Rowan-Salisbury Schools
Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan
Effective 2019-2022

Approved by local Board of Education on: 28-MAY-19
LEA Superintendent’s Name: Lynn Moody
LEA AIG Contact Name: Eisa Cox
Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on: 03-JUL-19

Rowan-Salisbury 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, Rowan-Salisbury Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

Rowan-Salisbury Schools Vision for local AIG program: As the Renewal School System, Rowan-Salisbury School System is committed to redesigning education to create authentic and personalized learning experiences for all students through flexibility in curriculum, budgeting, hiring and calendar design. Our community deserves a school system with autonomy that empowers every teacher to create a personalized learning environment that serves the whole child, beyond the test. And, Rowan-Salisbury School System teachers ensure that every student at every school is an engaged learner by: mastering fundamental standards in English, math, science and social studies; setting goals based on their unique smartness, career aspirations and personal passions; developing interpersonal skills in order to thrive as productive citizens and employees.

BELIEFS
Every child should have personal goals
To achieve their life goals, we need to engage them in innovative learning
Innovative, engaged learning results in skill development and academic achievement
Skills development and academic achievement helps students meet their life goals

VISION
Where every day, everyone discovers and achieves the extraordinary
MISSION
To Inspire and provide opportunities for innovative and engaging learning

We fully support the State definition of giftedness: "Academically or intellectually gifted (AIG) students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experiences, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both the intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor." As a result we have designed a comprehensive AIG plan implement best practices to meet the needs of our students.

AIG PROGRAM GOAL
To nurture and identify the academic and intellectual potential in all students through purposeful programming designed to achieve maximum student success

Rowan-Salisbury School System sincerely acknowledges the many stakeholders who contributed to the development of the 2019-2022 AIG Plan.

Executive Director of Programs:
Dr. Eisa Cox

AIG Coordinator
Nancy Goodnight

AIG Advisory Council:
Darrin Turner- AIG teacher
Paige Smart- AIG teacher
Christine Barringer- teacher and parent
Jennifer Eagle- AIG area lead teacher and parent
Jeanna Gregory-AIG district lead teacher
Emily Teeter-Title I lead teacher
Emily Bancroft-parent
Justin James-Middle School Principal
Marae Reid- Assistant Principal
Dr. Stephanie Sanders- Elementary School Principal
Dr. Ron Turbyfill-Executive Director of Communities in Schools

School Board Members:
Travis Allen
Alisha Byrd-Clark
Susan Cox
Dean Hunter
Kevin Jones
Jean Kennedy
Josh Wagner
Superintendent:
Dr. Lynn Moody

The Rowan-Salisbury School System utilized various methods to collect stakeholder input and feedback on AIG programming. Methods included:
- Surveys: parent, student, classroom teacher, AIG teacher, certified district staff
- Meetings: parents, AIG teachers, principals
- AIG Advisory Council: 5 meetings during 2018/2019 school year

Based on stakeholder input and a thorough review of current data, the following focus areas for the 2019-2022 AIG Plan were identified:
- Communication
- Program Equity
- Enrichment opportunities for gifted students
- Service delivery models
- Professional development
- Nurturing
- Identification
- Paperwork

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

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

Practice A

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

District Response: Any student (K-12) in Rowan-Salisbury School System (RSSS) may be referred for AIG screening. Our goal is to be sure every student has an equal opportunity to be referred and screened for AIG identification. Referral may come from a student, parent, teacher, or administrator. Additionally, we recognize and accept all students AIG identified in PowerSchool transferring into RSSS from another district within North Carolina. For students transferring into RSSS from out of state, we will accept the out of state gifted identification as a referral for AIG screening in RSSS. An Individual Student Referral must be completed for all referred and transfer students prior to beginning the screening process. The Individual Student Referral includes the following information:
- Demographic information
- Nomination information supporting referral
- AIG Referral Team’s outcome of referral
- AIG Referral Matrix

In grades K-2 the AIG Referral Team, consisting of AIG area and district lead teachers and the classroom teacher, will review data (iStation, report cards, benchmarks) and work samples (writing, reading, and math). Outcomes of the referral will be:
- Outcome 1: No screening needed at this time
- Outcome 2: Pursue AIG screening. Obtain permission to test. Individual administration of the Naglieri Non-verbal Ability Test (NNAT) is the screening instrument used for K-2 students.

In grades 3-12, the AIG Referral Team will collect student data including aptitude, achievement, grades and/or teacher perception inventory. Data will be reviewed using the AIG Screening Matrix, consisting of weighted data points, to determine the outcome of referral (screening or no screening needed). Students must have a minimum of 20 points on the AIG Screening Matrix to be screened for possible AIG identification.

Once a student referral has been accepted for screening, the designated AIG area and district lead teacher(s) will determine the necessary steps for screening. These steps will be individualized based on reviewing existing data and will include gathering qualitative and/or quantitative data in order to build a comprehensive student profile. Quantitative data may include aptitude and achievement data from multiple sources, both nationally and state normed, including; NC EOG, Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) and NNAT. Qualitative data may include the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS), grades, and/or the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT).

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:** Initial aptitude screening will be conducted using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), a nationally normed aptitude test. The CogAT is administered each year to all third grade students as a universal screening to collect data to be used in AIG screening and identification process (actual AIG services will begin with the fourth grade). Based on those results, students scoring 80% or above on a CogAT subtest or composite score are placed in a screening pool. In order to ensure a representative screening pool is developed, the baseline score of 80% may be lowered at individual schools to allow equitable access to screening for all students. The AIG district and/or area lead teacher(s) will administer any and/or all screening(s) to develop a comprehensive profile for each student.

The Rowan Salisbury School System currently uses multiple aptitude and achievement assessments to collect data for a comprehensive student profile to determine AIG identification. RSSS qualifies students for AIG reading and/or math identification. The CoGAT aptitude assessment is given to all third-grade students: CogAT verbal/quantitative/non-verbal (VQN) composite percentile may be used for math and/or reading identification. CogAT verbal (V) subtest percentile may be used for a reading identification. The quantitative/non-verbal (QN) CogAT composite percentile may be used for a math identification. Other aptitude assessments available for use are the OLSAT and NNAT. Achievement assessments used for AIG identification include the ITBS and NC EOGs. RSSS identifies students for AIG using one of three pathways in grades K-12:

**Pathway 1:** Intellectually Gifted (IG)

Grades K-2
99% NNAT

Grades 3-12
Must meet one of the following criteria:
- 96% or higher aptitude composite score CogAT, NNAT, or OLSAT
- 96% or higher verbal subtest on CogAT for reading identification
- 96% or higher on Quantitative/Nonverbal (QN) composite for math identification

**Pathway 2:** Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI for identification in both Reading and Math, AR for single subject reading identification, and/or AM for single subject math identification)

Grades 3-12
Must meet criteria for math and/or reading identification:
- Sum of aptitude (CogAT, OLSAT, NNAT) and achievement (EOG, ITBS) percentiles greater than or equal to 180 points for reading (AR), math (AM) or both reading and math (AI)

**Pathway 3:** Academically Gifted (AG for identification in both reading and math, AR for single subject reading identification, and/or AM for single subject math identification)

Grades 3-12
Must have 80% aptitude score to use Pathway 3
Must meet 3 out of 5 criteria for math and/or reading identification:
-90% or higher aptitude score (composite, verbal and/or quantitative and nonverbal composite)
-90% or higher achievement score
-Grade A in subject area (reading and/or math) for previous four report cards
-90% or higher Creativity Index on Figural Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (Figural TTCT)
-90% or higher on Gifted Rating Scale (GRS)

Alternative Pathway for under-represented schools:
- For schools identifying less than five students during the end-of-year, third grade screening process:
  Top 5% or no less than five students will be identified using the CogAT VQN composite score to
  begin with the 2019/2020 school year

**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:** In order to ensure equal access to AIG, referrals may come from student, parent, teacher, or administrators, as well as in and out of state student transfers. The CoGAT is used as a universal aptitude screening given to all third-grade students. The CoGAT data will be used to compile a testing pool for AIG screening. Any student scoring at or above the 80% on any subtest or composite score will be added to the screening list. School demographics and student populations will be used to determine if the district's 80% baseline needs to be adjusted for an individual site. The testing pool shall consist of no less than 5% of the third-grade student population.

District data shows a clear disparity between the total number of Hispanic and Black students enrolled district-wide, and the number identified as AIG. A comprehensive K-3 nurturing program is in place to identify gifted characteristics and potential. The whole class lessons in this program offer equal access and consistency to all K-3 students in RSSS. Additionally, multiple pathways to identification are available and include qualitative and quantitative measures. Non-verbal aptitude tests are available for use include; NNAT and the Test of Nonverbal Intelligence (TONI-4).

Beginning with the 2019/2020 school year, an alternative pathway to identification will be used in schools with less than 5% of the fourth-grade student population identified as AIG through pathways 1-3 as third grade students. Local school building norms using the Verbal/Quantitative/Nonverbal (VQN) composite CogAT score will be used to identify the top 5% or no less than five students from the total third-grade student population in those schools. When screening and testing is completed for 3rd graders in the spring of the 2019/2020 school year, the same norms will be applied.

**Practice D**
Implements screening, referral, and identification processes consistently within the LEA.
**District Response:** All AIG teachers have access to online screening, referral and identification documents through the Canvas. The AIG area lead teachers are trained in implementing screening, referral and identification processes. Those processes are reviewed, updated and clearly defined each year. In order to ensure successful implementation of those processes is being carried out in a timely manner, a flowchart, timeline for implementation, and a checklist for completion is updated and disseminated each year. This information is compiled and presented in an AIG teacher handbook available digitally and in print (by request). Professional development is provided as needed and an annual audit of records is carried out to ensure consistency throughout the LEA.

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

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System AIG department publicizes procedures and processes for all stakeholders throughout the district. The AIG Plan is housed on the district website along with the processes for AIG screening, referral and identification. A flowchart for identification and a timeline of screening are also included. Parent nights are also hosted at the district level as well as at individual schools each year. A parent and a teacher handbook are available and distributed in digital and print form (by request) and are updated yearly with the most current information on referral, screening and identification processes.

**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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System's current AIG Plan is posted on the district website available to all parents to ensure access to our district's procedures for AIG screening and services. Additionally, it is the expectation that every identified AIG student in Rowan-Salisbury School System will have an AIG record containing paperwork documenting identification and service delivery. Paperwork in the AIG folder includes the Permission to Test letter and the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), both of which include a parent signature of consent. The DEP is created in collaboration with the AIG teacher, parent and student to outline service options and delivery to the student.

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

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

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**

- Practice C: Work with Dr. Michael Matthews at UNCC to review district and school demographic data and research-based pathways to identification and create additional strategies to increase referral, screening and identification with under-represented populations.
- Practice C: Utilize ACCESS for ELLs data as a potential measure for referral and/or screening of ELL students for AIG
- Practices A and B: Include student portfolio or work sample evidence for screening and/or identification
- Practice B: Order Spanish versions of aptitude and achievement test if available
- Practice F: Convert to a digital AIG folder through Canvas that would include all paperwork

**Sources of Evidence:**

- District AIG webpage
- School and AIG teacher links to district AIG webpage
- Parent, student, teacher, staff survey data
- AIG Timeline for referral, screening and identification
- AIG identification flow chart and resource page
- AIG Canvas Resource page
- AIG Parent Handbook
- AIG Teacher Handbook
- Individual Student Referral
- AIG Referral Matrix
- Individual Student Profile
- Qualification letters
- Elementary and Middle School Differentiated Education Plan
- High School DEP/Academic Blue Print
- Site records review by AIG district lead teachers
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: The Rowan-Salisbury School System aligns its AIG programming and services with the North Carolina Academically and Gifted Program standards. We offer a full continuum of services to address the needs of gifted students across all grade levels and identification areas.

AIG area and district lead teachers collaborate with locally endorsed or state certified AIG teachers in addition to regular education teachers and other instructional staff to meet the needs of all gifted learners. Collaboration results in the implementation of a variety of evidence-based programming to enhance academic and intellectual performance, as well as support social and emotional needs. Options available include opportunities for acceleration, enrichment, and extension.

Acceleration Programs:
- Early entrance to kindergarten (NC g.s. 115c-364)
- Beginning school year 2020/2021 grades 6-8 Math acceleration
- Grade skipping (Iowa Acceleration Scale)
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- Advanced, Honors and AP classes
- Early College
- Dual Enrollment
- NCVPS

Enrichment Programs:

K-12 Digital Badging Program
Digital Badging for student enrichment: A new and innovative digital badging program will roll-out with the 2019-2020 school year to align with the district's strategic plan as the North Carolina's first renewal school district. In an effort to meet the needs of all gifted learners, the enrichment will provide students the opportunity to further personalize their learning experience and capitalize on their unique talents, characteristics and interests. Students will have choice in completing the digital badges and digital badges may be earned in a variety of topics at each grade span. Beginning in the fall of 2019, students will have access to at least two digital badges with additional badges to follow each year. Topics for study include: leadership, creative writing and the great works of literature, entrepreneurship, research and field studies, performance, logic, creativity, STEM, global studies, etc.. While allowing the student flexibility on pacing and environment for completion, these badges will encourage exploration through collaboration and communication with peers, teachers and community
partners, as well as foster the development of critical thinking and creativity.

The Digital Badges for enrichment will consist of three general components:
-Online learning modules for deeper learning on the enrichment topic.
-A field experience to expose students to their topic more in-depth and/or work with local experts in that field.
-A public showcase of their student work.

K-3 Nurturing Program
RSSS's nurturing program was designed to foster the development of critical thinking skills among all students. The program is taught whole group by AIG area lead teachers to ensure equal access and provide exposure to unlock potential in all students. As potential ability is noted, additional opportunities will be provided to allow gifts and talents to emerge. Professional development and resources will be provided to classroom teachers to continue in the development of these gifts and talents. Programs may include, but are not limited to: Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS), Tin Man Press materials, critical thinking tasks, programming and robotics, and logic puzzles. Area lead teachers will teach lessons to all K-3 students. Additional opportunities for support will be provided for high performing K-3 students in a small group setting to enhance further development of critical thinking skills, as well as targeting the social and emotional needs students may have.

Rowan Salisbury Student Portfolio
In alignment with our system's strategic plan as a renewal district, students will be completing a student portfolio that aligns with their talents, abilities, and future aspirations. This portfolio will be a comprehensive record of a student's journey from kindergarten through graduation from high school. Portfolio requirements will be aligned with Rowan-Salisbury Schools' directional focus under renewal, but will also include key components that allow our gifted students the ability to develop the areas specific to their diverse academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs.

Every student identified as academically and intellectually gifted will receive services to ensure needs are met. A Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) will be initialized each year outlining a comprehensive service delivery plan to span one academic year. The DEP will be crafted for each student individually through collaboration with the AIG teacher, parent and any other stakeholders (EC, ELL, guidance counselor, etc.) to ensure the needs of the students are being addressed through the plan. Specific AIG services provided to gifted students will vary based on grade level, identification area and personal needs. Services include, but are not limited to, the following:

AIG services in grades 4-8 include:
-cluster grouping with at least 5-8 identified AIG students in a classroom taught by a locally endorsed or state certified AIG teacher
-differentiated curriculum to meet individual needs and personalize learning experiences (compacting, tiering)
-blended learning using playlists and choice menus
-math acceleration model

AIG services in Grades 9-12 include:
-AP Honors classes
-seminars addressing social and emotional needs
-blended learning using playlists and choice menus
-online courses to earn beyond traditional credit
Practice B
Integrates and connects AIG services with the total instructional program and resources of the LEA in policy and practice.

District Response: The curriculum framework for the RSSS AIG program aligns with the district's directional focus. The AIG Coordinator and/or the Executive Director of Programs is/are contributing member(s) of the district's leadership teams (Administration Team, Curriculum and Instruction Team) to ensure a voice in all decision making that would impact gifted students. AIG area lead teachers will monitor practices within communities to align initiatives with the district's directional focus. Collaboration with and between departments including ELL, Instructional Design Coaches, Title 1, Technology, Media and Guidance is fostered to clearly establish and connect goals, strategies, and resources supporting the curriculum framework. A flowchart has been created to clearly show the alignment of AIG services and curriculum framework with other departments in the district. Specific collaborative initiatives include but are not limited to:
- Partnership with guidance counselors (K-12) to develop and implement lessons on social and emotional learning, bibliotherapy, and academic blueprints
- Collaboration with Federal Programs and Title 1 to develop and implement professional development for all teachers concerning best practices with gifted learners
- Partnership with instructional design coaches to review existing practices and establish new strategies for guided reading and mathematics differentiation for gifted learners
- Collaboration with ELL teachers to ensure equal opportunity for referral and screening of ELL students

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: Rowan-Salisbury School System's AIG Program has established research-based guidelines for the intentional grouping of gifted students in order to facilitate the achievement and growth of AIG students; and those students exhibiting high potential or the need for advanced learning services. The guidelines for grouping vary based on grade span. For K-3 students, nurturing classes are taught in a whole group setting, recognizing that in the early grades all students need exposure to lessons fostering higher order thinking skills in order to nurture and recognize potential. Based on observational data collected during whole group nurturing lessons, students showing high potential will be placed in a small group for additional nurturing lessons. In grades 4-8, classrooms will consist of at least five to eight AIG students placed within a larger cluster grouping. The AIG students will be grouped together within the cluster grouping for reading and/or mathematics instruction based on AIG area(s) of identification. For high school students, AIG students will follow a personalized academic blueprint and will be grouped in classes according to blueprint. For grades K-
12, the digital badging program will allow for flexible grouping based on student choice and interest.

**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 Rowan-Salisbury School System recognizes the need to improve the flow of communication regarding all areas of the AIG plan and program. In order to inform all teachers, school administrators, and support staff about the AIG plan, the delivery, and instruction of AIG students, and North Carolina guidelines and updates to gifted education policies and procedures, new supports have been established and put in place within the district. A common presentation highlighting AIG programs and services will be presented to all school personnel at the beginning of the academic school year as well as being posted on the district's AIG website. Additionally, a comprehensive AIG parent handbook is available digitally to all district employees and includes an AIG quick guide to services and delivery, a section of frequently asked questions, as well as the timeline and process for referral, screening and identification. The AIG teacher handbook includes all of the above information as well as specific guidelines for completing required AIG paperwork (referral, permission to test, profile, DEP, transfer of records). The common presentation (Google Slides), the AIG parent handbook, and the AIG teacher handbook will be reviewed and updated yearly. NCDPI and NC legislative updates regarding AIG will be presented to the district through PLCs, administrative meetings and staff development to ensure key stakeholders are informed.

**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:** In order to ensure an effective continuation of K-12 services, the Rowan-Salisbury School System understands strong communication between teachers and schools must happen. In order to improve and promote that communication, multiple processes have been created and implemented to establish AIG policies that promote consistency across the district. Those policies include a process for documenting identification and services, as well as for the transfer of records from elementary to middle school, and middle school to high school. A folder is created for each student referred for AIG screening that includes identification criteria, annual DEPs, and parental consent and communication (Permission to Test, Individual Student Profile, notification letters). Training will be conducted annually to ensure all school personnel understand and are able to ensure effective continuation of services.

-AIG area lead teachers will create, review, and update folders for all AIG students in elementary and middle school, as well as ensuring the transfer between schools at key transition points. At the beginning of each school year, the AIG area leads will meet with elementary and middle AIG teachers to review AIG folders to ensure service delivery matches identification area. They will also assist in developing DEPs for effective continuation of services. Area lead teachers will physically transfer the records from each of their assigned elementary schools to the middle schools of record for each
student. Documentation of transfer is required on the transfer sheet through obtaining the signature of an administrator or designee from both the sending and receiving schools. The transfer sheet will be kept on file by the AIG area lead teachers with a copy going to the AIG coordinator for district records.

-In collaboration with a designated guidance counselor at each high school, the AIG middle/high lead teacher(s), student and parent will create, review and update the academic blueprint for all AIG students in high school to ensure effective continuation of services. The AIG middle/high lead teacher(s) will also provide a list of AIG students to classroom teachers at the beginning of each semester. AIG area lead teachers will also support differentiation in the classroom through professional development for teachers in a PLC setting.

**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 AIG program in Rowan-Salisbury School System recognizes the need to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students. Further, RSSS AIG program understands the importance of all teachers and staff members having a basic understanding of the AIG student and his/her social and emotional needs. In order to understand and plan to meet these needs, the AIG area lead teachers, middle/high and district lead teacher(s), along with the Director of Counseling and an elementary, middle and high school guidance counselor will collaborate regularly. This team will explore best practices of social and emotional learning and create multiple opportunities for district teachers to learn how to address the unique social and emotional needs of gifted learners. To provide that understanding, professional development is offered during PLCs, the local AIG endorsement program (LEEP), digital learning modules, and faculty meetings. The information presented is research-based and comes from multiple sources including:
- NCDPI Division of Advanced Learning and Gifted Education’s AIG Booster Shots
- Teaching Gifted Kids in Today’s Classroom
- Differentiation for Gifted Learners
- Survival Guide for Gifted Kids
- The Gifted Teen Survival Guide
- Social and Emotional Gifted Teen Series
- Websites (hoagies.com, giftedguru.com, byrdseed.com)
- Collaboration with Duke TIP
Each AIG student has an AIG folder that includes a yearly DEP which highlights specific strategies to be used to meet his/her social and emotional needs.

**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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System clearly sees a need to have consistent policies and procedures for the varied acceleration opportunities available to our students. Procedures have been established for the following:
North Carolina’s policy for early entrance to kindergarten (NC g.s. 115c-364)  
Grade acceleration using the Iowa Acceleration Scale  
Credit by Demonstrated Mastery program  
Compact content through math acceleration grades 6-8  
Knox Center for Accelerated Studies (magnet school)  
Dual enrollment  
Rowan County Early College  

All procedures for the acceleration options are included in the AIG parent handbook which is shared digitally and housed on the district's AIG webpage. Print copies are available on request.

**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:** The RSSS AIG program uses multiple strategies to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities for our under-represented AIG populations and is committed to researching and exploring additional strategies to further broaden access to our culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, and ELL populations. The strategies we are using include:

- Annual review of district demographic data: To ensure we are consistently identifying the populations most under-represented so efforts to improve access to advanced programming can be targeted to those populations. District data and on-going trends show a strong disparity in the referral, screening and identification in our under-represented populations (culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, and ELL) when compared to the demographic make-up of our district and schools.

- K-3 Nurturing Program: To nurture the potential in all students, all K-3 students participate in a nurturing program designed to develop and enhance critical thinking skills. This whole group opportunity, taught by our area lead teachers, not only nurtures potential in all students, but also allows for the collection of qualitative data to be used to develop small groups for continued nurturing services. This qualitative data also can be used as one of the criteria used for AIG referral for screening, thereby broadening access to our under-represented populations (culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, ELL).

- Partnerships with ELL, Title I and Communities in Schools: To collaborate in recognizing, planning, and utilizing all resources available to extend learning opportunities of our advanced learners from under-represented populations, specifically, culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged and ELL learners. Collaboration efforts include:

- Providing staff-development K-12 in recognizing and understanding gifted characteristics and the differences in how those characteristics may change within the different under-represented populations
-Purchasing classroom materials, based on best-practices, that are culturally and ethnically relevant

- Employment of AIG area lead teachers based in school communities to differentiate and personalize AIG services within each community

Through collaboration with ELL and Communities in Schools, we have worked to understand and implement changes in our referral process to include the use of data collected though the ELL department. WIDA (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment) data may be used as a criterion for referral. In addition, through collaboration with UNCC and Title 1 we have established school-based norms to be utilized for AIG referral.

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

**District Response:** The RSSS AIG program recognizes the need for extra-curricular programming to enhance and further develop the needs, interests and passions of our AIG students. Current extra-curricular opportunities include:

- Digital Badging Program: This program will give all AIG students the opportunity to earn badges based on their unique giftedness and passions. Badge topics include: Leadership, Creative Writing, Reading Challenge, Leadership, Research and Field Study, Performance, Logic, Creativity, STEM Prototype and Global Studies.
- AIG Summer Camps: Creative Arts in the Community, K-2 Coding Camp
- Bridge Program
- Crosby Scholars
- In district academic and intellectual competitions that focus on standards-based problem solving and critical thinking.

In addition to those opportunities with the RSSS, we recognize the need to publish and promote other areas of extra-curricular programming available to our AIG students. We compile and publish a list of local, state and national opportunities available to our gifted students and house that list on our district website. Opportunities include summer enrichment programs, talent identification programs and links to national websites. Additionally, a quarterly newsletter is emailed to all parents of AIG students to update information and opportunities available to AIG students.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**
- Practice A: Increase badges offered through Digital Badging Program
- Practice A: Expand math acceleration model to elementary school
- Practice A: Develop ELA acceleration program for elementary and middle school
- Practice E: Develop transition programs for AIG students between 5th/6th grades and 8th/9th grades to prepare students for changes and increased challenges in programming
- Practice F: Develop a clearly defined and more robust acceleration policy for each grade span
- Practice H: Develop school-based norms for AIG referral and screening
Sources of Evidence: - Agendas and PowerPoints of district and school-based PD
- Common PowerPoint
- Meeting minutes and notes from district meetings
- District website
- School and AIG teacher links to district website
- Differentiated Education Plan
- Transfer records
- Academic Blueprint
- Audit of AIG records by AIG district lead teachers
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery: State Board of Education Policy SBE GCS-M-001, Section 13
- Early Admission to Kindergarten: GCS-J-001, NCAC 6E.0105
- AIG Teacher Handbook
- AIG Digital Badging Canvas courses
- Example student portfolio
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: The RSSS AIG program recognizes the need to adapt the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) in all grade levels and subject areas to address the range of advanced ability levels in our AIG students. Students can be identified as gifted in reading, math, reading and math, or intellectually gifted. Instruction is differentiated and provided to gifted learners through extension, enrichment and/or acceleration. It is the expectation that every AIG student will receive instruction in identified content areas by a locally endorsed or state certified AIG teacher. AIG area and district lead teachers will meet regularly to explore new research in differentiating for gifted learners in order to plan and create resources and strategies to be used by AIG classroom teachers. In addition to offering resources, AIG area leads will co-teach and provide model lessons to support classroom teachers as they enrich and extend the NC SCOS. Flexible grouping follows district policy and is based on identified area(s) ensuring appropriate grouping is in place. Additionally, this collaboration will ensure differentiation through instruction is standards-based, data-driven, and grounded in research-supported best practices in gifted education. Differentiation strategies may vary based on content area and/or grade level. These include:

Elementary and Middle School:
- K-3 nurturing program includes whole group lessons and flexible smaller groupings based on qualitative data generated from whole group lessons. All lessons are designed to promote critical thinking development, in addition to supporting specific practices within the NC SCOS
- Math grades 6-8 acceleration
- Tiering and compacting curriculum
- Leveraging 1:1 technology to personalize learning through student choice and pacing. Examples of specific strategies include student choice grids, blended learning model and playlists
- Cumulative student portfolio (K-12) will reflect authentic, interest-based examples showing student mastery of content standards in math, reading, social studies and science.
- Grade Acceleration will be used in individual circumstances, using data from the Iowa Acceleration Scales showing academic readiness two years above grade level.
- Knox Center for Accelerated Learning provides middle school subject acceleration in reading, mathematics and science.

High School:
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) using assessment and performance tasks
- Enrollment in the Rowan County Early College program for rising high school freshmen
- Dual enrollment with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
- Enrollment in honors and AP classes
Practice B
Employs diverse and effective instructional practices according to students’ identified abilities, readiness, interests, and learning profiles, to address a range of learning needs at all grade levels.

District Response: The RSSS AIG program utilizes research-based instructional practices to ensure the diversity of student abilities are addressed. A continuum of AIG services is provided K-12 across content area and grade level. In line with the district's directional focus, instructional practices are personalized and aligned to student readiness and interests.

Best practices for all AIG learners:
- Instruction by teachers who have knowledge of the characteristics of gifted learners
- Grouping by criteria established by the district, based on best practices
- Lessons with development and refinement of critical thinking skills embedded within
- Opportunities to explore and extend knowledge, based on individual student interests and aptitude

AIG area lead teachers and AIG classroom teachers are expected to utilize current evidence-based instructional practices that differentiate content, process and product. These practices include, but are not limited to:
- Socratic Seminar
- Problem Based Learning
- Genius Hour
- Maker Space
- Student Led Conferencing
- Compacting
- Blended Learning
- Flipped Classroom
- Subject integration
- Pre- and post- assessments
- Tiered assignments
- Flexible seating
- Interest Inventories to determine student learning styles, readiness and interest
- Learning Contracts
- Playlists
- Student Choice Boards
- Pre and post assessments

The RSSS AIG program offers a seven-month course of professional development, the Local Educators’ Endorsement Program (LEEP), to further prepare teachers to employ diverse and effective instructional practices. This course is open for any teacher that is or would like to be instructing or working with gifted students. Modules for LEEP are:
- What is Gifted? An Introduction to Gifted Education (characteristics and needs)
- Raising the Rigor in the AIG Classroom
- Instructional Practices for the AIG Classroom
- Planning Strategies for Teaching Gifted Students

Further, the LEEP program provides a network for AIG teachers to learn from, communicate with, and
share best practices to benefit our advanced learners.

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

**District Response:** The RSSS AIG program has a variety of evidence-based resources available to and being utilized by AIG teachers. A district level resource library includes books and materials supporting evidence-based best practices. Many resources include multiple copies and are available for check out to teachers working with gifted students. Book topics include brain-based learning, STEM, Challenge Math, gifted learning in the regular classroom, grouping strategies for gifted learners, and instructional design for gifted education. Additional research-based materials are site-based to ensure best practices for gifted learners are consistently utilized throughout the district.

Site-based resources include, but are not limited to:
- **Elementary Level:**
  - William and Mary ELA Units
  - Jacob's Ladder
  - Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS)
  - Junior Great Books
  - Michael Clay Thompson resources
  - Tin Man Press resources
  - Junior Great Books
  - Vocabulary Workshop
  - Singapore Math
  - Ian Byrd resources
  - Gifted Guru resources
  - Lego Serious Play
  - Marcy Cook Math and tiling cards

- **Middle School Level:**
  - William and Mary ELA units
  - Ian Byrd resources
  - Gifted Guru resources

- **High School Level:**
  - Honors curriculum
  - Advanced Placement Curriculum
  - Dual credit curriculum
  - Virtual curriculum

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

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System is fortunate to have a 1:1 technology program. All K-2 students have a specific iPad assigned to them for the year which is housed at school. All 3-8 students have a specific iPad checked out to them for the year that travels to and from school. All 9-12 students have a specific MacBook Air checked out to them for the year that travels to and from school. Therefore, all students in the Rowan-Salisbury School System have access to 21st century content and individual schools and teachers are able to select apps and other resources to better facilitate instruction based on individual student needs.

Because of this, teachers are able to focus on the Blended Learning model and implement the 4C’s of 21st century skills: Critical thinking, Communication, Collaboration and Creativity. AIG teachers personalize learning experiences for students and create learning experiences that promote the development of 21st century content and skills on an on-going basis. These experiences include, but are not limited to, problem-based learning, Socratic Seminars/discussions, and brain-based strategies. As a core practice in Rowan Salisbury School System and as a part of our District Directional Focus, we believe that an engaged learner is one who has mastered academic skills and can analyze and solve real-life problems; has the interpersonal skills to be problem-solvers, communicators, and leaders with civility, creativity, teamwork and work ethic; and is an inspired learner who has developed goals, understands their strengths and talents, knows what they love, what they want to do, and who they want to become.

The RSSS AIG program has implemented two new initiatives to directly align with the district's directional focus areas as a renewal system. The directional focus empowers 21st century readiness through the development of interpersonal skills, academic skills, and unique life goals.

-Digital Badging for student enrichment: The digital badging program provides students the opportunity to further personalize their learning experience and capitalize on their talents and interests. Students have choice in completing the digital badges and digital badges may be earned in a variety of topics. Beginning in the fall of 2019, students will have access to at least two digital badges with additional badges to follow each year. Topics for study include: leadership, creative writing and the great works of literature, entrepreneurship, research and field studies, performance, logic, creativity, STEM, global studies, etc. While allowing the student flexibility on pacing and environment for completion, these badges will encourage exploration through collaboration and communication with peers and promote critical thinking and creativity.

The Digital Badges for enrichment will consist of three general components:
-Online learning modules for deeper learning on the enrichment topic
-A field experience to expose students to their topic more in-depth and/or work with local experts in that field
-A public showcase of their student work

-K-12 Individual Student Portfolio: All students will participate in creating and/or adding to a digital student portfolio. Each year every K-12 student will document their personalized learning experiences and be given the opportunity to share the portfolio with peers, parents, teachers and community members. This process from learning to documenting to sharing will further foster the development of 21st content and skills.
Practice E
Uses on-going assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction and inform flexible grouping practices.

District Response: The Rowan Salisbury School System consistently uses data from varied sources, both formative and summative, to improve classroom instruction. Data is assessed and disaggregated on an on-going basis by district and site-based leaders to drive instructional decisions at the district and school levels. EVAAS growth data over the three-year period 2015-2018 showed no difference in growth based on AIG delivery model (cluster grouping, pull-out resource). Based on that EVAAS data, the delivery model beginning with the 2019/2020 school year will be a cluster grouping model based on NAGC best practices. AIG students will be clustered in groups of at least 5-8 students in reading and/or mathematics, based on AIG identification area(s). Instruction will be provided by a locally endorsed or state certified AIG classroom teacher. The classroom AIG teacher in collaboration with area and district lead teachers will continually evaluate new data as it becomes available. Data sources include, but are not limited to, EOG testing, EVAAS, Benchmark testing, NC Check Ins, MClass, conferencing and exit slips. Data will be disaggregated to support modifications to teaching strategies being used with classroom teachers serving gifted students. Modifications would include grouping strategies, differentiation, tiering assignments, creating leveled playlists and center rotations. The data is also used as a criterion for clustering students in the AIG classroom at both the elementary and middle school levels.

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

District Response: The Rowan-Salisbury School System recognizes the necessity of providing services that directly and indirectly address the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Services are provided to accomplish two things:

1.-Education of all stakeholders, including school personnel, parents and students, in recognizing the unique social and emotional needs of gifted learners. The AIG area leads will provide professional development to school personnel using the NCDPI Division of Advanced Learning and Gifted Education's Booster Shot series. These Booster Shots will also be used in presenting parent workshops on the social and emotional needs of gifted students. The AIG district lead teacher will facilitate the LEEP program, including one module that focuses on the unique characteristics of gifted learners and their social and emotional needs. Additionally, resources will be posted on the district's AIG webpage that are specific to the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

2.-Modifications to differentiation and instructional practices to meet the unique social and emotional needs of gifted learners. These include:
   -Bibliotherapy
   -Teaching a unit on giftedness
   -Utilizing the Social and Emotional Gifted Teen Series from Pieces of Learning
An online survey is completed biannually by students in grades 3-12 to measure and understand social and emotional learning. This program helps educators support students’ critical skills and mindsets for success in school and life.

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

**District Response:** Rowan Salisbury School System's AIG Nurturing Program is designed to promote the development of critical thinking skills in all students grades K-3, as well as further nurture those students with high learning potential in a smaller group environment. Area lead teachers are responsible for:
- Facilitating the K-3 Nurturing Program at their designated elementary schools
- Utilizing Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) to develop critical thinking skills in K-3 students
- Collecting anecdotal records to establish the need for further enrichment of high-potential K-3 students in a small group setting
- Supporting K-3 classroom teachers by providing resources and instructional ideas to support the development of critical thinking in the classroom setting
- Establishing a library of resources and units for K-3 classroom teachers to check out. Examples include logic puzzles, mind benders, analogies, tangrams, and pentominoes.

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

**District Response:** Rowan-Salisbury School System recognizes that collaboration among all staff is essential in the development of age- and ability-appropriate curriculum and instruction. Collaboration efforts include:
- AIG area and district lead teachers collaborate among themselves and with PLCs at schools to create resources for regular education teachers to extend and enrich the curriculum for advanced learners
- AIG district and area lead teachers collaborate with guidance counselors to develop suitable bibliotherapy book studies for elementary, middle and high school students to address the social and emotional needs unique to gifted learners.
- AIG district and area lead teachers collaborate with reading design coaches to adapt guided reading to be suitable for gifted leaners
- AIG district and area lead teachers collaborate with technology facilitators to increase the rigor using digital resources
- AIG district and area lead teachers collaborate on a district and school level with ELL and EC teachers to meet the needs of ELL and twice-exceptional gifted students
- During PLCs teachers utilize online modules in the district's iBook on rigor to support the differentiated needs of advanced learners
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: The Rowan Salisbury School System's AIG program includes clear expectations for documentation articulating the differentiated curriculum and instruction services of every gifted child to match their identified needs. As a district, RSSS understands this is necessary to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions. The document used is the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). Every AIG student will have a DEP initiated, reviewed, and finalized each academic year and should reflect the services that best align with the student's needs at that time. Meetings are held twice each year to initiate and review the DEP with parents. These meetings can be face-to-face (individually or a group setting), by phone, or by video conference. In the event none of those options are available, after multiple attempts have been made, teachers may use written correspondence and student transfer of communication to initiate and review DEP. Parent signatures are required at both times to signify information has been communicated and agreed upon. The DEP articulates the following pieces of information:
- areas of identification
- differentiated instructional practices and strategies to be used in the classroom
- measurable goals
- notation of meeting type
- record of consent through parent signature
- indication of continuing services on year-end finalization of record

In addition to the DEP, identification criteria for placement and student identification type will be entered into PowerSchool to ensure proper documentation is in place as students transfer from school to school or to another school system in North Carolina. This also provides documentation of identification to teacher, administrators and parents requiring confirmation of a student's identification area(s).

Beginning with the 2019/2020 school year, high school DEPs will transition from paper to a digital platform that will also include a comprehensive academic blueprint for AIG students.

I ideas for Strengthen the Standard: -Practice B: Develop additional local professional development modules on social/emotional learning and differentiation for gifted learners specific to grade level span (K-2, upper elementary, middle school, high school)
-Practice D: Increase badges offered through Digital Badging Program
-Practice E: Develop common instrument to highlight data pertinent to AIG students

Sources of Evidence: -AIG area lead teachers' weekly meeting notes
-AIG area lead teachers’ schedules
- AIG Local Educators' Endorsement Program (LEEP) Canvas Course site
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery student records
- District PD offerings
- AIG Digital Badging website
- Example student portfolio
- Presentations and notes from data meetings
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 Rowan-Salisbury School System employs an AIG-licensed educator as the AIG Coordinator for the district. The AIG Coordinator position was created to fully and exclusively oversee and lead the district's AIG program. Job responsibilities and duties of the AIG Coordinator include, but are not limited to:
- Provides leadership, supervision, and decision-making for AIG programs that support the strategic direction of RSSS
- Participates in professional development opportunities, including regional and other statewide meetings to support gifted education
- Writes and revises the local AIG plan
- Maintains accurate record keeping and reporting
- Monitors the implementation of all AIG services in accordance with the AIG plan and district strategic direction
- Oversees and makes decisions for coordination of procedures, schedules, project outcomes, documentation, and grants for AIG in compliance with federal, state and local requirements
- Monitors and directs the assessment requirements associated with the AIG program
- Oversees the referral, screening and identification processes to ensure equitable access for all students, including those who have historically been under-represented in AIG
- Coordinates activities relating to AIG
- Regularly visits schools and classrooms to assist instructional personnel
- Collects and analyzes data necessary to measure program success in enhancing student achievement and monitor the program of individual students. Evaluates long-range and short-term goals to determine program effectiveness and address needs.
- Reviews educational research related to improving student achievement and promotes research-based best practices for the K-12 instructional programs.
- Collaborates with the Executive Director of Programs, state coordinators, school principals and teachers to design and implement best instructional practices and resolve problems and compliance issues associated with AIG.
- Provides professional development and coordinates AIG PLCs
- Seeks opportunities to expand programs through grants and community partnerships
- Performs other related duties as assigned

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

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System recognizes the importance of gifted education. The district expectation is that every teacher working with gifted students holds his/her North Carolina AIG add-on licensure or has/is working towards successful completion of the district’s AIG Local Educators' Endorsement Program (LEEP).

Eight AIG area lead teachers are employed and trained to directly impact and support the services relative to the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of all gifted students. Each lead teacher primarily serves one of the six geographic zones of the district. Within each zone, responsibilities and duties vary by grade span and site needs. They include:

1. **Teacher Support/Professional Development K-12**
   - Provide mini PD during PLC on: social/emotional needs, signs of giftedness, strategies for challenging gifted learners, differentiation, increasing digital rigor, increasing depth and complexity, understanding RSSS referral/screening/identification
   - Provide PD on strategies and methods for gifted instruction. Examples might include: Socratic/Padeia seminar, William and Mary units, Guided math/reading, Enrichment, Extension, Acceleration.
   - Provide direct classroom support through model lessons and co-teaching.
   - Creates units and/or district-wide extension activities for classroom teachers to supplement K-3 Nurturing services

2. **K-3 Nurturing Services**
   - Grades K-2: Develop and implement lessons to focus on the development of critical thinking skills: evaluative thinking (judging), convergent thinking (deductive logic and analytical thinking), visual/spatial perception, and divergent thinking (inventive and creative thinking).
   - Grade 3: Develop and implement lessons to focus on the development of critical thinking skills and in preparation for aptitude screening (analogies, sequencing, patterns, relationships, logic and logic puzzles).

3. **AIG Screening and Identification**
   - Coordinates AIG screening and identification processes
   - Maintains confidentiality
   - Ensures fidelity in all paperwork, record keeping and processes within the AIG program

4. **Talent Development and Enrichment Programs**
   - Develops and coordinates other programming within communities: academic competitions, enrichment badging, PLCs

One middle/high AIG lead teacher is employed and trained to directly impact and support the services relative to the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of all gifted students in middle and high school. The responsibilities and duties include:

1. **Creating, updating and maintaining student academic blueprint in conjunction with the student, school counselors, and the parent**
2. **Serve as liaison with high school guidance counselor to support social and emotional needs of AIG students**
3. **Teacher support/PD 6-12 as outlined above**
4. **AIG Screening and Paperwork as outlined above**
5. **Talent Development and Enrichment as outlined above**
6. **Acceleration: Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, College and Career Promise, Advanced Placement**
AIG area and district lead teachers will collaborate with AIG classroom teachers through PLCs and professional development as well as co-teaching or through model lessons. Collaboration will be ongoing to ensure academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of AIG students are being met. Topics explored through PLCs and professional development include; research-based best practices, differentiation and tiering strategies for gifted learners, and personalized and blended learning.

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: The RowanSalisbury School System has developed strategic and purposeful professional development for all district personnel involved in gifted programming or services, including guidance counselors, administrators, regular education teachers, AIG teachers and support staff. These professional development opportunities, led by AIG area and lead teachers, are reviewed each year through teacher/staff surveys and modified or replaced according to results.

Professional development opportunities include:
-Rowan Salisbury Schools Local Educators' Endorsement Program (LEEP)
-Gifted Education Praxis study cohort
-School and district-based PD modules on social/emotional needs, gifted characteristics, and best practices for teaching gifted students
-District wide book study exploring topics of teacher interest. Examples include rigor, standards-based grading, tiering instruction, compacting content, differentiation strategies for gifted students.

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: It is the expectation that all AIG students in the Rowan-Salisbury School System will be taught by an AIG certified or locally endorsed teacher(s). Teachers will have successfully completed the North Carolina AIG add-on licensure through an accredited institution of higher education or by passing the Praxis Gifted Education Exam. Additionally, a district option for local endorsement is available to teachers. The Rowan Salisbury School System’s AIG Local Educators’ Endorsement Program (LEEP) was developed and implemented with the 2017/2018 school year and is reviewed and modified annually to reflect state and national trends in gifted education. It is the district expectation that any teacher working with AIG students, who does not hold required licensure/endorsement, will be enrolled in LEEP and working towards in-district endorsement.

RSSS AIG LEEP is a seven-month program consisting of face-to-face meeting, online interface, weekly readings/responses, and monthly assignments. State and national experts in gifted education are featured presenters at monthly meetings to complement modules of study. LEEP Modules include
the following areas for supporting gifted education:
-What is Gifted? An Introduction to Gifted Education (characteristics and needs)
- Raising the rigor in the AIG classroom
- Planning strategies for teaching gifted students
- Instructional practices for the AIG classroom
- Local, state and national programming

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

**District Response:** All professional development within the Rowan-Salisbury School System is based on the district's directional focus. District administrators and other key stakeholders collaborate to prioritize professional development offerings. Stakeholders include Title I, ELL, Exceptional Children, beginning teachers' program, reading design coaches, school counselors, technology facilitators, and AIG. By partnering with these stakeholders, professional development is planned and implemented to align with AIG program goals and ensure best practices in gifted education are considered. Specific professional development may include, but is not limited to:
- Increasing rigor in reading instruction
- Efficiently utilizing formative assessment to monitor and drive instructional practices
- Mentoring beginning AIG teachers
- Increasing AIG referrals and screening for ELL student population
- Creating small group counseling opportunities for gifted learners focusing on social and emotional needs

A book study will be conducted with AIG teachers each year to strengthen capacity in delivering AIG services.

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

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System recognizes that time must be provided for teachers to plan, implement and refine their teaching practices. Within the AIG program, teachers are given opportunities to refine their practice in various ways.
- AIG area and district lead teachers meet weekly to review data and plan lessons and materials for nurturing, PD and teacher support.
- AIG classroom teachers participate in weekly PLCs to reflect and plan, as well as participate in PD targeted to the needs of gifted learners.
- Opportunities to attend conferences on gifted education and share knowledge gained are provided
- Access to a learning library with resources, research-based strategies and exemplars
- Online modules open to all teachers with research based strategies to support gifted learners' needs
**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**
- Practice B: Add additional middle/high AIG lead teacher
- Practice C: Develop additional local professional development modules on social/emotional learning and differentiation for gifted learners specific to grade level span (K-2, upper elementary, middle school, high school)
- Practice C: Increase funding available for teachers to attend out-of-district PD offerings
- Practice F: Provide go and see opportunities for teachers to learn best practices in excelling districts

**Sources of Evidence:**
- Job descriptions of AIG Coordinator/district lead teacher, AIG area lead teachers
- Schedules of AIG area lead teachers
- Database of AIG classroom teachers
- AIG Local Educators' Endorsement Program (LEEP) Canvas site
- AIG district, school and teacher websites
- AIG site records review
- PD agendas and notes
- NCAGT conference agenda
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: The Rowan-Salisbury School System’s AIG program includes intentional and meaningful partnerships with parents and families to ensure the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs are met for our AIG students. These partnerships are reviewed annually through parent conferences and surveys to determine effectiveness and direction for improvement.
Communication with parents/families are prioritized at the district and school level by/through:
- Semi-annual conferences for initiating, reviewing and finalizing each AIG student’s Differentiated Education Plan.
- School-based parent informational meeting on AIG screening process held each spring and led by AIG area lead teachers.
- Semi-annual district led parent/family information sessions outlining AIG program and services led by AIG district lead teachers
- Annual program on the social and emotional needs of gifted students presented each fall in partnership with Duke TIP and district AIG leadership.
- AIG Showcase Nights are held semi-annually in each district area to allow students the opportunity to share highlights of learning experiences with parents, families, friends and the community
- RSSS district website is updated regularly and includes information on AIG programs and services, referral/screening/testing, as well as information of extra-curricular opportunities within and outside the district and links to national websites focusing on gifted education.
- The AIG Advisory Council advocacy group includes parent members and promotes initiatives to further improve communication efforts
- AIG personnel develop and facilitate various summer camps designed to meet the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted students.
- Collaboration between AIG and ELL to create avenues to specifically reach parents of ELL children to share and promote AIG programs and services
- Partner with Rowan Cabarrus Community College to inform parents and families of dual credit opportunities for AIG students

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: Information regarding the local AIG plan and policies relating to gifted education
is shared through multiple pathways including, but not limited to:
- AIG plan is housed on the Rowan-Salisbury School System's website with links to it on school websites
- Gifted Advisory Council meeting minutes posted on the Rowan-Salisbury School System's website
- Teacher Handbook~ digital resource outlining AIG plan, policies and procedures
- Parent Handbook~ available digitally and in print (on request); provides comprehensive information on gifted programming in the Rowan-Salisbury School System including referral, screening, paperwork, service delivery, resources, FAQs, glossary of terms, and contact information
- Parent/Family networking and information nights
- Connect-Ed telephone and Peachjar digital subscription communication services
- PLCs, principal and faculty meetings
- Translation services for meetings and literature
- AIG student and program accomplishments are relayed to local media through the Rowan-Salisbury School System's Public Information Officer
- Quarterly AIG Parent Newsletter
- Utilizes parent email listserv

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

District Response: The Rowan-Salisbury School System's AIG program is supported and monitored by the AIG Advisory Council, made up of parents, teachers, district and school-based leadership and support staff, local school board member and community members. This diverse group includes representation from all areas of the district and includes no fewer than 12 members. Duties of the council include:
- Advocates for all gifted students
- Reviews student growth and achievement data to monitor effective implementation of local AIG plan
- Ensures local AIG plan is aligned with district's directional focus

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: Rowan-Salisbury School System recognizes the diversity of its students and the need to respect cultural differences of all students. Parents and families, as well as the community at large, are informed of opportunities available for AIG students on an on-going basis in their native language through strategic use of district translation and interpretation services. Translation and
interpretation services encompass both spoken and written communication by providing:
- Translation services for AIG documents in Spanish, as well as for district fliers and brochures shared through Peachjar digital communication service.
- Spanish interpreters provided for parent meetings, AIG sponsored events, and Connect-Ed telephone service
Translation and interpretation in additional languages will be arranged as 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:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System's AIG program partners with community stakeholders to enhance AIG programs and standards. These partnerships include:
1. Partnership with UNCC to:
   - Serve on and optimize function of AIG Advisory Council
   - Advise on most up to date, research-based best practices
   - Assist in streamlining and maximizing effective district AIG programming and processes
   - Advise on development and improvement professional development offerings within the district
2. Networking with neighboring districts to discuss professional development, state initiatives in gifted education, and resource sharing
3. Enlisting area faith-based partners to support AIG programming with financial and facility support.
4. Partnerships with local businesses to create and implement AIG challenge opportunities
5. Partnership with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College to increase dual enrollment by AIG students
6. All digital badges will have community partners to include field experiences, experts in relevant fields and to showcase student work

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**
- Practice A: Hold information session about beginning a local PAGE chapter
- Practice A: partner with families to develop specific opportunities for gifted students
- Practice A: Develop parent Listserv
- Practice C: Develop bylaws for AIG Advisory Council
- Practice E: Develop sponsorships with local business to support academic competitions (Battle of the Books, Math Olympiad, Science Olympiad and/or Odyssey of the Mind)

**Sources of Evidence:**
- Gifted Advisory Council agendas and minutes
- AIG district website
- District, area and school-based informational meetings
- AIG Parent Handbook
- Connect-Ed and PeachJar communications
- Differentiated Education Plans
- Academic Blueprint
- Artifacts from AIG showcase nights
- Summer camp brochures
- Southwestern Regional Alliance AIG meeting agendas
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 Rowan-Salisbury School System’s AIG program forms and utilizes a committee of stakeholders consisting of teachers, parents, administrators, and community members to develop a plan in accordance with state legislation. The AIG Advisory Council surveys stakeholders, researches other district AIG plans, and collaborates with other districts to help strengthen the services provided to our students.

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

District Response: The current plan is available to all stakeholders both online and in print (on request). Processes and procedures are in place to facilitate the implementation of the program and oversee its effectiveness. Annually, there will be two meetings of the AIG Advisory Council to gather feedback from all stakeholders and present an annual review to the local board of education. Surveys of key stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators and students will be used to assess program effectiveness and gather input for possible improvements. Annual audits of records and processes will be completed by district AIG leadership including, but not limited to, the AIG coordinator and lead teachers. An annual onsite audit will be conducted at every school within the district to review each record to ensure alignment with PowerSchool headcount and completeness of documentation. Results of audits will be shared with teachers, administrators, and AIG advisory council and will be used to maintain district compliance district expectation and to make adjustments as necessary to ensure fidelity in program administration.

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: State funds are used to supplement the AIG program through employing highly qualified AIG certified teachers. All AIG teachers in the district are either certified, working on certification from a college or university, or enrolled or completed local AIG endorsement program. State funds are also used to purchase supplemental material and assist in providing professional
development for the latest trends/best practices in gifted education. State funds are also used to ensure updated testing materials for AIG screening and identification.

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

District Response: Testing and accountability reports are received yearly from the Director of Accountability and discussions are held between the Director of Accountability, Executive Director of Programs, AIG Coordinator and AIG district and area lead teachers to assist in the interpretation of data and how it may drive instruction. EOG, EVAAS, EOC, SAT, AP, ACT, Pre-ACT and drop-out data is then disaggregated by district, school, grade, teacher and AIG subgroups. Data teams, consisting of teachers and administration, exist at all district schools to analyze both summative and formative data on an ongoing basis. These teams are trained in the analysis and interpretation of data. Bi-annual meetings are held with school data teams and district leadership to review trends and propose changes to improve instruction and respond to student needs.

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: When surveyed on how effectively the district provides intentional and appropriate gifted support and services for under-represented populations, 60% of parent respondents were unsure or indicated the district was ineffective. The Rowan-Salisbury School System’s AIG program is aware of the need to monitor and improve representation, performance, and retention of under-represented populations. To improve representation we have introduced the use of school based norms in developing screening pools and an alternative pathway to identification that includes qualitative measures in addition to quantitative data. Formative and summative data each year is provided by the Director of Accountability and analyzed by the AIG Coordinator, lead teachers and school-based Data Teams to gauge the performance of under-represented populations receiving AIG services. Based on these analyses and trends revealed, practices are modified to improve student performance. No student is removed from the AIG program based on performance data, withdrawal from the program can only be initiated by parent request.

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

District Response: The Rowan-Salisbury School System’s Human Resources department maintains records reporting highly qualified status for all employees, including AIG staff. Both AIG add-on licensure and current participation or successful completion of the local AIG endorsement program
are monitored by the AIG department.

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

**District Response:** The Rowan-Salisbury School System's AIG program solicits feedback from all stakeholders on an annual basis using multiple surveys. In addition, the Rowan-Salisbury School System has an AIG Advisory Council made up of teachers, parents, administrators and community members that help develop and write the local AIG plan using the feedback gathered through stakeholder surveys. This council will continue to monitor and review the AIG plan throughout the next three years to ensure program standards are being followed.

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

**District Response:** Rowan-Salisbury School System's AIG program will utilize the following sources of data to review and revise the AIG plan programming annually. Sources include but are not limited to:
- stakeholder surveys
- demographic data
- annual site records review
- AIG advisory council
- school data team findings
- District data team findings

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

**District Response:** The AIG program creates a digital district AIG report card on a yearly basis to keep stakeholders up-to-date on plan and program updates. This digital report will show growth, stakeholder input and updates/changes to the plan.

**Practice J**
Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents and families through established written policies, procedures, and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving
District Response: Policies establishing and protecting the rights of students/parents/families are embedded in the AIG plan. These policies include safeguarding rights pertaining to identification, placement, reassessment, transfer procedures and grievance procedures. Copies of these policies are included in the AIG Plan and in the AIG Parent Handbook, both of which are posted on the district's AIG website and available in Spanish versions.

Procedures to Resolve Disagreements Regarding Gifted Procedures:

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

Procedure to Resolve Disagreement:

Step I. AIG Referral Team conference
--1. Parent/guardian may make a request in writing to the school principal requesting a conference with the local school AIG Referral Team.
--2. A conference with the parent/guardian and the local school AIG Referral Team will be granted within 10 calendar days of the request. Parent will be notified in writing within 5 calendar days. If the disagreement is not resolved at the local school AIG Referral Team conference, and the principal was in attendance, proceed to Step III.

Step II. Principal Conference
--1. Parent/guardian may make a written request for a conference with the principal to review the decision within 15 calendar days of the local school AIG Referral Team decision.
--2. Principal will review the recommendation with the chairperson of the local school AIG Referral Team.
--3. Principal will grant the conference within 10 calendar days of the request and make a written response to the parent within 5 calendar days of the conference.

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

Step III. Appeal to the Executive Director of Programs and AIG Coordinator
--1. Parent/guardian may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the Executive Director Program and AIG Coordinator within 15 calendar days of receiving the principal's response.
--2. The Executive Director of Programs and AIG Coordinator will review the grievance within 5 calendar days of receipt of the appeal.
--3. Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the appeal, the Executive Director of Programs and AIG Coordinator will schedule a conference concerning the appeal. A written summary of the appeal will be provided to the parent/guardian and principal within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

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

Step IV. Appeal to the Associate Superintendent or Superintendent
--1. Parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Executive Director of Programs to the Associate
Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:
- Practices A and B: Develop a multi-district team of AIG Coordinators who will meet at least twice per year to: read and critique AIG plans prior to submission for feedback; review compliance of AIG plans during plan cycle; share ideas for improvement

Sources of Evidence:
- AIG district website
- AIG Advisory Council minutes
- Site records review
- AIG headcount reconciliation
- AIG LEEP roster
- Invoices for materials purchased
- Notes from data meetings
- Parent, student, teacher, staff survey results
- Procedures to Resolve Disagreements within Rowan-Salisbury Schools
Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):

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