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

Approved by local Board of Education on: 09-APR-19
LEA Superintendent’s Name: Lory Morrow
LEA AIG Contact Name: Rhonda Hager
Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on: 12-JUN-19

Lincoln County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

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

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs and align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2019-2022. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA’s board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

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

Lincoln County Schools Vision for local AIG program: Lincoln County Schools is committed to the development of lifelong learners, innovative problem solvers, and responsible contributing citizens in a global society. Among our students are those who exhibit high academic performance, or who possess exceptional potential for outstanding achievement and leadership as stated in the North Carolina definition of giftedness. Because we believe that giftedness is developed through intellectual challenge, we strive to nurture exceptional capabilities through academic rigor, leadership development, and service opportunities. Lincoln County Schools will deliver a model of differentiated services that enhances and extends the regular education program for academically and intellectually gifted students from all racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Funding</th>
<th>Local Funding</th>
<th>Grant Funding</th>
<th>Other Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$612660.00</td>
<td>$67076.22.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents

Standard 1: Student Identification ............................................................................................................. 3
Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community ........................................... 7
Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction ............................................................................... 12
Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development ............................................................................... 16
Standard 5: Partnerships .......................................................................................................................... 19
Standard 6: Program Accountability ......................................................................................................... 22
Standard 1: Student Identification

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

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

District Response: Most students are nominated for consideration in the AIG program by their teachers, but parents may also request their child to be screened by contacting their child's teachers. However, all students are universally screened with an aptitude test in the fall of their third grade year. From this screening data, students scoring in the 85th percentile or above continue in the process. These students are then screened for academic achievement, student performance, and teachers complete a teacher observation checklist. In grades 4-8, students performing in the 85th percentile or above on the End of Grade (EOG) reading or math tests are screened. Students at high school level who are performing in the 85th percentile or above on End of Course (EOC) exams are examined for screening. Screening and referral processes are established, norm-referenced, and are an ongoing process. As noted in our survey results, parents and students indicate the Lincoln County Schools (LCS) screening process is communicated to and understood by all stakeholders.

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

District Response: AIG Identification Criteria for K-3 Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI)
Meets three of the four criteria:
- Intelligence or aptitude test – 98th percentile or higher
- Standardized Achievement Test – 98th percentile or higher in reading and/or math
- Student Performance – Grade average of 90 or higher in reading and/or math or Mastery (K-2)
- Teacher Observation Checklist (Gifted Rating Scale-GRS) – 90th percentile or higher on 3 of 5 categories, one of which must be either Academic or Intellectual

AIG Identification Criteria in grades 4-5 in Reading, Math, or Both (AG, AR, AM)
Meets four of the five criteria:
- Intelligence or aptitude test – 90th percentile or higher
- Standardized Achievement Test – 90th percentile or higher in reading and/or math
- Student Performance – Grade average of 90 or higher in reading and/or math
- Elementary Portfolio Assessment (minimum score of 8)
- Teacher Observation Checklist (Gifted Rating Scale-GRS) – 90th percentile or higher on 3 of 5 categories, one of which must be either Academic or Intellectual
AIG Identification Criteria in grades 6-12 in Reading, Math, or Both (AG, AR, AM)
Meets three of the four criteria:
- Intelligence or aptitude test – 90th percentile or higher
- Standardized Achievement Test – 90th percentile or higher in reading and/or math
- Student Performance – Grade average of 90 or higher in reading and/or math
- Teacher Observation Checklist (Gifted Rating Scale-GRS) – 90th percentile or higher on 3 of 5 categories, one of which must be either Academic or Intellectual

AIG Identification Criteria in grades 4-12 for Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI)
Meets three of the four criteria:
- Intelligence or aptitude test of 97th percentile or higher
- Standardized Achievement Test – 97th percentile or higher in reading and/or math
- Student Performance – Grade average of 90 or higher in reading and/or math
- Teacher Observation Checklist (Gifted Rating Scale-GRS) – 90th percentile or higher on 3 of 5 categories, one of which must be either Academic or Intellectual

AIG Identification Criteria for Intellectually Gifted (IG)
- Intelligence or aptitude test of 97th percentile or higher

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

District Response: For those students in K-12 who are highly gifted and in need of differentiated services, the following criteria and procedures will be used by the AIG Team to make a recommendation regarding differentiation of services.

Step 1: The AIG specialist or classroom teacher will notify the principal of any highly gifted student who may require differentiation.

Step 2: The AIG specialist will meet with the regular classroom teacher to discuss the student's profile and needs.

Step 3: The AIG specialist and regular classroom teacher will review the student's classroom work samples.

Step 4: The AIG specialist will conduct a minimum of two observations in the regular classroom setting.

Step 5: The regular classroom teacher, AIG specialist, and principal will meet to discuss preliminary findings.
Step 6: The AIG specialist determines whether to proceed with testing.

If the student does not require testing, the student is placed on a "Watch and Wait" list. The AIG specialist may begin or continue nurturing services and observations.

If the student's profile indicates a need for testing, the AIG specialist will begin testing based on the student profile and according to specified criteria.

The AIG population for our district does not reflect the same diversity as our entire population. To address this issue, our English Learner (EL) teachers and AIG specialists will begin to collaborate on prospective EL students who should be screened for AIG. This effort will be implemented to increase the identification of underrepresented populations. When a language issue is present, a non-verbal test will be administered.

Exceptional Children (EC) teachers and AIG specialists will collaborate concerning twice-exceptional students and how to best serve the students.

Nurturing opportunities provided in K-3 classrooms are intended to identify any students that demonstrate gifted qualities.

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

**District Response:** All third grade students take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) which is used as a universal screener for AIG identification. All students who score at or above the 85th percentile are referred for additional testing for AIG identification.

Beginning in fourth grade the district provides a screening template that is prefilled with students scoring at or above the 85th percentile on EOG/EOC testing. In addition, parents or teachers can also refer students for AIG screening. A district screening timeline is provided to each AIG specialist. An AIG procedures guide provides checklists, forms, and detailed information about the screening, referral, and identification process for consistent implementation across the district.

Each AIG specialist submits screening sheets to be audited annually by the District AIG Team to make sure there is consistency within the district in regard to identification of students. The elementary, middle, and high school directors and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction serve as the District AIG Team.

Screening tools are administered with fidelity and scored consistently across the district. Training in administration and scoring is conducted by directors.

**Practice E**
Disseminates information regarding the screening, referral, and identification processes to school personnel, parents/ families, students, and the community-at-large.
**District Response:** Lincoln County Schools outlines the AIG screening and referral process on the LCS webpage and through an AIG brochure. Parent nights are held at all levels to make sure parents are informed about AIG identification and services available. District-wide letters are sent home with all students informing parents of upcoming screenings, criteria, and course offerings. Standardized slides will be shared originally, beginning in 2019, that outlines the screening, referral, and identification process to be shared with teachers, administrators, and counselors.

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

**District Response:** Identification documents are maintained in red folders by each AIG specialist. Folders will also be maintained for students who were screened but do not qualify, including all screening documents. Data leading to identification decisions are reviewed with parents by an AIG specialist. Parents are notified in writing about placement decisions. An area for focus is to schedule individual parent meetings to go over AIG identification and programming with a parent upon initial AIG identification.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Continue to explore resources and identification processes to make sure that our underrepresented populations have equal access to Academically and Intellectually Gifted services. This would include examining individual school demographics as they relate to AIG screening and identification.

Develop clear, concise, and consistent communication to all stakeholders concerning identification criteria, PowerSchool designations, and services available.

**Sources of Evidence:** Lincoln County Schools webpage contains AIG screening and identification criteria
AIG brochure to share with stakeholders the AIG screening and identification criteria
Comprehensive Lincoln County Schools AIG plan to communicate to stakeholders
Screening sheets used to collect additional student information for identification
Parent sign-in sheets from annual Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) meetings
Each AIG student has a red folder with AIG identification and testing information
Annual headcount of AIG students
Testing resources and protocols used for screening and identification
2018-2019 AIG stakeholder survey results
Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

Practice A
Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and learning environments. These services are aligned to a student's AIG identification.

District Response: At the K-3 level, an extensive nurturing program is implemented in order to conduct a "broad sweep" of the student population and promote talent development. AIG specialists work collaboratively with regular classroom teachers using observational instruments and assessments to screen students who may require another level of service in addition to the services provided in regular classrooms. Services for students are aligned to the students' AIG identification. Students in grades 4-5 are served either through cluster grouping, pull-out, or differentiated services in the regular classroom. At the middle school level, students are served through cluster grouping with classroom differentiation or direct, daily service in advanced level classes in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics. High school students have an AIG coordinator who meets with them to encourage enrollment in honors and advanced placement courses. Opportunities for content acceleration and grade level acceleration are based on the assessment data and individual student needs. According to our survey data, parents and students have a clear understanding of the different levels of services in reading and math.

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

District Response: Gifted Education in the district is an integral part of the overall plan to successfully educate all students in the district. AIG program goals are incorporated into school improvement plans and accreditation processes to address AIG as a subgroup with growth data. The needs of academically gifted students are included in the following focused plans in our district: District Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plans based upon state and federal accountability data. AIG specialists at the elementary and middle school levels work with regular classroom teachers to develop DEPs that address students' needs. Elementary AIG specialists enhance and enrich instruction that is occurring in the general classroom. Middle school students' core instruction in reading is provided by an AIG specialist. Math services accelerate the curriculum allowing Math I to be taken in middle school. High school students are supported and advised by the AIG coordinator to identify appropriate courses to meet their individual needs.
Practice C
Develops procedures for intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate the achievement and growth of AIG and other students with advanced learning needs.

District Response: Through the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and School Improvement planning process, schools are provided the autonomy to develop flexible grouping and enrichment plans to meet the learning needs of their advanced learners. School teams analyze multiple data sources to identify areas of needed enhancement and support to promote student growth. In addition, teachers are notified of student services and identification at the beginning of each year.

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

District Response: The AIG specialists will provide professional development annually to all teachers, administrators, and support staff in the AIG identification procedures and service options. AIG specialists discuss instructional services and programs for gifted learners during grade level and team meetings. AIG information is published on the district's AIG webpage to provide communication about identification procedures and service options. The AIG brochure is available in print for all stakeholder groups. AIG specialists and school-level administrators are provided an AIG procedures manual that contains an overview of key information about the local AIG plan. This manual is updated annually.

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

District Response: A meeting is held to transition AIG students between elementary to middle and middle to high school. These meetings include a discussion of the academic and social-emotional needs of each student focusing on both summative and formative student data. This process makes sure there is an effective system of sharing student data for the continuation of K-12 services.

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

District Response: The holistic development of gifted learners is supported through established transition meetings and registration processes. AIG specialists meet specifically to transition students between elementary, middle, and high school. This transition includes opportunities to identify the individual social-emotional needs of students. Guidance counselors for all grade spans are
supported on an ongoing basis on identifying and supporting the various social-emotional needs of AIG students. EC teachers collaborate with AIG specialists to discuss students with dual exceptionalities and plan appropriate differentiated instruction. The AIG team is part of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) at each school and will collaborate to ensure that the social-emotional needs of identified students are met and supported by the school.

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

District Response: Highly capable students may be allowed to accelerate in grade level and/or content in order to provide the most appropriate learning environment. Recommendation for grade acceleration should be made by the school level AIG team utilizing data gathered based on the Iowa Acceleration Scale. Students are also allowed to earn Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) of content at the secondary level. CDM processes and procedures are in place to allow high school students the additional opportunities to accelerate. Students are provided opportunities for distance learning through North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) and locally developed Canvas courses to make sure there is access to acceleration.

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

District Response: Students are nurtured in grades K-3 in a push-in model utilizing PETS (Primary Education Thinking Skills) curriculum. This process allows our AIG specialists to work collaboratively with classroom teachers to nurture a variety of gifted traits in a broad student population. In fourth and fifth grade, nurturing opportunities are provided to students that are not identified but demonstrate gifted traits. AIG specialists meet with classroom teachers, EC teachers, and EL teachers to focus on recognizing gifted traits in students of underrepresented AIG populations. Middle school AIG specialists use a screening tool to make sure that advanced course opportunities are accessible to a broader student population than those already identified. High school AIG coordinators meet individually with all students to make sure they are provided opportunities that are related to post-secondary interests. These opportunities include advanced course level work, mentoring programs, internships, job shadowing, and apprenticeships.

An area for focus is to provide professional development to assist in identifying and nurturing gifted traits in underrepresented populations.

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

**District Response:** A variety of support activities are available to enrich the existing curriculum and are available to gifted students. These offerings are shared with teachers, counselors, students, and parents in various forms (both print and electronically).

Support Activities

**Student Competitions:**


- **Middle School** - Battle of the Books, Math Counts, National Geographic Geography Bee, Robinson-Lineberger Literary Contest, Soil and Water Conservation Essay Contest, DAR Essay Contest, and Martin Luther King Essay contest.

- **High School** - Robinson-Lineberger Literary Contest, Quiz Bowl, Stock Market Game, DAR Essay Contest, Poetry Out Loud, and Martin Luther King Essay contest.

**Enrichment Programs:** Summer Ventures, Duke University TIP, Governor’s School, Future Engineering Camp, Lincoln County Schools Summer Science Camp, GEMS (Girls Excelling in Math and Science Club), Junior Achievement Biztown.

**Special Schools:** North Carolina School of Math and Science, North Carolina School of the Arts.

**Specialized Course Offerings:** North Carolina Virtual Public School, LCS developed Canvas courses, Career and College Promise classes.

**Guidance:** AIG Coordinators at high school, 9-12 Career Development Plans, and Character Education.

The district will continue to offer additional enrichment programs that challenge and motivate AIG students.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Provide professional development to AIG specialists, counselors, and classroom teachers focusing on identifying and nurturing gifted traits in underrepresented populations.

Develop grouping procedures based on best practice research.

Integrate AIG services and enrichment into the MTSS process to promote intentional flexible-grouping
that enhances enrichment for gifted students.

Align services for students matching identification areas.

**Sources of Evidence:** Differentiated Educational Plans for AIG students
- Documentation of monthly AIG planning meetings
- Professional development on curriculum differentiation
- Online resources
- Various instructional materials used in AIG programming
- College and Career Promise
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- North Carolina Virtual Public Schools
- North Carolina School of Science and Math courses
- North Carolina Advanced Placement Partnership Agreement
- 2018-2019 AIG stakeholder survey results
Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

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

District Response: Lincoln County Schools adapts and extends the NC Standard Course of Study to address the various academic needs of gifted learners. At the elementary level, students are provided enrichment opportunities that focus on increasing the depth, breadth, and content covered in the general classroom. At the middle school level, content acceleration is provided in an accelerated math program designed to telescope three years into two years. In addition, Advanced English Language Arts classes extend and enrich content standards in a homogenous learning environment through process and product differentiation. At both the elementary and middle levels, gifted students are cluster-grouped to ensure students are able to work together with students of similar needs, abilities, and interests in the regular classroom. High school students have the opportunity to accelerate content by enrolling in college-level classes through the Career and College Promise Program. In addition, high school students may also enroll in honors level classes and Advanced Placement courses. AP courses not offered at a school site may be taken via the NC Virtual Public School or locally developed Canvas courses. Credit by Demonstrated Mastery guidelines have been shared and publicized to those students who desire content acceleration. In addition, AIG stakeholder survey results indicate that parents, students, and teachers believe our curriculum is rigorous and relevant.

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

District Response: Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) are in place for AIG students and include specific service options. An Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) is developed for students requiring extensive differentiation and includes additional modifications. Differentiation for gifted students is provided through differentiated content, process, product, and/or learning environment. The use of these differentiation strategies provides gifted students with increased rigor, depth, and complexity in both the gifted and regular classroom. At the elementary level, students are provided additional time to explore topics of interest in a variety of ways that include: research projects, tiered assignments, probe journals, learning logs, etc. At the middle school level, gifted students are clustered on instructional teams. Differentiation is provided in these classrooms through blended learning, research projects, tiered assignments, etc. Differentiation in the high school classroom is provided through blended learning, group projects, and presentations, choice activities, tiered assignments, etc.
Practice C
Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that enhance student learning.

**District Response:** A variety of research-based resources have been obtained to augment AIG curriculum and instruction. AIG specialists meet monthly to incorporate new resources into instructional plans. Professional development is provided during these sessions to build teacher capacity and knowledge of tools to enhance student learning. The district currently uses the following curriculum resources: instructional units developed by the College of William and Mary, Jacob’s Ladder, Critical Thinking, and Building Skills, Building Academic Vocabulary, Word Within a Word, WordBuild, Hands-on Equations, Hands-on Fractions, Lego Mindstorms, Junior Achievement Biztown, Newsela, and Algebraic Thinking. In addition, middle school AIG specialists use SpringBoard units for instruction in English Language Arts. IXL is used to support acceleration in math and Discovery Education for social studies and science have been added. High school students utilize Discovery Education for biology, IXL for math, QUIA for social studies, and APEX for content support and credit recovery. College Board resources are used to support AP classes.

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

**District Response:** Lincoln County Schools enhances students’ critical thinking and problem-solving skills through differentiated instructional units and online learning opportunities, including college-level coursework such as Advanced Placement and the Career and College Promise Program. Community service projects are provided at each level through classroom instruction and/or service organizations. Future-ready skills are developed through apprenticeships, mentoring programs, job shadowing and internships at the high school level. High schools and middle schools are focusing on future-ready skills through career fairs, industry tours, and college visits. Student-led Socratic seminars are conducted to develop critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. Elementary gifted students participate in simulation activities, including participating in Junior Achievement BizTown, promoting critical thinking, and problem-solving in a real-world career environment.

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

**District Response:** Formative assessments, including SchoolNet and NC Check-ins, are used in our school district to provide assessment data in reading and mathematics for grades 3-8 and selected courses at the high school with End of Course testing. This data is disaggregated to create opportunities for flex grouping and differentiation. The district testing coordinator will lead data
discussion focusing on the growth of gifted learners with classroom teachers, AIG specialists, and administrators.

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

**District Response:** The district conducts meetings with counselors throughout the year in regard to addressing the social-emotional needs of students. Social-emotional needs of students will be addressed specifically during transition years. Student survey data indicates that additional education on the social-emotional needs of students is needed. This will be accomplished through the development of units of study that intentionally support the social-emotional development of AIG children. Professional development focusing on the needs of gifted students will be shared with counselors, AIG specialists, and classroom teachers of gifted students.

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

**District Response:** A nurturing program has been developed and implemented for students in grades K-3 for talent development. The nurturing program is built on the push-in model in which AIG specialists push into all K-3 classrooms providing differentiated instruction focusing on critical thinking skills utilizing the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) and U-Stars curriculum. This process is intended to cultivate the potential of all K-3 students. Students who demonstrate gifted and talented traits such as creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking are provided additional enrichment opportunities.

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

**District Response:** AIG (K-8) specialists meet monthly to develop differentiated units of study. Content specific Professional Learning Community (PLC) groups (6-12) collaborate to discuss advanced level learners. Opportunities for collaboration and communication between the AIG personnel and other staff have been developed. Specifically, grade level and vertical planning meetings, along with the sharing of resources and instructional strategies, are provided. Collaboration efforts are facilitated by the Directors of Elementary, Middle and High School Education in the Instructional Services Center (ISC).
Practice I
Develops and documents a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/families to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

District Response: Every AIG student has a Differentiated Education Plan that matches the identified needs of the student. Meetings are held annually with parents/families to review the AIG plan and differentiated program services. Elementary gifted students receive an AIG progress report at each grading period to provide additional communication with parents regarding student progress. High school AIG coordinators are present at high school registration meetings to guide and develop a four-year plan of coursework that aligns with individual student DEPs. AIG coordinators review and update these plans with students and parents on an annual basis.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Provide professional development that incorporates best practices for meeting the social-emotional needs of AIG students. This professional development will be shared with counselors, AIG specialists, and classroom teachers of AIG students.

Explore social-emotional curriculums designed to address the diverse needs of gifted students. Counselors will develop and implement quarterly small group sessions at all levels focusing on social-emotional needs of gifted students. Topics for small group sessions will be planned to focus on student needs (based on student and/or teacher input).

Utilize the North Carolina AP Partnership to strengthen and add rigor to advanced placement courses.

Sources of Evidence: Licensure required for AIG specialists at the schools
Differentiation of instruction professional development roster(s)
Sign-in sheets for professional development offered on Best Practices on Social-Emotional Needs
Sign-in sheets for monthly AIG meetings and agenda/topic of professional development
AIG leadership attendance to regional meetings in order to keep current on possible AIG professional development
2018-2019 AIG stakeholder survey results
Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

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

**District Response:** The District AIG Team is comprised of the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Elementary Education, Director of Middle School Education, and Director of High School Education. As funding becomes available or as personnel changes are made, it may allow for this situation to change to have an AIG-licensed educator as lead coordinator. Currently, our high school director holds AP certification. The AIG team meets to discuss progress on the plan to identify next steps for implementation as well as monitors the local AIG plan's implementation. The AIG team attends regional and state meetings to collaborate with other AIG leaders that support AIG learners.

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

**District Response:** AIG specialists meet regularly to collaborate and plan instruction units that meet the various needs of the students they serve. Stakeholder feedback indicates that there are opportunities to improve support for the social-emotional needs of gifted learners. This is an area for focus for AIG specialists and staff serving gifted learners.

Elementary teachers participate in ongoing professional development focusing on the selection and utilization of curricular materials that meet the diverse needs of elementary gifted children. Curricular materials selected focus on helping elementary students understand their learning styles and preferences.

Middle school AIG specialists participate in professional learning communities that specifically engage them in continued professional development regarding gifted learners and effective instructional strategies for English Language Arts (ELA).

At the high school level, AP teachers are required to obtain AP course certification and attend regular professional development to support instruction and the diverse student needs of gifted learners. Specialized professional development is provided for all AP teachers via the North Carolina Advanced Placement Partnership and College Board. High school counselors serve individual students and parents to meet their differentiated education plan goals and assist with course selection, registration, and address social-emotional needs. Professional development will be a continued focus for guidance counselors in the area of social-emotional needs directly working with
gifted students.

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

**District Response:** Professional development offerings for teachers of gifted students continue to be an area of focus for our district. All AIG specialists are required to participate in district level professional development, focusing on grade level content and standards, in addition to AIG professional development. Our stakeholder survey data indicates the need for additional professional development in the area of differentiation for teachers serving AIG students in the regular classroom at elementary and middle schools. Professional development focusing on differentiation will be provided to teachers directly serving AIG students and will begin during the 2019-2020 school year.

All teachers, counselors, and administrators will be provided professional development focusing on the traits and social-emotional needs of gifted learners as well as receive focused information regarding identification processes and criteria.

High school AP teachers are required to obtain AP certification.

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

**District Response:** Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, general education teachers that serve AIG students will be required to participate in professional development specifically designed to meet the needs of gifted learners. Gifted students will be clustered together in these specific classrooms. Furthermore, our district will provide administrators an AIG overview to make sure the AIG plan is implemented in regard to placement of AIG students in clusters with teachers that are best qualified to teach AIG students and meet these requirements.

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

**District Response:** Professional development for AIG specialists is currently integrated with other district professional development initiatives. As a district, we will continue to align professional development with AIG program goals. We encourage attendance at the annual gifted conference and other seminars that are available. Continued emphasis will be placed on providing professional
development on differentiation and meeting the needs of ongoing gifted learners.

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

**District Response:** AIG specialists participate in various opportunities for collaboration throughout the school year. During their meeting times, they effectively plan appropriate instructional strategies and interdisciplinary units of study to be implemented at their various school sites. In addition, AIG specialists are able to attend grade level/content planning meetings throughout the year.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Provide professional development on differentiation for classroom teachers serving cluster groups.

Provide AIG specialists opportunities to collaborate and plan for integration of social-emotional components to current units of study.

Provide additional strategies for counselors to support social-emotional needs of gifted students.

**Sources of Evidence:** Differentiated Education Plans/Individualized Differentiated Education Plans
State PRC 034 funds matched to AIG programming and service and delivery
Student schedules
Integrated units of study with social-emotional components
Social-emotional strategies for counselors
Agendas and rosters for professional development sessions
2018-2019 AIG stakeholder survey results
Standard 5: Partnerships
The LEA ensures on-going and meaningful participation of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the local AIG program to develop strong partnerships.

Practice A
Develops partnerships with parents/families that are intentional and meaningful to support the following needs of AIG students:
* academic and intellectual
* social and emotional

District Response: Parents are notified regarding identification and progress; however, the survey data indicates a need for increased ongoing communication regarding services and student performance. Our current two-way communication efforts include annual parent orientations, school level parent conferences, and district level annual stakeholder group meetings. AIG specialists communicate regularly with parents via email, the AIG webpage, and written communication. The district maintains an AIG webpage for parents providing updated information. At the secondary level, meetings are held with students and parents throughout the year. Students and parents also receive information through the webpage, telephone calls, school announcements, and communication with honors, and AP teachers. At the high school level, AIG coordinators/counselors work directly with parents and students to communicate course and enrichment opportunities. Parent surveys indicate the need for increased communication regarding AIG services at transition times. As these meetings are scheduled and enhanced, we will continue to focus on meeting student academic needs as well as social and emotional needs. This will be an area for focus for face-to-face parent meetings at each level.

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

District Response: Data from the AIG District Task Force indicates stakeholders need additional information regarding the AIG plan. The district AIG information is shared through a variety of media including newsletters, AIG webpage, informational meetings with parents, and annual parent conferences to discuss DEPs or IDEPs. Social media and the district website are utilized to share student accomplishments throughout the year.

Practice C
Establishes and utilizes an advisory group to develop, implement, and monitor the local AIG program and plan. This advisory group is representative of the diverse populations of the district and is at least comprised of community members, AIG parents and families, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff.
**District Response:** Our district AIG District Task Force is comprised of K-12 teachers, parents, administrators, and community members from each region of our district and is representative of our demographics. We will continue to invite members of underrepresented populations to serve on the AIG District Task Force. The focus will be placed on expanding the role of the AIG District Task Force to examine program data and provide detailed feedback for program improvement.

Currently, the AIG District Task Force assists with providing feedback about standards of concern. They assist with reviewing district data, funding, and resources. The AIG District Task Force reviews the draft plan to provide additional feedback by area.

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

**District Response:** According to our AIG District Task Force feedback, continued improvement is needed in the area of communication with parents/families and the community about opportunities available to AIG students. We will continue to utilize all available tools including AIG websites, flyers, brochures, email, social media, and automated phone calls to inform parents and families of opportunities for AIG students. In addition, this information should be provided in their native language by using the strategies listed below:
1. Update the district AIG webpage to include information concerning opportunities and activities available for AIG students. Make information available in the student's native language.
2. Provide forms and brochures translated into English and Spanish.
3. Translate forms into other languages based on needs.
4. Provide translators when holding AIG parent meetings, if needed.

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

**District Response:** There is a need to create stronger partnerships with business and industry to foster collaboration and to better prepare students to be career and college ready. The district has identified the following partnerships to focus on:
1. Meet with Lincoln Economic Development Association (LEDA) representatives to develop partnership opportunities such as mentoring programs, speaker bureau, job shadowing, etc.
2. Enhance partnerships with Gaston College, North Carolina School of Science, Lenoir-Rhyne University, and UNCC to support the AIG program.
3. Maintain partnership with Gaston College for students to earn dual credit through Career and College Promise.
4. Develop sponsorships for programs that engage AIG students in problem-solving and critical thinking such as Robotics clubs, Engineering clubs, Junior Achievement (Biztown), Science Olympiad, Odyssey of the Mind, Quiz Bowl, and Battle of the Books.
5. Showcase projects and work of AIG students in the community through Rotary, Kiwanis, Arts Council, LEDA, etc.
6. Seek community partnerships to enhance the AIG program.
7. Continue the North Carolina Advanced Placement Partnership to strengthen Advanced Placement courses.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Face-to-face meetings will be scheduled with parents yearly to discuss DEPs, program goals, and student performance.

An individual parent meeting will be held following initial AIG identification.

**Sources of Evidence:** Updates to the district and school AIG webpage
Updates to the High School Curriculum Guide
Meeting agendas
Rosters of parent orientation meetings
AIG brochure
List of AIG District Task Force Committee members
Invitation letter to stakeholders
Translated forms and informational materials
Community partnerships
High School Advanced Course Offerings brochure
District Strategic Plan
2018-2019 AIG stakeholder survey data
NCAPP Agreement
Standard 6: Program Accountability

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

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

District Response: The Local Educational Agency (LEA) plan has been submitted and approved in prior years through the AIG District Task Force and Lincoln County School Board. After receiving School Board approval, the AIG plan is submitted to DPI through the online portal. Feedback from the review process (including feedback from Regional AIG leads, AIG coordinators in other districts, and self-assessment) has been and will continue to be utilized to make program improvements. All stakeholders will be surveyed on topics related to the diverse learning needs of gifted students to be considered for program changes.

With the addition of AIG as a subgroup, there is an increased emphasis on demonstrating growth with all AIG students every year. Annually our Testing and Accountability Director will meet with AIG specialist to share AIG student achievement and growth data.

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

District Response: Curriculum directors work closely with AIG specialists and individual school leaders to review data for program improvement. The AIG District Team is also responsible for monitoring and ensuring the completion of actions outlined in the AIG plan. Throughout each planning cycle, district leadership develops a specific monitoring document that aligns with the current plan to make sure that progress is made with each component. The AIG District Team will complete interim reports and take feedback offered to ensure implementation of the AIG plan.

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

District Response: The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction confers with the district finance officer regarding PRC 034 funds and then meets with the AIG Curriculum Team to make sure that funds are expended appropriately. An area for continued focus is to increase staffing for elementary AIG specialists to reduce shared positions between schools.
**Practice D**
Maintains, analyzes, and shares student achievement, student growth, and annual drop-out data for AIG students.

**District Response:** Conduct an annual analysis of student performance and growth data (End of Grade and End of Course) for identified AIG students by district and school in comparison to local testing data of all students. This analysis will help in identification of disproportionately and underrepresented populations as well as opportunities for the academic growth of gifted students. Analysis of yearly dropout data will be reviewed with administrators and appropriate staff in order to observe trends in data and develop strategies for improvement. The Testing and Accountability Director will assist in providing access to AIG student data that will be analyzed and shared with various stakeholder groups. AIG subgroup data and growth will be examined to target areas to inform instruction and service delivery.

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

**District Response:** Investigate alternate pathways for identifying underrepresented populations. Review current testing practices to make sure that nonverbal assessments are used appropriately. Use Advanced Placement (AP) Potential and Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) data to assist in increasing participation of underrepresented populations who may be successful. Provide professional development for principals, counselors, and teachers regarding characteristics of culturally and economically diverse gifted students. AIG teams are established at each school for the purpose of ensuring that all students have equal access to gifted services. Study referral and screening data at schools where there is a disparity between the school's demographics and the demographics of AIG students to ensure that underrepresented populations are provided equitable access to screening.

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

**District Response:** AIG licensure credentials are maintained in the Human Resource department database. All K-8 AIG specialists currently hold AIG licensure. Advanced Placement teachers are required to obtain AP certification.

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

**District Response:** AIG District Task Force meetings are scheduled to review program data and make recommendations for improvement. Survey data from stakeholders is shared and used to make improvements. Intentional conversations will be ongoing to receive feedback from AIG students and parents to discuss improvements to the AIG program.

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

**District Response:** AIG surveys are administered at least every three years to parents, students, and teachers to receive feedback about the AIG program. During the implementation of the three-year plan, various focus groups are used to gather feedback. Throughout the school year, feedback is gathered informally by AIG specialists, coordinators, and administrators. Ongoing feedback will be gathered through a variety of modes, including parent open house meetings, parent conferences, and DEP meetings.

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

**District Response:** Student achievement and headcount data are reviewed annually. During the implementation of the three-year plan, additional surveys and focus groups are used to gather feedback. Comments from the DPI plan review are utilized by district personnel for continuous program improvement. AIG subgroup test data is analyzed and utilized to target areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Additionally, American College Testing (ACT) data for AIG students is analyzed to determine program effectiveness and develop plans for improvement. The AIG plan will be available on the district AIG webpage. Survey data, achievement, and enrollment data will be shared with stakeholders. Each AIG specialist will be provided with data from the evaluation of the local AIG program in order to assist in disseminating the information.

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

**District Response:** The goals, procedures, criteria, and service delivery options of the Lincoln County Schools Gifted Education Program is clearly communicated to parents. Informed consent from parents is obtained prior to beginning the assessment process. Parental consent for services is
obtained during the annual DEP review. In years of transition, consent for additional assessment or reassessment is obtained from parents. Students that transfer from other LEAs are reassessed, with parental consent, to determine the level of service.

Parents/guardians who have questions or concerns should first talk with the regular education teacher, the AIG specialist, and/or the school principal. If parents/guardians disagree with a decision, it is hoped that the concerns may be resolved at the local level. The following procedures should be followed to resolve any disagreement:

Step 1: If the parent has a disagreement concerning nomination, identification, or services, they may request a meeting with the teacher and principal at the local school level. The principal may convene with the school level AIG Team to review referral and placement records and the student’s current performance.

Step 2: If the disagreement is not resolved at the school site, the disagreement should be reviewed by the system-level coordinator(s) of the Academically Gifted Education program.

Step 3: The next level for discussion and review is with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

Step 4: The next level for discussion and review is with the Superintendent (or designee).

Step 5: If an agreement cannot be reached administratively, the disagreement should be reviewed by the Lincoln County Board of Education. At any point in the hierarchy of discussions, the school system may consider the possibility of mediation with an impartial facilitator. The mediator will be selected from an approved list from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Step 6: 115C-150.8 Review of Disagreements
In the event that the procedure developed under G.S. 115-C-150.7 (b) (7) fails to resolve a disagreement, the parent/guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

Legal fees are the responsibility of the parent.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Schedule annual data analysis meetings with the Director of Testing and Accountability and AIG specialist to examine student performance and growth.

Examine screening data to make sure that underrepresented populations are included.

Increase nurturing opportunities in grades 4-5 for unidentified students in underrepresented populations to prepare for advanced level coursework and additional screening opportunities.

**Sources of Evidence:** District Plan
District AIG webpage
Board of Education agenda
Disaggregation of EOG and EOC data
Screening data
Headcount data
AIG subgroup data
Budget report
Purchase orders
Copy of testing guidelines
Roster and agendas from professional development sessions
AP class enrollments
AP exam data
College course enrollment
Student participation (Governor's School, Duke Talent Identification)
DPI program review feedback
EVAAS data
ACT data
AIG newsletters
Student AIG folders containing written consent
2018-2019 AIG stakeholder survey results
Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):
Local Board of Education approval.docx *(Local Board Approval Document)*