

Alexandria City Public Schools

Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

2012-2016

LEA#	101		
Superintendent	Dr. Morton Sherman, Ed.D.		
Mailing Address	2000 N. Beauregard St. Suite #203 Alexandria, VA 22311		
Gifted Education Coordinator/ Designee	Frances Donna Brearley	Title Address Telephone E-mail	Talented and Gifted Coordinator 2000 N. Beauregard St. #203 Alexandria, VA 22311 703-824-6912 Frances.brearley@acps.k12.va.us
Local School Board Chairperson	The Honorable Sheryl Gorsuch		
Date Approved by School Board			

Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

Each school board must review and approve a comprehensive plan for the education of the gifted. That plan must provide specific explanations of the school division's implementation of the *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students*. School divisions, working in conjunction with their school boards, should determine the appropriate timeframe of applicability for their division's gifted plan. Historically, division plans span five years. For the technical review, the DOE will request a division to send their most current, approved plan at the time of the review. The applicable timeframe for the division's plan does not need to correspond to the collection year of their technical review. Information on the DOE technical review schedule can be found at the gifted education homepage at the Virginia Department of Education's Web site http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/index.shtml

Section 8VAC20-40-60A of the *Regulations* states that, "Each school board shall submit a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students to the Department of Education (DOE) for technical review on a schedule determined by the Department. Each school board shall approve a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students that includes the components identified in these regulations." To assist school divisions and school boards in complying with section 8VAC20-40-60A, the Virginia Department of Education has created this template for developing Local Plans for the Education of the Gifted (revised January 2011). This public document addresses all aspects of local services for gifted students, including, but not limited to, the area(s) of giftedness the school division will serve, an operational definition of giftedness in the division and its supporting identification procedures, program services, professional development, curriculum development, and parent and community involvement.

Each section of the plan should address specific procedures and information for each area of giftedness identified by the school division. If a school division identifies students in general intellectual aptitude (GIA) and specific academic aptitude-mathematics (SAA-M), then the section for referral procedures, for example, should reflect the specific referral procedures for GIA and SAA-M. Throughout the local plan template, school divisions may need to copy and paste the drop down boxes, the insert text form fields, and any pertinent information for each area of giftedness identified by the division. In order to be able to 'choose an item' from a drop down box, simply right click on the highlighted 'choose an item' wording and the drop down arrow should appear on the right. Right clicking on the arrow will then allow the drop down box choices to appear. If certain procedures or policies apply to more than one area of giftedness, simply copy and paste the drop down selection box to reflect all areas of giftedness that are applicable to the procedures or policy.

Once the completed comprehensive local plan for the education of gifted students has been approved by the local school board, the plan shall be accessible to the public through the division's Web site. The division shall ensure that printed copies of the plan are available to citizens who do not have online access.

For more information, contact the Virginia Department of Education specialist for Governor's Schools and Gifted Education at 804-225-2884.

Alexandria City Public Schools

General Information regarding the Gifted Program in Alexandria City Public Schools

In section 8VAC20-40-40A of the *Regulations*, divisions are required to screen, refer, identify, and serve gifted students in at least general intellectual aptitude or specific academic aptitude. School divisions may identify and serve gifted students in career and technical aptitude or visual or performing arts aptitude, or both, at their discretion. On the chart below, please indicate all areas of giftedness that are identified and served within the division. Please copy and paste any additional rows as might be needed to address all areas in Specific Academic Aptitude and/or Visual and/or Performing Arts that are identified by the school division.

Area of Giftedness Identified by the Division	Grades Served
General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA)	K-3 (2012-13) Grades 4-12 phased in over subsequent years
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) - English	4-12
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) - Mathematics	4-12
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) - History and Social Science	4-12
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) - Science	4-12
Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)	
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Choose an item.	

(Please highlight, copy, and insert SAA and/or VPA rows as necessary to reflect all areas of giftedness served by the school division.)

Part I: Statement of Philosophy and Local Operational Definition of Giftedness for the School Division (8VAC20-40-60A.1)

A. Division Statement of Philosophy for the Education of Gifted Students

- All students will reach their maximum potential when they are taught a rigorous curriculum in a climate of high expectations by teachers who believe in their capacity to teach all learners.
- We have the responsibility to ensure that all students learn. Students are motivated to learn when the learning is relevant to them.
- Students achieve when their progress is supported, monitored, and celebrated.

Talented and gifted learners in the Alexandria City Public Schools receive educational services that provide opportunities directed to their unique needs. These services include a differentiated instructional program that teaches higher level thinking processes in a learning environment that is respectful of the uniqueness of the individual student and conducive to risk-taking and exploration of new ideas. A flexible instructional pace enables students to maximize their learning.

To meet the needs of the Talented and Gifted (TAG) students, the following goals are emphasized in the delivery of instruction:

1. TAG students learn a differentiated curriculum that addresses the particular learning characteristics and competency levels of the individual student. The curriculum includes opportunities for students to work at an accelerated pace, be exposed to higher level critical thinking strategies and sophisticated levels of content, and participate in creative activities that promote and develop originality and complex problem solving skills.
2. TAG students utilize a broad range of supplementary instructional materials that enhance and extend the standard curriculum. This exploration encourages students to become self-directed, independent learners. Independent research addresses students' interests, talents, readiness, and learning needs. Students develop and apply self-evaluation techniques to critique their own products.
3. TAG students are encouraged to accept and value their giftedness and to relate to their intellectual and age peers and the community at large in a positive manner. Students are given opportunities to collaborate with intellectual and age peers; share ideas through oral and visual presentations; develop appreciation for others' ideas by participating in cooperative learning activities; and learn to evaluate the work of their intellectual and age peers with respect, perspective, and constructive criticism.

B. Division Operational Definition of Giftedness

This section should include an operational definition for each area of giftedness (general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, visual and/or performing arts aptitude, or career and technical aptitude) identified and served by the division. An operational definition provides the concrete, observable, and/or measurable criteria for 'giftedness' used by the division in the identification process. Such a definition might include a listing of the evidence of student readiness for gifted educational services, e.g. evidence of gifted behaviors as determined by a valid and reliable teacher checklist or evidence of superior academic performance based on a norm-referenced assessment of aptitude.

ACPS Talented and Gifted (TAG) students, K-12, demonstrate or have the potential to achieve high levels of accomplishment that needs to be recognized and acknowledged through rigorous curriculum and other instructional experiences. Acknowledging the developmental stages of giftedness, General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) and Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) identification and services will be available.

General Intellectual Ability is defined as students who demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate superior reasoning; persistent intellectual curiosity, advanced use of language; exceptional problem solving; rapid acquisition and mastery of facts, concepts, and principals; and creative and imaginative expression across a broad range of intellectual disciplines beyond their age level peers. Beginning in K-3, students will be identified through the use of norm-referenced assessments of aptitude and gifted behaviors such as captured in the norm referenced, *Gifted Rating Scales*. In addition student work products, interviews and classroom performance data will be used to help identify those students exhibiting superior reasoning, advanced thinking, problem solving and superior academic performance. In grades 4-8, for students who exhibit superior performance and ability in specific subjects such as reading, mathematics, science and social studies, in addition to the data referenced above, a standardized achievement test will be included.

Part II: Program Goals and Objectives (8VAC20-40-60A.2)

This section should include goals and objectives for the school division's gifted education program. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

**A. Identification:
2012-2013**

- 1) Begin to identify students in grade K-3 in General Intellectual Aptitude, allowing current students who have Specific Academic Aptitude identification to continue receiving services. Grades 4-12 will continue identification in Specific Academic Aptitude for reading, math, science and social studies.
- 2) Visual-Performing Arts identification will continue for those currently identified students. However, GIA will include experiences to develop abilities and talents in the arts, sciences and humanities as we phase out Visual and Performing Arts. These experiences will involve making connections among these disciplines to showcase the integration and application of content in deep and complex ways.
- 3) Reduce the disproportionality of Black, Hispanic and low socio-economic TAG identified students as compared to White students by one-sixth each year by using multiple criteria and best practices in identifying students from underrepresented populations.
- 4) Broaden the screening process through whole grade level screening in two grade levels K-5 using a standardized ability test to help identify potential in students who might not otherwise be referred
- 5) Simplify and streamline the placement process so as to best utilize the resources available.
- 6) Identify students with potential through the establishment of a talent pool/nurturing program in the early elementary years at targeted schools.

2013-2016

- 1) Phase-in General Intellectual Aptitude for grades 4-12 each subsequent year.
- 2) Use identification data to review and revise procedures for identifying students in both General Intellectual and Specific Academic Aptitude K-12.

B. Delivery of Services:

Enhance the delivery of services in each of the following areas:

- 1) K-3 Talent/Nurturing Pool- modeled after *Young Scholars Program*, Fairfax County
Supporting an approach to finding and serving young students at targeted schools to seek out and support the development of potential from underrepresented populations

- 2) K-12 General Intellectual Aptitude
Providing gifted students with instruction experiences within their general education classroom designed to enrich and extend the curriculum. These experiences will involve making connections among the arts, sciences and humanities to showcase the integration and application of content in deep and complex ways.

- 3) K-12 Specific Academic Aptitudes
Language Arts and Mathematics
Grades K-3 services for previously identified students will continue along the continuum for those students, phasing out with each successive year. These services are provided through individual differentiated education plans (DEP) in the general education classroom with support and resources for general education teachers to create and implement instructional activities which enhance and enrich topics of student interest and superior performance.

Grades 4-5 services are provided through separate classes taught by teachers with gifted endorsement.

Note: Students in schools implementing SFA will receive reading instruction at their instructional level with either a general education/TAG teacher. They will receive writing instruction with a TAG teacher and supplemental services for the TAG teacher as needed on an individual basis.

Grades 6-8 services provided through a cluster model in open enrollment Honors level courses with teachers trained in gifted education strategies.

Grades 9-12 services are provided through Honors, AP and dual enrollment opportunities.

Science and Social Studies

Grades K-3 services for previously identified students will continue along the continuum for those students, phasing out with each successive year. These services are provided through individual differentiated education plans (DEP) in the general education classroom with support and resources for general

Alexandria City Public Schools

education teachers to create and implement instructional activities which enhance and enrich topics of student interest and superior performance.

Grades 4-5 services provided through individual differentiated education plans (DEP) in the general education classroom with support and resources for general education teachers to create and implement instructional activities which enhance and enrich topics of student interest and superior performance.

Grades 6-8 services provided through a cluster model in open enrollment Honors level courses with teachers trained in gifted education strategies.

Grades 9-12 services are provided through Honors, AP and dual enrollment opportunities.

Curriculum and Instruction:

To review and revise the existing TAG curriculum at all grade levels to ensure differentiation of both instruction and assessment that meets the needs of all students in the division who are eligible for TAG services. This includes the development and implementation of a separate middle school Honors curriculum reflecting principles of the Middle Years International Baccalaureate Programme and best practices in gifted education curriculum design.

To vertically align K-12 TAG curriculum to improve continuity of instruction

C. Professional Development:

To provide professional development to all teachers within the Division emphasizing cultural competency, the characteristics and special needs of gifted students.

To provide a comprehensive professional development program that supports teachers in the development and implementation of differentiated instruction for students identified for gifted services, including specialized training for honors teachers in gifted education strategies.

To build a cadre of instructors with TAG endorsement and/or significant experience in working with students identified for gifted services in K-12.

D. Equitable Representation of Students:

To reduce the disproportionality within the TAG program by one-sixth each year within the Hispanic, Black and low socio-economic populations through

- 1) The use of research –based practices in the identification of underrepresented populations such as the use of alternative and culturally sensitive assessments, providing cultural competency training for teachers and a commitment to long-term support.
- 2) The implementation of a K-3 Talent Pool and nurturing program designed for targeted schools to seek out potential and provide early intervention and support.
- 3) Provide whole grade level screening with standardized measures at 2 grade levels in K-5
- 4) Involve and communicate with families of underrepresented populations in their communities and native language materials

Parent and Community Involvement:

To promote an understanding of the need for gifted education and differentiation by involving parents and the community with TAG program communications, opportunities, and support, with a special focus on special populations.

Part III: Screening, Referral, Identification, and Service Procedures

A. Screening Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section should provide screening procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures should include the annual review of student data used to create a pool of potential candidates for further assessment. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

Screening Procedures for Specific Academic Aptitude and General Intellectual Aptitude

Grades K-8

All Alexandria City Public Schools students will be screened annually using multiple criteria including local data, including teacher ratings, classroom performance and local achievement data. Whole grade level screening with a nationally standardized abilities test will take place in the fall of 1st grade (beginning in 2012) and fall of 3rd grade (beginning in 2013). A spreadsheet of student profiles will be created to assist in creating a pool of candidates for further evaluation. In addition students referred through teacher, parent/legal guardian, and/or student referrals are included.

Note: Training on the identification of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, and/or underrepresented populations including ELL and Special Education students for TAG services is provided at the beginning of each school year.

In addition, Parent/Guardian TAG Information Nights are held at each school to inform parents about the program and referral and identification procedures. Special efforts are made to reach parents/guardians of students who are economically disadvantaged, culturally diverse, ELL or who have a disability. Translators are provided when needed.

Grades 9-12

Throughout the school year, teachers in grades 9-12 and counselors use past performance in the classroom, scores on standardized tests, and advanced scores on Standards of Learning tests to create a pool of candidates who would benefit from gifted services in specific academic aptitude such as instruction in the Honors and Advanced Placement classes.

Alexandria City Public Schools

The following chart summarizes the screening activities:

Month/s	Activity	Contact Person	Person Responsible
August- September	Teacher training on characteristics of gifted students including those from underrepresented populations.	TAG Teacher(s)/TAG Designee	TAG Coordinator
August 1- September 30 th	Review previous Spring Advanced SOL scores, SRI, SMI and year end grade averages K-12	Monitoring and Evaluation Services/TAG Designee	TAG Designee
October 1 to November 30 th	Parent/Guardian TAG Information Night at each school	TAG Designee announces through K-12 PTA meetings, school newsletters	TAG Designee, Designated TAG Teacher, Principal
October 1-30 th	Administer 1 st gr ability test	Monitoring and Evaluation Services	TAG Coordinator
November 1-30 th (beginning Fall 2013)	Administer 3 rd gr ability test	Monitoring and Evaluation Services	TAG Coordinator
December – January 31 st	Review 1 st and 3 rd gr ability test data	TAG Designee/TAG teacher	TAG Designee
Middle of March –May 30 th	Review of classroom performance, SRI, SMI, PSAT, SAT, & SOLs gr. K-12	Teachers, Monitoring and Evaluation, Counseling Services	Teachers, TAG Designees, Counselors, Principal

Referral Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section provides referral procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures shall permit referrals from parents or legal guardians, teachers, professionals, students, peers, self, or others. These procedures should include to whom referrals are submitted and the timeline for the division to provide parents/guardians with the results of the eligibility process. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

Referral procedures for Specific Academic Aptitude and General Intellectual Aptitude

Alexandria City Public Schools conducts an active search for students who should be evaluated for identification for gifted and talented services in general and specific academic aptitude. Screening is conducted on a yearly basis.

Automatic referrals can result when a student has an ability test score or the combination of two other pieces of data which indicate a need for further evaluation. These data sources could be from grade level screening assessments such as whole grade level ability testing, school-based benchmarking assessments given at specific points in the year (i.e. Criterion-referenced tests (CRT), Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI)), grades, or work samples showing superior level accomplishment or potential. Referrals from classroom teachers, school personnel, community members, parents, peers, or self-referrals are accepted twice a year in the Fall and Spring. Referrals are also solicited once a year through school newsletters and/or faculty meetings, memoranda, and parent meetings.

Classroom teachers, other school staff, peers, parents, community members and students may refer a student for talented and gifted services **in one or more areas** (General Intellectual Aptitude grades K-3 or specific academic aptitude in language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies in grades 4-12) through the following steps:

- 1) Complete the *Referral of Student for Talented and Gifted Services* form. A referral form may be requested from a school's TAG Designee and can also be accessed online at www.acps.k12.va.us/tag/.
- 2) Upon completion, the referral form is given to the school TAG Designee.
- 3) Within 10 school days of receiving a referral form, the TAG Designee notifies parents with the *Parent Notification Letter* and the *Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation*.
- 4) Following receipt of the *Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation*, the school has 45 days to evaluate the student and determine eligibility at an Identification/Placement Committee Meeting.

Alexandria City Public Schools

- 5) Within 10 school days following the Identification/Placement Committee meeting, parents are notified of the decision of the Identification/Placement Committee using *Not Eligible for TAG Services* letter or *Eligible for TAG Services* letter.
- 6) Once a student has been referred for talented and gifted services, he/she will proceed completely through the eligibility process.

Students may be referred for evaluation for talented and gifted services any time during the school year from the first day of the school to the 90th day of school (allows eligibility process to be completed by end of the school year). Students may be referred in General Intellectual Aptitude or a specific academic area **only once** during the academic school year, however, they may be referred within the same academic school year for a **different academic area**. If students are found ineligible for gifted services in a specific area, they may be referred the following school year for the same area.

Transfer students previously identified in another school division must go through the referral process. However, appropriate data from the previous school division may be used by the Identification/Placement Committee to make a decision about eligibility.

No one criterion or measure may deny or ensure a student's eligibility for gifted services. Teachers are encouraged to look at different behaviors that potentially gifted students from a variety of backgrounds typically display.

Alexandria City Public Schools

Timeline of Referral Process for GIA and SAA

Activity	Person Responsible	Time/Days
Solicit referrals through screening, review of existing data, K-12	Classroom teachers, Resource teachers, other school staff	30 days in Fall and Spring
Solicit referrals through Parent and Community Announcements- newsletters, Parent Information Nights, memos	TAG Designee, TAG Teacher, TAG Coordinator	October, November
Administration of 1 st gr ability test	TAG Coordinator Accountability & Testing	October
Administration 3 rd grade CogAT	TAG Coordinator Accountability & Testing	November
Standardized testing results reviewed for automatic referral	TAG Designees	December
<i>Referral of Student for Talented and Gifted Services</i> submitted to TAG Designee	Teachers, School staff, Parents, Peers, Student, self, Community members	1st day of school to 90 th day of school
<i>Parent Notification Letter and Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation</i> sent to parents	TAG Designee	Within 10 days from receipt of <i>Referral of Student for Talented and Gifted Services</i>
Identification/Placement Committee Meeting decision	TAG Designee, TAG teacher, Curriculum Specialist, referring or current teacher/s in area/s referred	Within 45 days from receipt of <i>Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation</i>
<i>Notification of Eligibility and Permission to Place</i> form sent to parents	TAG Designee	Within 10 days from Identification/Placement Committee Meeting decision

C. Identification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section provides identification procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. Identification in GIA programs shall be K-12 and must include a nationally norm-referenced aptitude test. Identification in SAA programs shall be K-12 or as assessment instruments exist to support identification, and must include either a nationally norm-referenced aptitude or achievement test. Identification in CTA and VPA programs shall be at the discretion of the school division. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

1. Multiple Criteria Listing (8 VAC 20-40-40D.3)

This section includes the three or more criteria that are used by the division to develop a profile or composite for each student being considered. This listing of criteria should be repeated for each area of giftedness identified by the division. Please copy and paste the section below to support all identified areas of giftedness. NOTE: No single instrument, score, or criterion may be used to exclude or include a child for eligibility. Selection of either item 5a or 5b or both counts as a single criteria.

General Intellectual Aptitude

- 1. Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio
- 2. Record of observation of in-class behavior
- 3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires
- 4. Individual interview
- 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s) (must be included for GIA)
and/or
- 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
- 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.)
- 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures

Specify: Parent/guardian questionnaire and Kindergarten Observation form

Note: Norm-referenced aptitude test scores, grades and rating scales are used as a basis to determine if any additional criteria are needed and appropriate for placement. Special consideration is given to ELL, twice-exceptional and low socio-economic students to ensure culturally fair assessment. Whenever possible, the use of assessments in Spanish will be provided.

Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

- 1. Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio
- 2. Record of observation of in-class behavior (as needed)
- 3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires (as needed)
- 4. Individual interview (as needed)
- 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s) (must be included for GIA)
and/or
- 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
- 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.)
- 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures (as needed)

Specify: Parent/guardian questionnaire

Note: Norm-referenced aptitude and /or achievement tests data, grades and student products will be initially reviewed to determine if any additional criteria from the above list is needed and appropriate for placement. Special consideration is given to ELL, twice-exceptional and low socio-economic students to ensure culturally fair assessment. Whenever possible, the use of assessments in Spanish will be provided.

D. Placement Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section provides procedures for the placement of gifted students in each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures include information about the identification and placement committee.

1. Identification/Placement Committee (8VAC 20-40-40D)

- a. This section includes the **number** of persons comprising the Identification/Placement Committee by category.

Specific Academic Aptitude and General Intellectual Aptitude

- 1 Classroom Teacher(s)
- 1 Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s)
- 1 Counselor(s) (as needed)
- 1 School Psychologist(s) or
- 1 Assessment Specialist(s) (as needed)
- 1 Principal(s) or Designee(s)
- Gifted Education Coordinator
- 1 Other(s) Specify: Parents may attend as non-voting members. In addition other staff members, such as special education and ELL teachers, are included as appropriate.

- b. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

This section indicates the type of Identification/Placement Committee the division uses.

- School-level Division-level

2. Eligibility (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section includes a chart detailing all criteria that could be considered in the identification process for a specific area of giftedness identified by the division. A description of the eligibility process used by the committee to make decisions regarding eligibility for services shall follow the chart. It includes a timeline for making eligibility decisions within 45 instructional days of the school division's receipt of the parent's(s') or legal guardian's(s') consent for assessment.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Measure	Administered/ Completed by	Scored by	Provided to the committee by
Group Norm-reference Ability test 1 st gr/3 rd gr whole grade level	Accountability Office	Publishing Company	Accountability Office
Individual or group norm-referenced test	School Psychologist	School Psychologist	TAG Designee/School Psychologist
Student products, performance or portfolio	Classroom Teacher	Selection Committee/ TAG teacher or Designee	TAG Designee
Record of in-class behavior/ Gifted Rating Scales	Classroom Teacher	TAG Designee	TAG Designee
Individual interview	TAG Coordinator	TAG Coordinator	TAG Coordinator
Record of previous achievement	Classroom Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Classroom Teacher
Parent Questionnaire	Parent	TAG Designee	TAG Designee

In the fall, referrals are accepted by the TAG Designee from teachers, school staff, parents, students, and community members. The process continues in this manner:

- 1) Within 10 days, the following letters are mailed to parents of referred students:
 Parent Notification of Referral for Talented and Gifted Service, Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Evaluation and Parent Information Form for the Talented and Gifted Program and, for students in kindergarten only, the Parent Questionnaire.

- 2) When the school receives the signed Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Evaluation form from the parents, the school has 45 school days to complete the eligibility assessment, convene an Identification/Placement Committee, and make a decision.

Alexandria City Public Schools

The TAG Designee at each school distributes checklists and work samples (if needed) to teachers of referred students and gathers information on grades, standardized test scores, completed *Gifted Rating Scales*, and any other information need to make an informed decision on appropriate placement for the referred students. Teachers have the referred students select class completed work samples or complete the provided work samples in their class. Every student is assessed in ability and achievement in the referred subject area with norm-referenced tests administered by the school psychologist or a trained school staff member.

Eligibility is determined according to the established criteria through a review of all collected data by the individual school's Identification/Placement .The *Student Eligibility Profile* for students in grades K-12 includes:

- 1) an ability test score (% and quotient);
- 2) the score from the *Gifted Rating Scale*;
- 3) an assessment of student products scored with a rubric designed for assessing work of gifted students; and
- 4) classroom performance, as indicated by grades (1-12) or Kindergarten Observation Form (K).

The profile may also include a classroom observation, student interview, or other standardized test scores when needed, as determined by the Identification/Placement Committee.

Student performance on each assessment is plotted on the *Student Eligibility Profile* according to percentiles, quotients, and total raw scores. To be placed in the TAG program, students must demonstrate superior ability in the referred subject area by scoring in the superior range on three of the assessments (including 1 standardized measure).

Please note: All students will be assessed for the standardized testing, grades and *Gifted Rating Scales* on the eligibility profile. Other criteria will be considered if needed. Additional measures of ability may be administered to special education students, ELL students, and others (as determined by the Identification/Placement Committee only) when evidence exists that a score or type of assessment would be invalid for a particular student. School Psychologists may select valid and reliable assessments to meet individual needs.

Once all of the information in the profile has been reviewed, the committee makes one of three decisions: 1) the student is eligible for TAG services; 2) the student is not eligible for TAG services; 3) more information is needed to make a decision and the committee will reconvene at a later date. Parents/guardians who are in attendance are told of the committee's placement decision at the meeting. All parents/guardians are officially notified of the decision by letter.

For all students found eligible for gifted education services, parental permission is requested and delivery of services begins at the beginning of the quarter following the return of the *Parent Notification Form for Talented and Gifted Services* or a date decided on by the committee. Provision of services for students is subject to continuous review. If a student is ineligible for services, the reasons for ineligibility and the steps for filing an appeal are communicated to the parent.

Alexandria City Public Schools

The following measures are considered in making an eligibility decision for General Intellectual Aptitude services. Percentiles may be determined by national or local norms, as appropriate.

Measure	Rating	GRADES
1. Standardized Ability Tests	96%ile	K-12
1. Product Samples, performance or portfolio	Superior (18-20 pts)	K-12
2. Record of in-class behavior	Superior (1-20 pts.)	K-12
3. Gifted Rating Scales Intellectual, Creative, Leadership or Motivation scales	90%ile	K-12
4. Observation	Superior	K-12
5. Interview	Superior	K-12
6. Grade Averages	E	1-2
	A	3-12
Talented & Gifted Observation Scale	Superior	K
7. Other valid and reliable measures	Superior	K-12

Specific Academic Aptitude - English Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

Measure	Administered/ Completed by	Scored by	Provided to the committee by
Individual or group Norm-reference Ability test 1 st gr/3 rd gr	Accountability Office	Publishing Company	Accountability Office
Individual or group Norm-referenced Achievement Test for select areas of strength	School Psychologist	School Psychologist	School Psychologist
Student products, performance or portfolio	Classroom Teacher	Selection Committee/ TAG teacher or Designee	TAG Designee
Record of in-class behavior/ Gifted Rating Scales	Classroom Teacher	TAG Designee	TAG Designee
Individual interview	TAG Coordinator	TAG Coordinator	TAG Coordinator
Record of previous achievement	Classroom Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Classroom Teacher
Parent Questionnaire	Parent	TAG Designee	TAG Designee

In the fall, referrals are accepted by the TAG Designee from teachers, school staff, parents, students, and community members. The process continues in this manner:

- 3) Within 10 days, the Parent Notification of Referral for Talented and Gifted Services, Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Evaluation, Parent Information Form for the Talented and Gifted Program, and, for students in kindergarten only, the Parent Questionnaire are mailed to parents of referred students.
- 4) When the school receives the signed Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Evaluation form from the parents, the school has 45 school days to complete the eligibility assessment, convene an Identification/Placement Committee, and make a decision.

The TAG Designee at each school distributes checklists and work samples (if needed) to teachers of referred students and gathers information on grades, standardized test scores, completed *Gifted Rating Scales*, and any other information need to make an informed decision on appropriate placement for the referred students. Teachers have the referred students select class completed work samples or complete the provided work samples in their class. Every student is assessed in ability and achievement in the referred subject area with norm-referenced tests administered by the school psychologist or a trained school staff member.

Eligibility is determined according to the established criteria through a review of all collected data by the individual school's Identification/Placement Committee. The *Student Eligibility Profile* for students in grades K-12 includes:

- 1) an ability test score (% and quotient);
- 2) and/or an achievement test score (% and quotient) in the referred subject;
- 3) the score from the *Gifted Rating Scale (if needed)*;
- 4) an assessment of student products scored with a rubric designed for assessing work of gifted students; and
- 5) classroom performance, as indicated by grades (1-12) or Kindergarten Observation Form (K). The profile may also include a classroom observation, student interview, or other standardized test scores when needed, as determined by the Identification/Placement Committee.

Student performance on each assessment is plotted on the *Student Eligibility Profile* according to percentiles, quotients, and total raw scores. To be placed in the TAG program, students must demonstrate superior ability in the referred subject area by scoring in the superior range on three of the assessments (including 1 standardized measure).

Please note: All students will be assessed for the standardized testing, grades and *Gifted Rating Scales* on the eligibility profile. Other criteria will be considered if needed. Additional measures of achievement or ability may be administered to special education students, ELL students, and others (as determined by the Identification/Placement Committee only) when evidence exists that a score or type of assessment would be invalid for a particular student. School Psychologists may select valid and reliable assessments to meet individual needs.

Once all of the information in the profile has been reviewed, the committee makes one of three decisions: 1) the student is eligible for TAG services; 2) the student is not eligible for TAG services; 3) more information is needed to make a decision and the committee will reconvene at a later date. Parents/guardians who are in attendance are told of the committee's placement decision at the meeting. All parents/guardians are officially notified of the decision by letter.

For all students found eligible for gifted education services, parental permission is requested and delivery of services begins at the beginning of the quarter following the return of the *Parent Notification Form for Talented and Gifted Services* or a date decided on by the committee. Provision of services for students is subject to continuous review. If a student is ineligible for services, the reasons for ineligibility and the steps for filing an appeal are communicated to the parent.

Alexandria City Public Schools

The following measures are considered in making an eligibility decision for Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) services. Percentiles may be determined by national or local norms, as appropriate.

Measure	Rating	GRADES
1. Standardized Ability Tests (required for GIA)	96%ile	K-12
2. Standardized Achievement Tests (required for SAA- math) Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI)	500 600 800 1000 1100 1200	3 4 5 6 7 8
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) Mathematics	96%ile	4-12
Standardized Achievement Tests (required for SAA- reading) Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)	875 975 1140 1185 1235 1280	3 4 5 6 7 8
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)-Reading	96 %ile	9-12
Standardized Achievement Tests (required for SAA- science & social studies) Iowa Test of Basic Skills	96%ile	3-12
3. Product Samples, performance or portfolio	Superior (18-20 pts)	K-12
4. Record of in-class behavior	Superior (1-20 pts.)	K-12
5. Gifted Rating Scales Academic or Intellectual or Motivation scales	90%ile	K-12
6. Observation	Superior	K-12
7. Interview	Superior	K-12
8. Grade Averages	E	1-2
	A	3-12
9. Talented & Gifted Observation Scale	Superior	K
10. Other valid and reliable measures	Superior	K-12

Alexandria City Public Schools

Timeline

Activity	Person Responsible	Time/Days
Solicit referrals through screening , K-5	Classroom teachers, Resource teachers, other school staff	30 days in Fall and Winter
Solicit referrals through screening, 6-12	Classroom teachers, other school staff	Ongoing
Solicit referrals through Parent and Community Announcements- newsletters, Parent Information Nights, memos	TAG Designee, TAG Teacher, TAG Coordinator	October, November
<i>Referral of Student for Talented and Gifted Services</i> submitted to TAG Designee	Teachers, School staff, Parents, Peers, Student, self, Community members	1st day of school to the 90th day of school
<i>Parent Notification Letter and Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation</i> sent to parents	TAG Designee	Within 10 days from receipt of <i>Referral of Student for Talented and Gifted Services</i>
Identification/Placement Committee Meeting decision	TAG Designee, TAG teacher, Curriculum Specialist, referring or current teacher/s in area/s referred	Within 45 days from receipt of <i>Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation</i>
<i>Notification of Eligibility and Permission to Place</i> form sent to parents	TAG Designee	Within 10 days from Identification/Placement Committee Meeting decision

3. Determination of Services (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section describes the process of determining appropriate educational services for identified K-12 students.

General Intellectual Aptitude

ACPS provides GIA services through in classroom enrichment. Identified students will be clustered together in groups of 5-7 within their general education classroom. These students will then be provided instructional experiences designed to enrich and extend the curriculum. These experiences will involve making connections among the arts, sciences and humanities to showcase the integration and application of content in deep and complex ways.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

ACPS offers gifted services in specific academic aptitude through several programming options: differentiation of instruction in general education classes; self-contained classes by grade and subject area; and honors classes, advanced placement classes and dual enrollment. For each student found eligible for gifted services in specific academic aptitude, the Identification/Placement Committee determines services for the student within existing program options based on the student's eligibility profile.

In grades kindergarten through three, all students found eligible for gifted services prior to August 2012 in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies receive those services within the general education classroom through a *Differentiated Education Plan*. These plans are developed through a consultation/collaboration model with the designated TAG teacher at each building and are monitored by the TAG Designee and TAG Coordinator. The plans are based on the strengths of the learner, assessed during the eligibility process, and provide a modified curriculum of enrichment, differentiation, and acceleration in math, language arts, social studies and/or science. Electronic copies of the DEP are submitted to and monitored by the TAG Coordinator each quarter. Parents are given a copy and updated on the progress each quarter from the classroom teacher.

In grades four and five all students found eligible for gifted services in math and/or language arts receive instruction with a designated TAG teacher in a self-contained class. The curricula are modified from the standard curricula and contain content and activities that are accelerated, enriched, and differentiated.

Gifted services in science and social studies continue to be provided through a *Differentiated Education Plan* within the general education classroom in grades four and five, then in honors classes in grades six through nine. Electronic copies of the DEP are submitted to and monitored by the TAG Coordinator each quarter. Parents are given a copy and updated on the progress each quarter from the classroom teacher.

Honors, advanced placement and dual enrollment courses provide gifted services to eligible students in grades 10-12.

High school students (9-12), who are identified eligible for gifted services, are offered opportunities which foster the development of their interests and abilities. Administrative and guidance department staff work cooperatively to design appropriate educational experiences and to inform parents and students of courses, co-curricular, and extra-curricular enrichment opportunities that are particularly suitable to the student's needs. They assist students in planning, including scholarship opportunities, and provide one-on-one counseling with students as appropriate. Honors, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment courses are offered in numerous academic areas at the high school level.

Differentiated instruction in grades six through 12 is monitored by the school division. The TAG Coordinator utilizes the *TAG Observation Form* and *Program Monitoring Form* to ensure the appropriate implementation of differentiated curriculum and instruction for TAG identified students.

Part IV: Notification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.4)

This section includes the procedures used for (a) notifying parents/guardians when the individual identification process is initiated; (b) requesting permission for individual testing and/or collection of additional information; (c) requesting permission for provision of appropriate service options; and, (d) parents/guardians wishing to file an appeal of the identification outcome, change in placement, or exit decision. Any procedural differences pertaining to a specific area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

General Intellectual Aptitude and Specific Academic Aptitude

The TAG Designee in each school is responsible for all forms and letters to parents/guardians. The Designee is the contact person for the entire identification process.

Once a student has been referred for formal assessment, through the referral process or through transfer, parents are notified by letter within 10 school days. The parent/guardian is asked to complete the *Parent Information Form*, and for parents of Kindergarten students, the *Parent Questionnaire*, about the student and a permission form, *Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation*, allowing their child to be administered the necessary standardized tests.

Parents/guardians are invited by the TAG Designee to attend the Identification/Placement Committee's eligibility meeting to be held within 45 school days of receipt of the *Written Permission for Talented and Gifted Services Evaluation* form.

Alexandria City Public Schools

The Identification/Placement Committee's placement decision is communicated to the parents and school principal by the TAG Designee within 10 school days of the decision by sending home the *Eligible/Not Eligible for TAG Services* form. If the student is found eligible, the parent/guardian is required to sign a *Parent Notification Form for Talented and Gifted Services* which provides parental permission to place the child in the program. If, at any time, parents/guardians have any questions about placement decisions, they may contact the principal/TAG Designee at their school building. If a student is ineligible for services, the reasons for ineligibility and the steps for filing an appeal are communicated to the parent.

Parents/guardians may appeal within 10 instructional days after being informed of an initial placement decision of the Identification/Placement Committee, or of a decision regarding a change in placement by the TAG Coordinator. Appeal information is included in the letter which communicates any TAG decision. The parents/guardians submit a written statement to the TAG Coordinator requesting a review of the decision and citing their reasons for believing that the committee decision was in error. All parents/guardians may submit any additional data and/or information they may have relevant to their child's eligibility for gifted services as part of the appeal.

An appeal conference is held within 25 school days of the request for an appeal. The following people are invited to attend:

- The TAG Coordinator (facilitates meeting—non-voting member)
- A classroom teacher (preferably from the same grade as the student)
- A designated TAG teacher
- A principal
- A guidance counselor
- A school psychologist
- Parent(s) or guardian(s) (non-voting member)
- The child's classroom teacher or additional participants (non-voting members)—invited by parent/guardian, if desired.

Additional participants are allowed to attend at the discretion of the TAG Coordinator. A majority of people are selected from schools other than the one which the student attends. Therefore, the majority of the committee consists of different members not on the original Identification/Placement Committee. After hearing the information presented at the appeal conference, the Appeal Committee makes one of the following decisions:

- Eligible for services in SAA and/or GIA
- Not eligible for services

Each case will be evaluated individually. The decision is communicated in writing within fifteen school days after the appeal conference. The decision is final.

Documentation of placement decisions and identification forms are forwarded from the TAG Designee to the TAG Coordinator. A record of each decision is placed in the Division computer database by the TAG Designee during the placement meeting.

Part V: Change in Instructional Services (8VAC20-40-60A.5)

This section includes the policy for written notification to parents or legal guardians of identification and placement decisions, including initial changes in placement procedures or exit policy from the program.

General Intellectual Aptitude and Specific Academic Aptitude

To ensure that children's academic and affective needs are met, a parent/guardian, teacher, or student may request a change in gifted services.

Student progress is monitored by teachers continuously throughout the school year. When a student experiences difficulty, as reflected in a grade of "C" or lower in the subject area/s in which Specific Academic Aptitude TAG services are delivered, the classroom or TAG teacher meets with the student and parents/guardians to write a *Plan to Improve Performance of Student Receiving TAG Services*. If, after a predetermined period of time of not less than 45 consecutive school days, the *Plan to Improve Performance* is not successful, the classroom teacher (K-3) or designated TAG teacher (4-8) completes a *Change of Placement Notification* form to exit the student from the specific area of gifted services and submits that request with the *Plan to Improve Performance*, and any other necessary documentation, to the TAG Coordinator.

Parents/guardians are notified in writing by the principal/TAG Designee of the decision to place their child back into the general education classroom with the *Change of Placement Notification*. The document is signed by the parents/guardians and returned to the school to confirm their knowledge of the change in placement. Parents/guardians may appeal the decision according to the appeal procedures.

A parent/guardian may also request that a student be exited from gifted services in a specific subject or general intellectual aptitude by submitting a request in writing to the principal/TAG Designee. Once the request is received, a *Change of Placement Notification* form is submitted to the principal/TAG Designee and TAG Coordinator, the parent signs a *Change of Placement Notification* and the student is placed back in the general education classroom.

Students already receiving services for TAG in one or more domains may be referred for other domains by following the referral procedures.

Part VI: Evidence of Appropriate Service Options (8VAC20-40-60A.10)

This section provides evidence that gifted education service options from kindergarten through twelfth grade are offered continuously and sequentially, with instructional time during the school day and week to (i) work with their age-level peers, (ii) work with their intellectual and academic peers, (iii) work independently; and (iv) foster intellectual and academic growth of gifted students. Parents and legal guardians shall receive assessment of each gifted student's academic growth. Career and Technical aptitude programs and Visual and/or Performing Arts programs are offered at the discretion of the school division.

A. Service Options are Continuous and Sequential

This section provides evidence that the division's program of curricula and instruction for gifted learners is continuous and sequential. GIA programs need to provide evidence from kindergarten through twelfth grade. SAA programs need to provide evidence that service options are continuous and sequential from identification until twelfth grade.

General Intellectual Aptitude

The Alexandria City Public Schools are committed to provide enriching and challenging learning opportunities for all students. By seeking out students early in their educational career showing the potential or ability to achieve, creatively think or problem-solve, these students will be provided with learning experiences specially designed to challenge and engage them. General Intellectual Aptitude services will take the following forms:

- 1) All schools - Beginning in K-3 for school year 2012-13 and then adding a year as the cohort continues through their school years, students will be provided with a novel curriculum designed to stimulate the development of advanced thinking skills and creative applications of knowledge. An emphasis on project-based learning and other extensions of the ACPS curriculum will be a focus. The TAG Teacher and classroom teacher will collaborate to plan and deliver these lessons. Enrichment and service learning will be included as the students' age and development allow. These services will be detailed on the Differentiated Education Plan designed specifically for General Intellectual Aptitude. A copy will be provided for the parents and monitored at both the school and division level.
- 2) Targeted Schools- A Talent Nurturing Program modeled on Young Scholars will be offered in targeted schools. This program is designed to find and nurture advanced academic potential in students from underrepresented populations beginning in kindergarten. Initiated as a pilot in 2012-13, this program will be expanded as appropriate in subsequent years, providing the long range continuum of services for students benefitting from these activities.

Many of these students may qualify for other TAG services later in their development.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies

ACPS offers gifted services in specific academic aptitude through several programming options:

- differentiation of instruction in general education classes;
- self-contained classes by grade and subject area; and
- honors classes, advanced placement classes and dual enrollment.

For each student found eligible for gifted services in specific academic aptitude, the Identification/Placement Committee determines services for the student within existing program options based on the student's eligibility profile.

Specific Academic Aptitude services currently in place for students in grades K-3 will continue and phase out as General Intellectual Aptitude services phase-in. The plans are based on the strengths of the learner, assessed during the eligibility process, and provide a modified curriculum of enrichment, differentiation, and acceleration in math, language arts, and/or science. These services are individualized and are reflected in the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This plan, created with the partnering of the TAG and classroom teacher, specifies what types of activities and extended enrichment each identified student will be provided. These plans are monitored at the school and division level. Electronic copies of the DEP are submitted to and monitored by the TAG Coordinator each quarter. Parents are given a copy and updated on the progress each quarter from the classroom teacher.

Grades 4-5

In grades four and five, all students found eligible for gifted services in math and/or language arts receive instruction with a designated TAG teacher in a self-contained class. The curricula are modified from the standard curricula and contain content and activities that are accelerated, enriched, and differentiated. In Science and Social Studies gifted services in continue to be provided through a *Differentiated Education Plan* within the general education classroom.

Grades 6-8

Gifted services are provided through a specially-designed ACPS Honors curriculum in Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies at the middle school level. This curriculum combines the best practices in gifted education and utilizes the International Baccalaureate curriculum framework to provide high level, rigorous instruction and assessments.

Grades 9-12

Honors, advanced placement, online instruction and dual enrollment courses provide gifted services to eligible students in grades 9-12.

B. Service Options Provide Instructional Time with Age-level Peers

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies or program model that allows gifted students to interact with their age-level peers during the school day and week.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Students receiving General Intellectual Aptitude services are grouped with their age-level peers in heterogeneous classrooms all day. These communities of learners will interact and collaborate on projects and special presentations. Additional opportunities to participate in competitions and extracurricular activities will be provided along the continuum.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

In grades four and five, students are grouped and served in age-level peer groups in both separate class and in-class differentiation services. In grades 6-12 students spend instructional time with age-level peers in all classes. A commitment to having age-level peers clustered in accelerated courses is also in place.

C. Service Options Provide Instructional Time with Intellectual and Academic Peers

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies used in the division to accelerate and enrich the content for gifted learners beyond the grade-level or course expectations for all learners. The description should include how these academic needs are met during the school day and week.

General Intellectual Aptitude

General Intellectual services are designed to provide enrichment to the ACPS curriculum, develop advanced thinking skills and provide opportunities for creative expression and problem-solving for students identified as gifted. Instructional time with intellectual and academic peers will be accomplished through clustering within homerooms, flexible grouping and interactive learning experiences. Student discourse and debate will further this intellectual stimulation and foster positive self-confidence.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

Grades 4-5

English and Mathematics services are separate classroom groupings exclusively serving gifted students. This provides the intellectual and academic peer group for all instruction. Science and Social Studies DEPs reflect services that provide opportunities for other gifted students to work on projects and service learning as appropriate together. These students also have opportunities to collaborate and create new learning experiences

Grades 6-8

Honors classes contain clusters of a minimum 5-7 TAG identified students in each section. This provides a critical mass of students who can collaborate, discuss and debate within their Honors classroom.

Grades 9-12 AP, Honors and dual enrollment courses provide intellectual peers within the context of the coursework. Additional opportunities for enrichment experiences such as Governor's School provide intellectual and academic peer group instruction and interaction.

D. Service Options Provide Instructional Time to Work Independently

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies or program model used in the division to allow gifted learners to work independently during the school day and week.

ACPS values the ability of students to self-regulate and work independently to produce new learning and become more expert in their areas of strength. This can be accomplished through a variety of activities.

General Intellectual Aptitude

The General Intellectual Aptitude DEP provides for student driven independent research, advanced study, individualized reading and writing activities, creative projects and production.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

In each content area gifted students are expected to demonstrate the ability to work independently, learn skills associated with time management and personal organization to enhance their instructional experience. Individual projects and assignments are embedded in the ACPS Honors curriculum across all content areas. Individual assessment (transfer tasks) activities are also differentiated in the Honors curriculum for gifted students and are designed for individual work.

E. Service Options Foster Intellectual and Academic Growth

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies used in the division to foster intellectual and academic growth during the school day and week.

General Intellectual Aptitude

General Intellectual Aptitude services provide activities designed to challenge and engage gifted learners. Using novel approaches and puzzling problems, students participate in learning experiences not usually encountered. These types of brain exercises provide a foundation of growth and rigor. Critical thinking, problem-solving, infusion of the arts and the creation of new ideas are the conceptual foundation upon which intellectual and academic growth is fostered.

Competitions such as *Odyssey of the Mind* and *Future Problem Solvers* bring together students around single challenges that serve to trigger curiosity.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

Grades 4-12 specific advanced content is explored through student inquiry and building concepts at a deep level. Approaching the content through questioning, curiosity and student-designed inquiry creates intellectual and academic growth. Accelerating content allows a student to grow in factual knowledge at a rate that reduces repetition and redundancy, unless needed for mastery. Through acceleration or deeper investigation into a topic, a student develops ownership and the desire to know more is fostered. Student selection and choice are important strategies to employ towards advanced intellectual and academic growth.

F. Procedures for Assessing Academic Growth in Gifted Students

This section includes a description of the procedures used by the division to assess the academic growth for gifted learners.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Assessments for gifted learners need to provide for high levels of performance. Pre-assessment is necessary in all gifted activities to ensure the starting level of instruction is appropriate for each student. Formative and summative assessments are designed with high level questions, problems and application of learned knowledge in mind. This can take many forms. Students reflect on their work and evaluate it accordingly. Attaining your personal best can help students track their own growth in many areas. The ACPS Curriculum contains transfer task assessments which can provide one measure of such growth. Individual assignments, projects and collaborative group work can also provide indicators of growth. In addition, individual student data will be available in SchoolNet, an electronic system for data collection.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

In specific content areas, the ACPS curriculum has differentiated transfer tasks for advanced and gifted learners. The assessment data from these transfer tasks is analyzed at the school level to help guide future instruction. It is formative in nature. Since gifted students receiving services are typically above grade level, it is important to find measures that capture their achievement accurately. Currently, ACPS uses the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Scholastic Math Inventory (SMI) to provide formative growth data. It is not capped at a grade level, so it is more useful for purposes of measuring growth. For in class assignments, rubrics measure quality and content. Portfolios can capture a student's progress from novice to expert over time in a particular area. All students can be assessed with a standardized instrument at various points along the TAG continuum of services to also show growth. All students take the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) test for each course they are enrolled and high school courses which qualify for possible college credit (i.e. AP) have tests which are designed to capture the student's understanding of the content at the highest level of the course instruction. Student self-evaluation and reflection is encouraged in all assessment tasks to develop metacognitive skill. These self-reflections, captured over time, also indicate growth. In addition, individual student data will be available in SchoolNet, an electronic system for data collection

Part VII: Program of Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction (8VAC20-40-60A.11)

The *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students* defines appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction as curriculum and instruction adapted or modified to accommodate the accelerated learning aptitudes of identified students in their areas of strength. Such curriculum and instructional strategies provide accelerated and enrichment opportunities that recognize gifted students' needs for:

- (i) advanced content and pacing of instruction;
- (ii) original research or production;
- (iii) problem finding and solving;
- (iv) higher level thinking that leads to the generation of products; and
- (v) a focus on issues, themes, and ideas within and across areas of study.

Such curriculum and instruction are offered continuously and sequentially to support the achievement of student outcomes, and provide support necessary for these students to work at increasing levels of complexity that differ significantly from those of their age-level peers. This section provides a description of the school division's appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction demonstrating accelerated and advanced content for gifted learners.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Students receiving services in General Intellectual Aptitude will participate in learning activities designed to enrich and extend the ACPS curriculum. This is accomplished through a variety of strategies, including the use of special resources shown to build thinking skills, support the development of creativity and the inclusion of the arts as modes of expression shown to advance intellectual abilities. These enrichment activities will pull from research-based gifted education resources, such as curriculum units and *Jacob's Ladder* from the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary, *Building Thinking Skills*, by Sandra Parks and advanced vocabulary and grammar lessons from elementary series created by Michael Clay Thompson.

Specific Academic Aptitude - English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies

The Virginia Standards of Learning offer a core curriculum for all students. These standards provide the basis for all curricula, including the curriculum for gifted students, grades K-12, within the school division. The talented and gifted program is supported by the ACPS curriculum which differentiates and accelerates the curriculum as appropriate for gifted learners.

This rigorous curriculum is designed with 'the end in mind' and is aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning. Now in its third iteration, the ACPS curriculum provides a framework for instruction in English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

On July 31, 2012, a complete written curriculum for secondary Honors in these content areas will be available to all ACPS instructors. This new Honors curriculum is based upon research-proven design principles, including the following:

- A comprehensive required reading list for the new Honors curriculum, including complex text reflecting a range of literary genres, cultural traditions, and literary eras.
- A range of balanced assessment tools and processes, with major focus upon student metacognition, self-assessment, and completion of authentic, performance-based assessment tasks.
- Instructional emphasis upon inquiry-based learning, problem solving, and decision making in authentic, real-world contexts and settings.
- Consistent emphasis upon higher-order questioning and analytical, synthesis-driven, and evaluative reasoning processes.
- An emphasis upon authenticity, accelerated pacing, and student engagement.

The mathematics curriculum for the TAG Program contains the following design elements:

- Mathematics curriculum for the TAG program is accelerated beginning in grades 4, with curriculum compacting of grades 4 and 5 Standards of Learning.
- Grade 5 TAG Math addresses grade 6 Standards of Learning, and then through the middle school honors program, TAG math students move into Advanced Math Concepts (compacted grades 7 and 8 Standards of Learning).
- TAG students then complete middle school with Algebra 1 Honors at a minimum.
- More accelerated options are available for those students with exceptional mathematical abilities.

Alexandria City Public Schools

Honors Science and Social Studies classes at grades six through eight have differentiated ACPS curriculum and unit transfer tasks that address the needs of students receiving gifted services.

Part VIII: Policies and Procedures for Access to Programs and Advanced Courses (8VAC20-40-60A.12)

This section provides the school division's policies and procedures that allow access to programs of study and advanced courses at a pace and sequence commensurate with the learning needs of the gifted student.

General Intellectual Aptitude And Specific Academic Aptitude

K-12 access is provided through the annual adoption of Program of Studies which describes and defines advanced coursework, open enrollment, special programs and other opportunities allowing students to choose appropriate courses and pacing. In addition, the following policy provides for the learning needs of gifted students:

PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

The School Board shall provide acceptable programs for gifted students. ACPS shall provide educational opportunities appropriate to each student's exceptional abilities. The School Board recognizes its responsibility to provide each student with the opportunity to realize his/her potential.

Gifted students require a unique, advanced, and challenging educational program in order to enhance development their special abilities. The School Board shall submit an annual report on its Program of Gifted Education to the Department of Education as prescribed by the Board of Education.

The School Board will actively promote and develop an appropriately differentiated educational program for gifted students in order to facilitate the fullest development of their potential. The School Board shall establish a local advisory committee for the gifted education program. Annually, the committee shall review the gifted education program, including any revisions to the program. The committee shall also determine the extent to which the program for the previous year was implemented by the division. The comments and recommendations of the committee shall be provided in writing to (1) the Superintendent and (2) the School Board. The program shall be in compliance with the Code of Virginia and the Board of Education regulations.

Reference: ACPS School Board Manual, IGBB-1

Part IX: Personal and Professional Development (8VAC20-40-60A.13)

School divisions must provide evidence of professional development based on the following teacher competencies outlined in 8VAC20-542-310 below.

1. Understanding of principles of the integration of gifted education and general education, including:
 - a. Strategies to encourage the interaction of gifted students with students of similar and differing abilities; and
 - b. Development of activities to encourage parental and community involvement in the education of the gifted, including the establishment and maintenance of an effective advisory committee.
2. Understanding of the characteristics of gifted students, including:
 - a. Varied expressions of advanced aptitudes, skills, creativity, and conceptual understandings;
 - b. Methodologies that respond to the affective (social-emotional) needs of gifted students; and
 - c. Gifted behaviors in special populations (i.e., those who are culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, or physically disabled).
3. Understanding of specific techniques to identify gifted students using diagnostic and prescriptive approaches to assessment, including:
 - a. The selection, use, and evaluation of multiple assessment instruments and identification strategies;
 - b. The use of both subjective and objective measures to provide relevant information regarding the aptitude/ability or achievement of potentially gifted students;
 - c. The use of authentic assessment tools such as portfolios to determine performance, motivation/interest and other characteristics of potentially gifted students;
 - d. The development, use, and reliability of rating scales, checklists, and questionnaires by parents, teachers and others;
 - e. The evaluation of data collected from student records such as grades, honors, and awards;
 - f. The use of case study reports providing information concerning exceptional conditions; and
 - g. The structure, training, and procedures used by the identification and placement committee.
4. Understanding and application of a variety of educational models, teaching methods, and strategies for selecting materials and resources that ensure:
 - a. Academic rigor through the development of high-level proficiency in all core academic areas utilizing the Virginia Standards of Learning as a baseline;
 - b. The acquisition of knowledge and development of products that demonstrate creative and critical thinking as applied to learning both in and out of the classroom; and
 - c. The development of learning environments that guide students to become self-directed, independent learners.

5. Understanding and application of theories and principles of differentiating curriculum designed to match the distinct characteristics of gifted learners to the programs and curriculum offered to gifted students, including:
 - a. The integration of multiple disciplines into an area of study;
 - b. Emphasis on in-depth learning, independent and self-directed study skills and metacognitive skills;
 - c. The development of analytical, organizational, critical, and creative thinking skills;
 - d. The development of sophisticated products using varied modes of expression;
 - e. The evaluation of student learning through appropriate and specific criteria; and
 - f. The development of advanced technological skills to enhance student performance.
6. Understanding of contemporary issues and research in gifted education, including:
 - a. The systematic gathering, analyzing, and reporting of formative and summative data; and
 - b. Current local, state, and national issues and concerns.

Professional development focused on teaching gifted students is provided throughout the year and required of all new teachers and teachers who provide direct services to gifted students. Teachers, who are considered teachers of the gifted, whether in full- or part-time positions, are designated in this section. The section includes training requirements for the designation.

Full-time teachers of the gifted are typically those persons who work predominantly during the day and/or week with identified gifted students. Division level support is provided to teachers who participate in cohorts designed to lead to full endorsement.

TEACHING/GRADE
Elementary TAG
Teachers

REQUIRED TRAINING

Current TAG teachers-Gifted Endorsement and/or MA in Gifted Education and demonstrated success teaching gifted students

New TAG Teachers—must have the add-on Gifted Endorsement or International Baccalaureate (IB) certification (endorsement must be received within three years of employment in that position.)

Additional staff development is ongoing during monthly meetings and teacher professional days. Topics will include: cultural competency, the use of alternative assessments in helping to find gifted in students from underrepresented populations, implementing the differentiated ACPS curriculum for TAG students, meeting the social-emotional needs of gifted learners and related topics.

Conference attendance as appropriate and available.

Part-time teachers of the gifted are typically those persons who provide services for gifted students through the regular classroom or for only a portion of their teaching day. Although not required, these teachers may also participate in the cohort groups leading to full gifted endorsement.

TEACHING/GRADE

K-5 classroom teachers,
all students identified
for gifted services

6-8 Honors teachers of
all students identified for
gifted services

REQUIRED TRAINING

6 hrs. -Annual local training in characteristics of the gifted, differentiation using the ACPS curriculum and the components of the identification process. Specific training on the use of *Gifted Rating Scales* and teacher observation and learning characteristic checklists will be provided.

Annual training at new teacher orientation

Workshops and conferences as needed.

All Middle Grades Honors teachers will within two years complete one of the following:

- Gifted Endorsement
- International Baccalaureate (IB) certification
- Local professional development in “Teaching Honors in ACPS” which includes best practices in gifted education, differentiation strategies and how to implement the ACPS Honors curriculum —24 hrs - 3 required sessions per year

Annual training at new teacher orientation

Workshops and conferences as needed.

AP Training (High School only)

Part X: Procedures for Annual Review of Effectiveness (8VAC20-40-60A.14)

This section provides the procedures for the annual review of the effectiveness of the school division's gifted education program, including the review of screening, referral, identification, and program procedures toward the achievement of equitable representation of students, the review of student outcomes and the academic growth of gifted students. School divisions may decide to focus on one or more areas to review each year. However, reviews shall be based on multiple criteria and shall include multiple sources of information.

Annually, the Talented and Gifted program in ACPS will be reviewed for effectiveness in the following manner:

- 1) Screening profiles will be submitted to the TAG Coordinator twice annually and be reviewed by a committee comprised of TAG teachers and Designees to ensure that all students in the screening pool have been appropriately evaluated
- 2) Referral and identification data will be reviewed and reported by the TAG Coordinator, disaggregated by ethnicity and gender to determine progress toward equitable representation
- 3) Student grades and measures used by the Division to measure student growth (i.e. SMI, SRI) will be compiled and reviewed for current TAG students
- 4) Graduation rate, Honors, AP and Dual Enrollment data will be reviewed to determine TAG student success.
- 5) The Talented and Gifted Advisory Committee reviews the plan each year and reports to the School Board on the progress made and effectiveness
- 6) Every two years, a comprehensive survey of stakeholders will be conducted and results reported.

Each 4th year within the 5 yr plan cycle, an full independent program evaluation will be conducted by an outside resource knowledgeable in program evaluation and gifted education, such as university or other professional evaluation service provider.

Part XI: Procedures for the Establishment of the Local Advisory Committee (8VAC20-40-60B)

Each school division shall establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members who are appointed by the school board. This committee shall reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division. This section should include the school division's procedures for the establishment of the local advisory committee for the gifted program.

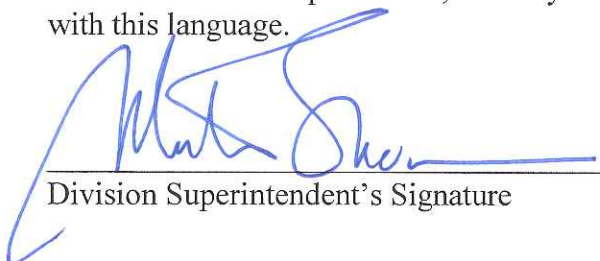
Individuals interested in serving on the TAG Advisory Committee submit applications for membership to the Alexandria City School Board. An effort is made to appoint members who represent all constituents in the community. Advisory committee members solicit applications for specific slots to achieve broad representation. Community organizations are also represented when possible. The TAG Advisory Committee By-Laws outline committee membership. Additional recruitment efforts will be made to improve broad representation to include teachers, parents, students and community members.

Part XII: Assurances (8VAC20-40-60A.6; A.7; A.8; A.9)

In accordance with the *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students*, the following assurance must be provided by the school division:

- Assurances that student records are maintained in compliance with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations;
- Assurances that (i) the selected and administered testing and assessment materials have been evaluated by the developers for cultural, racial, and linguistic biases; (ii) identification procedures are constructed so that those procedures may identify high potential or aptitude in any student whose accurate identification may be affected by economic disadvantages, by limited English proficiency, or by disability; (iii) standardized tests and other measures have been validated for the purpose of identifying gifted students; and (iv) instruments are administered and interpreted by trained personnel in conformity with the developer's instructions;
- Assurances that accommodations or modifications determined by the school division's special education Individual Education Plan (IEP) team, as required for the student to receive a free appropriate public education, shall be incorporated into the student's gifted education services; and
- Assurances that a written copy of the school division's approved local plan for the education of the gifted is available to parents or legal guardians of each referred student, and to others upon request.

Pursuant to these requirements, I hereby certify that the school division is in compliance with this language.


Division Superintendent's Signature

Morton Sherman
Printed Name

7/2/12
Date