency, isolation, depression, peer relations, perfectionism, dropping out of school, stress, frustration, and underachievement, and that about 20-25% of gifted students have emotional difficulties. In addition to our in-school services, we understand that a student's most prominent and influential relationship is the parent/guardian-child relationship; frequent communication with families ensures students know that we care about their wellbeing.

**\* Practice B**

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

CCS AIG works deliberately to develop meaningful two-way partnerships with stakeholders both within our school system and throughout the community.

We are working to implement a protocol with teachers and liaisons that will help guide the discovery of our student's interests so that we can help facilitate opportunities within our community for our AIG and Talent Development students. We are excited about the growing partnership with the following individuals/groups:

- Safe and Healthy Schools Coordinator - a project with planning and organizing a community outreach program to combat and provide aid to our local homeless population.

- HS and MS Career Coordinator and Advisor and Tri-County Community College Workforce Development Director - opportunities to grow our student numbers in the CTE Department and provide opportunities for internships. Help students explore some exciting new programs available in our schools and the local community college, including aviation, culinary arts, mechatronics, and many more.

- 21st Century Afterschool Program and STEM Program Coordinator - create a STEAM/STAC or Robotics club that could meet during the afterschool program; this particular group would help us to meet the needs of our underrepresented populations better. We would also like to promote cross-grade-level interaction by encouraging our high school AIG and Talent Development students to become creativity coaches. These students would work with elementary and middle school students through a project-based curriculum.

- Parent Advisory committee - Especially since the social distancing time during COVID protocols, AIG will work with parent and community groups to help plan social events and opportunities for students from across the district to attend group activities, including options such as trivia nights, family nights, local plays, musical concerts, etc.

- Cherokee Chamber of Commerce - Provide opportunities for students to attend events and initiatives where students can learn from and interact with business and community leaders. Participate in planning and organizing community events, learning about marketing and promotion, job shadow, and business/community leadership. Learn about business/social etiquette and the spoken and unspoken rules of professional practice and interactions.

Several CCS schools are nearly two hours from the closest NC university, but as mentioned in Standard 5 practice A, AIG works deliberately to develop meaningful partnerships with our community college. We also encourage and provide opportunities for our students to attend events at two colleges in neighboring states, Lee University in Tennessee and Young Harris College in Georgia. Both neighboring schools are significantly closer to our schools and provide access to plays, concerts, and guest speakers within a more responsible distance.

Community advocates interested in partnering with CCS AIG are encouraged to contact the CCS AIG Director [leslie.ledford@cherokee.k12.nc.us](mailto:leslie.ledford@cherokee.k12.nc.us)

**\* Practice C**

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

CCS stakeholders and the AIG parent advisory committee are invited to all quarterly meetings. Meetings include opportunities for stakeholders to report and discuss upcoming AIG events and opportunities, express successes and concerns, and participate in the AIG program's ongoing development. CCS AIG welcomes participants from across grade levels and stakeholder groups and organizes regularly scheduled meetings to encourage participation. We also provide opportunities for feedback through our social media accounts and by publicizing our district contact information.

**\* Practice D**

Informs all students, parents/guardians, and the community of the following:

- Local AIG Plan
- Local AIG program services
- Policies relating to advanced learning and gifted education
- Ways to access opportunities available to AIG students

Communication is ongoing and responds to the diverse language needs of the community.

CCS AIG uses the district website and student handbooks to provide parents access to the:

- Local AIG Plan
- Local AIG program services
- Policies relating to advanced learning and gifted education
- Ways to access opportunities available to AIG students

We also maintain an active social media feed that advertises and reminds parents of events and upcoming opportunities.

Our social media feed, school messenger automated calls, and AIG program information on our website is hosted through a program that allows translation of our content into over 90 languages. We make every effort to provide parents with information in a timely and convenient manner. School liaisons and teachers are directed to make regular contact with students and parents to discuss progress and possible opportunities.

**\* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Make greater efforts to advertise and promote our program to parents and the community.

We want our students to get to know their peers from across the district and parents to know how to find our information in person and online.

- Form more intentional partnerships with institutes of higher learning.

Although we attend events, we would like to provide opportunities for our students to be actively involved in the educational opportunities available, including visiting classes and exploring and using the facilities.

**Planned Sources of Evidence**

\* CCS Website and AIG Facebook page

\* AIG activities and events

\* Partnership planning/correspondence

**Documents**

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
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AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
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Standard 6: Program Accountability

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

**Standard 6: Program Accountability**

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

**\* Practice A**

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

The AIG Plan was reviewed and accepted by the Cherokee County Board of Education on July 21, 2022.

**\* 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.

AIG will yearly seek input from stakeholders to monitor and ensure the effective implementation of the local AIG plan via a series of stakeholder surveys. Utilizing school-level internal input from the student, parents/guardians, and liaison communications, the AIG department will continuously review procedures to ensure equitable access to information and placement options for students. (see survey folder)

**\* 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.

PRC Funds for the AIG program are allocated and monitored by the district's Chief Financial Officer and provisioned as necessary to implement the AIG Plan. Cherokee County Schools receives four percent of the ADM per pupil spending budget from the state of North Carolina in the amount of \$1,364.78 per pupil. Based on past allocations, the projected budget for the 2022/23 school year is approximately \$152,667.00. CCS AIG allocates seventy-five percent of our budget for district and school-level salaries and benefits, ten percent to resources and expenses related to professional development, and fifteen percent for materials, resources, and expenses related to student services (see appendix "AIG Projected Budget").

**\* Practice D**

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

CCS strives to have an open and transparent relationship with our school and district data. Universal screening data is disaggregated and shared with district and school-level teachers and leaders. AIG sub-group information will continue to be shared based on projections, actual test results, and growth measures to ensure equity and excellence. Data is open and available to all appropriate stakeholders following FERPA guidelines. During MTSS team meetings and school-level and district leadership meetings, data is viewed honestly and transparently through the lens of current achievement, student growth, and student as risk factors, including dropout concerns. In addition, strategies to support success and close gaps for all students remain a high priority for our district. AIG will provide an annual review of current AIG student test results for schools to use as a guide for instruction. AIG staff will note at-risk students in the report, and MTSS teams will discuss strategies for support during MTSS data review meetings.

**\* Practice E**

Maintains and analyzes multiple data sources focused on the referral, identification, services, and retention of students within the local AIG program to ensure that students' racial, ethnic, economic, or other demographic factors, including other exceptionalities and language differences, do not reduce their likelihood of access to and participation in gifted education.

During this planning cycle, CCS AIG will provide demographic information, and using EVAAS, we will create a list of recommendations for students to include in talent development opportunities. Using this method, AIG has already identified 100 additional students to include in our talent development program and to screen for indicators of gifted behavior and 25 students who are not currently in our program whom we will recommend teachers screen and perhaps refer for testing. In the groups mentioned, 20/100 and 8/25 are minority students.

Regarding gender representation, CCS does quite well in consistency with district numbers. We have a nearly 50/50 representation in our overall population and our AIG student population. Another area we want to be mindful of is our representation of our economically disadvantaged population. Although we do not have a 1:1 comparison, we know that CCS is a Title 1 district and that we consistently serve a student population of which 80% or above qualify for free or reduced lunch. Our recent efforts to work collaboratively with the 21st-century program will ensure that we make improved strides to provide enrichment and talent development opportunities to this targeted population. (See more Demographic Reporting and Comparison CCS v AIG 2018\_2019 appendix).

Reporting Category/Year 2022	CCS	AIG	Totals
Hispanic	208	12	5.77%
AmIndian	18	0	0.00%
Asian	19	2	10.53%
Af.Amer	54	2	3.70%
Two or more	136	9	6.62%
White	2307	186	8.06%

Total	2744	211	7.69%
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Females	Males
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106	105
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**\* Practice F**

Maintains and utilizes current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving K-12 AIG students to align with the goals and strategies outlined in the local AIG plan.

AIG utilizes our district licensure directory to maintain current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving K-12 AIG students.

**\* Practice G**

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

CCS AIG welcomes feedback from various stakeholder groups and makes efforts to hold regularly scheduled meetings to encourage staff, leadership, family, student and community participation. We provide opportunities for feedback through our social media accounts, website, annual surveys, and by publicizing our district contact information. We have recently added a “Join the AIG Family and Community Advisory Board” link on our website. We will share this opportunity at the beginning of each school year during open house events and throughout the year via our social media accounts. We have also added a suggestion/feedback link for our website to increase our opportunities to hear from students, families, and community members. Most recent feedback for our AIG program suggests that we need to do a better job informing stakeholders about the AIG referral process and providing information to help teachers identify and support the learning needs of our students. Intentional efforts to provide clarity for teachers and parents/guardians about our processes for identifying and supporting students and creating a culture that recognizes and understands how to support the needs of all advanced learners are the foundational goals of this plan.

**\* Practice H**

Facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of the local AIG program utilizing multiple sources of data to revise the local AIG plan every three years.

The AIG director and specialist review the equity process and procedures with each new testing cycle and school year; utilizing parent/guardian, student, and teacher feedback, the AIG specialist, revises the differentiation approach for each student group.

**\* Practice I**

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

CCS AIG provides program plans and events to the superintendent. These plans are shared during the superintendent's report during monthly board meetings. We have an open-door policy for attendance at our stakeholder meetings and share meeting dates via our Google calendar. Information about the program, including the AIG Plan, active surveys and forms, state reports, resources, and guides, is available via our website or our shared Google Drive folder. We will continue to offer openness and transparency for our program and provide appropriate resources to stakeholders. Changes and updates to the program are shared at the school and district level as well as shared on our website and social media when appropriate.

**\* Practice J**

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents/guardians through established written policies, procedures,

and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

CCS AIG protects the rights of AIG students through written policies, procedures, and practices. We provide the option to decline AIG services at any time and options to opt back should it be requested later. Other safeguards for the rights of all AIG students and their parents/guardians include:

- Providing Informed Consent regarding the identification and placement of AIG students
  - Acceptance of AIG designation from transfers from other LEAs with procedures for reassessment if needed
  - Procedures for resolving disagreements following policy 1740/4010
- General Statute 115C-150.7(b)7 and 115C-150.8 provides guidance for the Review of Disagreements. In addition, CCS AIG follows the Cherokee County Board of education grievance policy 1740/4010 to review and settle any disagreement that may arise.



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#### **\* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

- Continue to advocate for the hiring and placement of AIG staff in each of our schools
- More personnel would help our district to build a stronger program. Differentiation specialists could be an asset for more than just the AIG program.
- Build structures to better measure qualitative data
- Developing focus group questions that could be shared and reviewed in different locations and meetings across the district could help to measure our qualitative data

- Support the discussion and use of data that improves the district's ability to personalize learning

**Planned Sources of Evidence**

\* Projected budget

\* Demographic data

\* Student Handbook

**Documents**

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
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AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	
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Local Board of Education Approval

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

\* Approved by local Board of Education on:

07/21/2022 

Original Application Submission Date: 07/22/2022

**Documents**

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
Local Board of Education Approval Signatures [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	 <a href="#">Local Board of Education Approval Template</a>	 <a href="#">Local Board of Education Approval Signatures</a>

AIG Related Documents

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

Required Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
Local Board of Education Approval Signatures [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	<a href="#">Local Board of Education Approval Template</a>	<a href="#">Local Board of Education Approval Signatures</a>
Optional Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Glossary [Upload up to 1 document(s)]	N/A	<a href="#">AIG Glossary</a>
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	

Glossary

**Cherokee County Schools (200) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

Phrase	Definition
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The Local AIG Plan glossary is provided in an uploaded document.