

## Overview: Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

### Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0

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

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

\* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

Alexander County Schools recognizes that gifted students are an integral part of our school system. The potential of these students needs to be discovered and developed to produce globally competitive students who are emotionally healthy and resilient. These students may exhibit behaviors, learn at a different rate, and utilize different learning styles

than other students their age. Alexander County Schools has adopted the ideal of "AIG All Day Every Day" as our vision for gifted students.

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

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
* \$ 263,154.00	* \$ 19,349.24	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 8,009.53

## Standard 1: Student Identification

### Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0

## Standard 1: Student Identification

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

### \* Practice A

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

For K-3 students, universal screener tools, such as mClass or iReady, and the Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) process are used to identify potential giftedness. Referrals are accepted from students, parents, or teachers, and forms can be found on the district AIG webpage. Referrals are accepted at any time of the year, but system-wide screening for identification for potential AIG occurs once in the fall and once in the spring of the school year. Identification recommendations are made through each school's MTSS process in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and guided by a locally or state endorsed AIG licensed staff member.

Universal screening is provided to all 4th graders by administration of the Cogat during 1st semester and review of student performance on iReady assessments and 3rd grade EOG assessments. For the next three years, universal screening will also be provided to all 7th graders by administration of the Cogat during 1st semester and review of student performance on iReady assessments and 6th grade EOG assessments in order to provide equity to students who might have missed the opportunity to be identified due to the Covid pandemic. Evidences in the screening, referral, and identification processes are both qualitative and quantitative including: 1) iReady, EOC, EOG, BOG, Explore, PLAN, ACT, and other nationally/state-normed achievement tests 2) Available aptitude scores, 3) Broad sweep screenings (CogAT), historical trends of classroom achievement and performance, 4) MTSS discussions in PLC.

For 5th-12th grade students, universal screener tools, such as EOG assessments, EOC assessments, iReady, and the MTSS process are used to identify potential giftedness. Referrals are accepted from students, parents, or teachers, and forms can be found on the district AIG webpage. Referrals are accepted at any time of the year, but identification for potential AIG occurs once in the fall and once in the spring of the school year. Identification recommendations are made by each school's MTSS process in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) which is guided by a locally or state endorsed AIG licensed staff member.

Students working with school staff can also create and submit portfolios and/or work samples to build a body of evidence to support AIG identification for K-2 students. The portfolio with the teacher referral form (located on the district website) will be used to determine AIG identification by the appropriate team of the school's MTSS process. The portfolio must show academic achievement of two grade levels above the student's current grade level. Additional testing for aptitude will be completed by the District AIG Lead.

The procedures for screening and referral will be shared at the beginning of the year with all principals at a Monthly Principals' Meeting, with Instructional Coaches at a weekly Instructional Coaches' Meeting, with teachers via instructional coaches, and with parents through school-based Parent Advisory Meetings, email, and the district-level AIG website.

#### **\* 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.

The following procedures for identification and placement including the AIG Identification Pathways will be shared with all principals at a Monthly Principals' Meeting, with Instructional Coaches at a Weekly Instructional Coaches'

Meeting, with teachers via instructional coaches, and with parents through school-based Parent Advisory Meetings, email, and the district-level AIG website.

Identification Areas are Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI), the highest students in both reading and achievement in Reading and Math, Academically Gifted in Math (AM), Academically Gifted in Reading (AR), and Intellectually Gifted in ability but not achieving to potential (IG).

Students in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade will be identified through teacher recommendation. These recommended students will then be assessed using NNAT3 (non-verbal). All Alexander County Schools (ACS) K-12th grade reading and math teachers are required to take regional endorsement classes through Northwest RESA. The district has a process for ensuring all indicated teachers complete this course by grouping staff into cohorts to complete the courses. These courses target meeting the needs of high achieving or intellectually gifted students within the classroom. If teachers require further assistance in meeting these needs, they will request help from the instructional coach or state certified AIG Teacher within the school. If the instructional coach or same-school-based AIG Teacher cannot help, the District AIG Lead will be contacted for assistance.

A universal screening occurs in 4th grade using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). For the next three years, 7th grade will also be universally screened using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). All students who score 90th percentile or above will be placed on a list of potentially identified AIG students. Paired with a score of 90th percentile or above on EOG Reading and Math Tests or who perform in the 90th percentile or above on the National Norm in iReady Reading and/or Math will qualify a student for AIG identification and services.

Students in 5th, 6th and 8th-12th grades will be identified through teacher recommendation. If EOG and/or EOC scores are 90% or above, the AIG District Lead will administer an appropriate aptitude test. These scores will be used to determine AIG placement.

Any student at any grade level can be potentially identified by administrator, counselor, teacher, or parent recommendation.

The District AIG Lead will enter relevant demographic, aptitude and achievement data into an ongoing tracking document for AIG Identification. Relevant record data includes CogAT Composite Score, CogAT Verbal Score, CogAT Quantitative Score, CogAT Nonverbal Score, EOG Scores, iReady National Norm percentile and if applicable, alternative aptitude or achievement assessment scores. The result spreadsheet will record the status of students in the potentially identified as AIG process by the labels of AI, AR, AM, IG, or FLAGGED (on a list to be reviewed after further testing).

As a potentially identified AIG student qualifies, documenting paperwork will be filled out and sent to the school's AIG contact; most often, this is the instructional coach, counselor, principal, or lead AIG teacher. If approved by the principal, the AIG school contact will contact the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to notify, explain the qualification pathway, and service delivery. Identification paperwork is signed by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the District AIG Lead.

The placement criteria for AIG Services for 2022-2025 in Grades K-12 in Alexander County Schools is as follows:

Pathway One: Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) requires all components:

- Aptitude test composite score of 95th percentile or above, and
- Achievement tests of 95th percentile or above in Reading and Math

Pathway Two: Academically Gifted in Reading (AR), Academically Gifted in Math (AM), or Academically Gifted in Reading and Math (AG) requires all components in each category:

Academically Gifted in Reading (AR)

- Aptitude test composite score of 90th percentile or above in Reading, and
- Achievement test of 90th percentile or above in Reading

Academically Gifted in Math (AM)

- Aptitude test composite score of 90th percentile or above in Math, and
- Achievement test of 90th percentile or above in Math, and

Academically Gifted in Reading and Math (AG)

- Aptitude test composite score of 90th percentile or above in Reading and Math
- Achievement test of 90th percentile or above in Reading and Math


Pathway Three: Intellectually Gifted (IG) required one of the components be met:

- Aptitude test composite score of 95th percentile or above, or
- Aptitude test verbal score of 95th percentile or above, or
- Aptitude test quantitative score of 95th percentile or above.

If a student on the potentially identified list does not place by pathway, the student will be considered for testing ensuring we address underrepresented populations. Retesting will be done using the NNAT-3 for students needing a non-verbal ability assessment, OLSAT for aptitude, or IOWA for achievement. Retesting occurs using a computer-based assessment in a one-on-one setting.

For students who enter the district placed AIG from another district or state, Alexander County will generally honor the placement from another district K-12. The receiving school's MTSS team will review the previous district's qualifying information and can recommend if further testing or information is needed.

The District Lead is responsible for ensuring no student is denied placement for services based on one test score.

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#### \* Practice C

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

Tests used in the pathways for identification and placement specifically include non-verbal assessments which, research shows, assist in the identification of underrepresented populations. Additional options to retest ability with a non-verbal test is advantageous to Multilingual Learners. The pathway of AI specifically targets highly gifted learners. With the conversation shift regarding AIG student recommendations to an MTSS setting, PLC discussions of data should further identify underrepresented populations. Currently our percentages of typically under-represented populations in AIG are Culturally/Ethnically Diverse, Economically Disadvantaged, and Multilingual Learners.



MTSS teams in each school will analyze student data to specifically identify students from underrepresented groups in Alexander County Schools who are potential AIG candidates and may need additional non-verbal aptitude testing or the opportunity to develop a portfolio to show evidence of giftedness.

Our underrepresented groups in Alexander County Schools AIG programs are culturally/ethnically diverse and Multilingual Learners. ACS will develop critical thinking and problem solving strategies, resources and professional development in our Title 1 schools which have the highest number of culturally/ethnically diverse and Multilingual Learners learners for K-2 students. This talent development will grow underrepresented populations of AIG students being identified.

#### **\* Practice D**

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

The large-scale identification process begins with a system-wide screening of fourth graders during the fall of each year. The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is administered by classroom teachers, with all test training and procedures followed. Scores are provided to the AIG District Lead and each school's MTSS team. With these scores, students are identified according to district eligibility guidelines. Forms for referral and identification are posted on the district website and mandated for use by all schools for consistency in processes and procedures.

Transfer students with AIG identification will be accepted and identified as AIG in Alexander County School, after the MTSS team reviews identification material to ensure the student meets the county criteria. For K-3, the school's MTSS team is made aware of potentially or identified gifted students from other school districts.

Students in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade will be referred through teacher or parent recommendation. These recommended students will then be assessed using NNAT3 (non-verbal).

The AIG District Lead will review the screening, referral, and identification processes with all principals and instructional coaches bi-annually at principal meetings and Instruction Coach meetings to ensure fidelity to the process. Instructional Coaches at each school will monitor screening, referral and identification procedures at their school using the flowcharts and checklists provided on the district website.

In the fall of each school year, the AIG District Lead and Instructional Coach at three randomly selected schools will audit the AIG folders located at each school in cumulative folders to ensure fidelity of screening, referral and identification processes across the district using the AIG checklist for school processes and student folders.

**\* Practice E**

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

Every child that is identified and placed as AIG will have a folder with identification paperwork signed by the District AIG Lead and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). Information about AIG processes and procedures will be communicated to Instructional Coaches and principals bi-annually through training at a monthly principal meeting and weekly Instructional Coach meetings. This information will then be shared with certified staff at each school bi-annually in weekly PLC meetings with Instructional Coaches. Community members, parents and/or guardians will be informed of screening, referral and identification processes and procedures through information posted on the district website and social media, sent out through the school system mass call communication system, annual conferences with classroom teachers and bi-annual District Information Meetings with the AIG District Contact.

**\* 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.

Students who are identified as potential AIG students in Alexander County Schools will have evidence gathered by the District AIG lead and the Instructional Coach at their school and documented on the county identification form as posted on the district website. This document will be analyzed by the AIG team to determine AIG eligibility and if needed communicate placement options with parents/guardians. If the paperwork is signed by parents/guardians and the student is placed AIG, the identification forms will be signed by the district AIG lead, student's parents/guardians, principal, teacher and Instructional Coach. This will be accompanied by the student's DEP(service options). These service options will be reviewed annually and signed by classroom teachers and parents and added to the student's AIG folder. The folder with identification paperwork and yearly signed DEP will be housed in the cumulative folder of each student.

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

At this time, the current AIG Plan utilizes the MTSS team for AIG identification recommendations. Increased communication and training for coaches, principals, teachers, parents and community members are included in the new plan.

Add a middle school screener to identify students due to Covid.

Research Achievement Assessments appropriate for underrepresented populations.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence**

\* Referral Forms

\* Pathways ID

\* K-3 Flowchart

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔗 <a href="#"><u>Identification Process for K-3 Students</u></a></li> <li>🔗 <a href="#"><u>Grade-level Screener Identification Process for AIG Students</u></a></li> <li>🔗 <a href="#"><u>AIG Pathways</u></a></li> </ul>

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

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

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

### \* Practice A

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

Alexander County Schools AIG programs and services are comprehensive in meeting the needs of gifted learners in all grade levels and classrooms.

K-3 - While not typically identified in K-3, classroom teachers and Instructional Coaches are in partnership to provide strategies and nurture potential giftedness. When a student demonstrates giftedness, teachers and AIG-IC provide and develop materials to meet the needs of the student. School schedules are organized to include time outside the regular curriculum to include time for acceleration where all students have the opportunity to work on their level. For advanced students in K-3, students are clustered and given advanced instruction or enrichment opportunities. iReady instruction also places all students on their independent learning levels and provides advanced learning opportunities for students in K-3 who have demonstrated mastery of grade level content.

4-8 - AIG students are identified formally in 4th grade and then clustered in locally and state endorsed AIG teachers' classrooms. These teachers, administrators, and AIG-IC when requested, work to cluster groups for compacting, differentiated, or accelerated instruction. Ensuring the social-emotional needs, school counselors and other support staff provide enrichment and other opportunities. School schedules are organized to include time outside the regular

curriculum to include time for acceleration where all students have the opportunity to work on their level. For advanced students in K-3, students are clustered and given advanced instruction or enrichment opportunities. iReady instruction also places all students on their independent learning levels and provides advanced learning opportunities for students in K-3 who have demonstrated mastery of grade level content.

9-12 - AIG students will be offered upper level, Honors-Level, Capstone and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. High school counselors will consult with AIG students about individual schedules and extracurricular opportunities (i.e. Governor's School, NCSSM, etc.). They will encourage our academically gifted students while supporting their social-emotional well-being.

All schools utilize a PLC and MTSS structure which provides weekly and monthly times to analyze data and plan for instruction to meet the needs of all learners including advanced or AIG students. MTSS meetings (SST) include key stakeholders including exceptional children's teachers, English Learner teachers(as needed), and counselors to be sure twice exceptional, Multilingual Learners and students with 504s receive appropriate AIG instructional opportunities as needed.

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#### \* **Practice B**

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

Administrators, Instructional Coaches, and locally endorsed AIG teachers will continue to work together to establish a stronger MTSS team which, in partnership with the school counselor, provides tools and resources for teachers and families to support the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Furthermore, the district's strategic plan now includes a goal specifically focused on meeting social-emotional needs of our students. It reads:

Strategy 1: ACS will establish and implement policies and procedures to support emotional wellness for students and staff.

1.1 Develop a District Team to identify needs and strategies. The team will be made up of various relevant personnel throughout the district (i.e. nurse, counselor, social worker, school administration, district leadership, and behavior support personnel).

1.2 District Team will complete various assessments (i.e. PanoramaEd, surveys, etc.)

1.3 The District Team will use data gathered from assessments and other resources to support program planning.

1.4 Investigate and implement an Employee Assistance Program for all ACS staff.

1.5 Investigate and provide stress-management resources for all ACS staff.

Strategy 2: ACS employees will engage in high-quality professional development supporting the emotional wellness of students and staff.

2.1 ACS non-certified personnel will be provided annual professional development on the subject of emotional wellness (i.e. Mental Health First Aid).

2.2 ACS certified staff will be provided annual professional development on the subject of emotional wellness including trauma and resilience (i.e. Reconnect for Resilience and Trauma Informed Training).

2.3 ACS Beginning Teachers and new teachers to the district will be provided professional development in the area of emotional wellness during orientation.

2.4 Intensive and direct professional development will be provided for school-based Student Support Staff to address behavioral and mental wellness.

As part of this plan, AIG students will participate in a yearly SEL surveys through PanoramaEd. The information from this survey will be analyzed by school counselors and social worker to address social and emotional issues of grade

levels, groups of students and individuals. From this information, counselors, specialists, social workers and classroom teachers will work with instructional coaches to develop and deliver appropriate social and emotional interventions and core instruction for all students as needed including AIG students. As needed, students identified, but not performing to capacity will also meet as a group with a school counselor once per month. Counselors will develop and deliver appropriate social and emotional interventions and core instruction including but not limited to Second Step resources, developing grit and resilience, etc.

During SST and PLC meetings, SEL needs of AIG students will specifically be discussed and resources shared by AIG specialists within the school and the counselor for best supporting AIG students with social and emotional needs identified through the PanoramaEd survey and classroom observations. Communication of these needs will be 2 way. Teachers may observe SEL needs of AIG students as manifested in the classroom and discuss in PLC and result in further discussion at SST or needs may be identified through the formal SEL survey, discussed in SST and communicated to teachers.

Summer Jumpstart opportunities allow AIG students transitioning from elementary to middle school and middle to high school to develop relationships with staff at their new school and allow students and guardians a forum to ask questions and express concerns. High school freshmen experience a Freshman Academy which creates a more personalized experience for these new high school students and has a counselor focused on their needs and in the same hall as the majority of their classrooms.

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

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

Alexander County School Strategic Plan addresses student success, professional excellence, lifelong literacy, collaborative community, educational technology, optimal operations, and emotional wellness. Within each overarching goal, the objectives exist that weave the AIG program into the district's vision. As an example, student success maintains the following objectives: students will be challenged through advanced opportunities in core instruction, in accelerated learning groups, advanced placement courses, and dual enrollment opportunities; Middle



and high school staff will work collaboratively with school administrators and central office directors to explore, plan, build, and provide virtual-blended courses; learning experiences will be enhanced through the intentional use of technology resources, building capacity for enhanced learning; middle and high school teachers, administrators, and staff will provide nontraditional opportunities for students to demonstrate course mastery and attain course credit. Implementing opportunities such as dual enrollment, credit recovery, credit by demonstrated mastery, virtual courses, and blended classes allows students to graduate high school with college credits; and principals and the School Improvement Teams will craft master schedules that incorporate, at a minimum of three times per week, structured opportunities for remediation and enrichment of student learning. Furthermore, the professional development plan for Advanced Programs includes monthly training for teachers to benefit gifted students.

As part of the MTSS process and data analysis, AIG students will be discussed in PLCS, addressed as part of differentiated core instruction and problem solved so that student advanced learning needs are addressed and met on a regular basis. The MTSS team at each school will include an AIG certified teacher and Instructional Coach as well as the school counselor so that academic and social/emotional needs are met.

The AIG District Lead will meet 1 day per week with the District Instructional Coach team to plan instruction for AIG students across all schools.

#### **\* Practice D**

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

Student data from mClass, iReady, informal and formal assessments including benchmark data and NC Checkins is analyzed three times a year by teachers, Instructional Coaches and principals. Students are grouped according to performance on triangulated data from multiple sources in ELA and math core and intervention/acceleration groups. These groupings change on an as needed basis at least three times a year. Groupings can be readjusted between assessment times based on student performance and teacher observation. For students in fourth and fifth grades, AIG students are clustered or flexibly grouped. AIG students with identification in math are clustered/flexibly grouped for math, likewise for AIG students identified in reading. When arriving to middle school, grades six through eight, AIG students are placed in the same class as other AIG students identified for Math and/or Reading. Seventh grade AIG

students scoring a level 5 on the 7th Grade EOG are placed in an advanced Math class, specifically Math I, in 8th grade. Upon reaching high school, as part of self-advocacy instruction, AIG students meet with their counselor and develop a four year plan for their schedule. Such a plan might include increasing academic courses taken in the ninth and tenth grade year to take Advanced Placement Courses, NCSSM classes, Capstone Courses, dual enrollment, etc.

Throughout all grades of education, student data is analyzed to provide the best program and services within the goals and resources of our LEA. If individual student data or performance does not support acceleration, enrichment, or extensions in a given grade or course, an AIG student may remain in the core curriculum or remediation. This does not mean the student is no longer AIG, but rather an individual student's AIG services and programs can change to meet his needs.

At the end of the academic calendar, overall AIG achievement and growth data in reading and math at each grade level will be analyzed by District AIG Lead, Instructional Coaches and Central Office Personnel to determine trends and evaluate current practices and grouping strategies.

#### **\* Practice E**

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

Communicating about gifted education is an ever-present process in Alexander County Schools. To ensure that teachers and school staff are aware of the DEP and needs for student differentiation, student AIG plans are reviewed during conferences and a current DEP is signed by teacher, principal/coach and parent and added to the student's AIG folder in the fall of each year. Communication is also maintained through the following methods: principals and curriculum leaders are briefed monthly on changes, updates, or information; the district maintains a website with AIG information and resources; AIG trained teachers are participants at faculty meetings, PLC meetings, and MTSS teams where AIG students and processes are to be addressed.

At the beginning of each year, one standard of the ACS AIG plan will be reviewed by AIG District Lead with Instructional Coaches each week to be reshared with staff during PLC or staff meetings. A common presentation created by the District Lead will be used and shared with all staff. This presentation will also be housed on the district website.

An AIG newsletter will be created by the AIG District Lead and shared three times per year with current changes to policy, suggestions for best practices, regulations and the teacher role in gifted education.

AIG services and differentiated instruction are addressed at PLC discussions and at MTSS/SST/data meetings at each school.

A common presentation is used to review AIG services and instructional plans with staff, parents/guardians and community stakeholders annually. This presentation is available on the district website.

#### **\* Practice F**

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

It is imperative that effective communication continue between teachers and schools. The focus will be to collaborate between AIG-Instructional Coaches and school PLCs, counselors, and principals to maintain effective communication on AIG services and initiatives. Elementary and middle school counselors and Instructional Coaches assist fifth grade students with the transition from elementary to middle school. A meeting is held to discuss student needs as they transition from elementary to middle. Teachers fill out rating scales on each student and recommend academic placement for each student as well as highlighting any social/emotional needs that might exist. High school counselors speak/meet with 8th grade students in the spring of the school year before registration at the high school or early college to discuss options for the four-year high school plan, enrichment opportunities, university requirements, etc. Middle school teachers also fill out rating scales and recommendation forms for students to assist in appropriate

academic placement at their new school. Middle school counselors meet with high school counselors to discuss any social/emotional needs for all students including AIG students. At each transition level (elementary to middle and middle to high), a meeting is held with parents during conferences to discuss and sign student DEPs.

### \* **Practice G**

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

Acceleration for a gifted student can be both social and academic. Our system utilizes the MTSS process to identify potential AIG students to accelerate. Such factors are used in consideration:

- student should score in the 98th percentile in multiple area, in both aptitude and achievement,
- a school psychologist may further assess the student,
- specificity of individualization (grade advancement, concurrent instruction, single subject advancement, etc.)
- data to determine skill gaps, plan instruction, and goals for instruction,
- consider individual characteristics and needs (physical maturity, height, emotional stability, motivation, ability to handle challenge, etc).

Specific types of Acceleration include:

Early Admission to Kindergarten for four year olds in Alexander County following state and district policy as outlines in Regulation Code: 4100-R EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN.

“Early Admission to Kindergarten Information for Parents

A four-year-old preschool child may be considered for Early Admission to Kindergarten in Alexander County Schools under the following conditions:

Step 1: Intent and Evaluation

**Intent:** The parent/guardian seeking early admission to kindergarten for a four-year-old child must request permission from the principal of the elementary school where the child is likely to attend in writing no later than the first thirty (30) days of the new school year of the interest in early admission to kindergarten. An evaluation, as outlined below, must be provided by the parents seeking early enrollment:

**Evaluation:** A written report of a score of 98th percentile on an aptitude test and a score at the 98th percentile on an achievement test. Examples of student aptitude assessments are the Stanford-Binet, The Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, the Kaufman Anderson, and other comparable test administered by a licensed psychologist. Examples of student achievement tests are the Metropolitan Readiness Test, the Stanford Early School Achievement Test, The Mini Battery of Achievement, the Woodcock-Johnson, the Test of Early Mathematics Ability (TEMA), the Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA), or any other comparable test.

Obtaining the aptitude and achievement test results and reports are the sole responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) and at their expense.

Step 1 requires completion before proceeding to Step 2.

## Step 2: Application and Interview

**Application:** Parent(s)/guardian(s) provide work samples of the evidence of the advanced level of performance and need for early admission to kindergarten.

**Interview and Observation (Child):** The principal and school counselor or instructional coach will interview and observe the child at the school and may ask the child about or request demonstration of school-related behaviors, following rules, sharing, writing, and similar topics, in order to determine the child's level of readiness for the demands of school.

**Interview (Parents):** The principal, school counselor or instructional coach, and Director of Advanced Programs will interview the parents/guardians about the child's development, experiences, and advanced learning.

Step 2 requires completion before proceeding to Step 3.

### Step 3: Recommendation and Communication

Recommendation: The school principal will consult with the school team (counselor and/or instructional coach) and the Director of Advanced Programs regarding his/her recommendation for early admission.

G.S. 115C-364(d) states early admission to kindergarten shall not automatically result in the placement of the child in the program for academically gifted students. By the time the child has enrolled for 90 calendar days, or at any earlier time that school officials determine that the child has adjusted satisfactorily and shall be allowed to remain in school, the gifted identification team shall review the child's information to determine if the child shall receive gifted services."

Grade and Subject Acceleration is an additional option in Alexander County Schools for our AIG students through the following procedures:

1. Student data is discussed in PLC.
2. Students who are 1 grade level ahead of their peers and demonstrate mastery of curriculum taught are identified. If additional testing is needed to confirm the need for subject or grade acceleration, it is administered.
3. Parents/students are contacted with options for acceleration.
4. Student is placed in higher academic area as needed. This can be in WIN time, in core instruction or in small group instruction.
5. Student performance is evaluated through formative and summative assessments to continue acceleration placement.

Compacting Instruction enables gifted students to skip curriculum standards and objectives and take challenge content in its place. This is processed through the following steps at the middle school level:

1. Students who have demonstrated mastery of the material to be learned (as indicated through diagnostic scores, EOG's, teacher recommendation points, check-ins, and classroom assessment data are permitted discussed at PLC.
2. They are allowed to register for enrichment opportunities such as Advanced Weightlifting, Advanced Art, Advanced Chorus, Jazz Band, Yearbook, Battle of the Books, Etc. during our 45 minute Acceleration Block.
3. They are required to complete 45 minutes of iReady at school and 45 minutes of iReady at home each week. However, they skip much of the STP/Tool box work that is completed with students who are on/below grade level.
4. In regards to in-class instruction, most AIG students are in the same cohort. Therefore, teachers eliminate previously mastered curriculum as they see fit. We have created/sought out high-school level curriculum for specific students.
5. This opportunity is presented to parents at the beginning of the year through in-person meetings.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery at the high school is handled by the Advanced Programs Department, and all staff supporting AIG students assists when appropriate following state and district guidelines as outlined in ACS Board Policy, Policy Code: 3420 STUDENT PROMOTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY, section G:

"The superintendent shall provide opportunities for students in grades 9 through 12 to earn course credit by demonstrating mastery of course material without first completing the regular period of classroom instruction in the course. Students in grades 6 through 8 may earn credit by demonstrated mastery for high school courses offered in middle school. To earn credit by demonstrated mastery, students must demonstrate a deep understanding of the content standards and application of knowledge through a multi-phase assessment, in accordance with standards established by the State Board of Education and any additional standards established by the superintendent."

Parents/guardians and students are informed of this opportunity through the counseling department. The counseling department will share application and the process for accessing Credit by Demonstrated Mastery.

Dual enrollment is an option for high school students through MOA's available through a partnership between ACHS and CVCC while following State, District, and school policies. Some students access other community colleges when CVCC is not available. This procedure is outlined in ACS Board Policy, Policy Code: 3101 DUAL ENROLLMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES

"In its effort to provide a rigorous expanded curriculum that will adequately prepare students for future educational and workplace endeavors, the board will support high school students who also wish to enroll in classes taught by a college, university, community college, or other approved entity in accordance with the requirements of this policy, state law, and State Board of Education policy.

#### A. Career and College Promise

The Career and College Promise program is designed to offer qualified high school students structured dual enrollment opportunities that provide both entry-level job skills as well as pathways leading to a certificate, diploma, or degree.

The board, in collaboration with local community colleges, may provide for dual enrollment of a qualified high school student in community college courses through (1) a Career and Technical Education Pathway leading to a job credential, certificate, or diploma aligned with one or more high school Career Clusters or (2) a College Transfer Pathway leading to college transfer credits.

The board may also partner with institutions of higher education to establish cooperative innovative high school programs that enable a student to concurrently obtain a high school diploma and (1) begin or complete an associate degree program, (2) master a certificate or vocational program, or (3) earn up to two years of college credit within five years. Students are eligible for these programs beginning in ninth grade.

The superintendent shall develop procedures consistent with this policy, state law, and State Board policies.

#### B. Other College Courses

The superintendent shall develop procedures and requirements for awarding high school credit toward graduation upon request to students who self-enroll in courses taught by a college, university, community college, or other approved entity. Credit toward graduation will be granted only for courses that are consistent with the policies and



standards of the school system and State Board requirements, including the requirements of State Board of Education Policy CCRE-001, which defines "Course for Credit."

The principal must approve the course in advance. Prior to granting approval, the principal shall determine whether the course is eligible for credit toward graduation in accordance with the procedures and requirements developed by the superintendent.

The parent or guardian of the student must give permission for the student to take the course, and the student must complete any forms required by the school system. Enrollment of a student in a course is the responsibility of the student and the student's parent or guardian. Unless otherwise provided, all special fees and charges and any special transportation needs are the responsibility of the student and the student's parent or guardian.

For a student to receive credit toward high school graduation, the school at which the course is offered must provide such essential information as is generally included in official transcripts of school records. This information must include:

- (1) a description of the content and subject matter covered by the course;
- (2) the number of clock hours of instruction in the course; and
- (3) the student's achievement or performance level in the course.

In addition, a syllabus that includes course goals, course objectives, course activities, and grade requirements must be provided.

The student also must meet any other requirements established by the superintendent."

Early Graduation is an additional option at the high school level. Parents are informed of this option through the counseling center and procedures are outlined in Board Policy Code: 3460 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

"Graduation prior to that of one's class may be permitted on the basis of criteria approved by the board upon recommendation by the superintendent. A student may qualify for early graduation provided he or she:

- has a written plan approved by the principal; and
- has accumulated 28 units of credit

#### Graduation Certificates

Graduation certificates will be awarded to eligible students in accordance with the standards set forth in State Board Policy GRAD-010."

#### \* Practice H

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

As Alexander County School MTSS Teams progress in their practice, teachers are becoming stronger data leaders, specifically in this instance, to subgroups and underrepresented demographics in AIG. We serve a large percentage of our gifted students in the regular classroom, but all schools (excluding grades 9-12) have built-in an enrichment/intervention time into the master schedule. Indeed, the district's strategic plan states, "Principals and the School Improvement Teams will craft master schedules that incorporate structured opportunities for remediation and enrichment of student learning at a minimum of three times per week."

Revisiting the MTSS Teams role in identification of underrepresented populations, school teams occasionally request varied screening tools and methods for EL, ED, 2E, and others. Our district uses CogAT as a universal AIG screener in 4th grade, and this test allows for IEP and Section 504 Modifications. A more user-friendly teacher referral form will be used to allow for greater ease in staff identification of potential AIG students.

Advanced learning options for students at all grade levels will be provided during school hours during a club or WIN (What I Need) time as well as after school opportunities. These opportunities include but are not limited to STEM clubs, enrichment clubs, mentorships, job shadowing, etc.

Each year, AIG District Lead will meet with EC and EL representatives to synergize efforts for effective programming for twice exceptional and EL student populations. They will work together to determine talent development opportunities for schools with high levels of under represented groups. The Instructional Coach team in cooperation with the AIG District Lead will work to develop talent development opportunities for K-3 in all grade levels.

**\* Practice I**

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

Alexander County Schools encourages a broad range of activities that meet the needs and interests of AIG students including but not limited to the activities listed below. AIG students and parents access information about these programs through their school personnel.

**Elementary**

- Battle of the Books
- County Spelling Bee
- Junior Beta Club
- Stock Market Clubs
- District Holiday Card Art Competition
- STEAM Days
- Little Read in partnership with Lenoir-Rhyne University Visiting Writers Series

- Robotics Clubs

- Book Clubs

- Poetry Clubs

#### Middle School

- Battle of the Books

- County Spelling Bee

- Beta Club

- Stock Market Clubs

- Real Money/Real World Program

- District Holiday Card Art Competition

- Advanced courses in Chorus and Band

- All-district Band Auditions

- STEAM Days

- Robotics Clubs

- Science Olympiad

#### High School

- NCSSM classes including three full courses offered at a high school and students who attend NCSSM online
- Beta Club
- Stock Market Clubs
- District Holiday Card Art Competition
- Advanced courses in Chorus and Band
- All-district Band Auditions

#### \* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

Develop presentations for areas ways to increase rigor and best practices in all classrooms.

Update MTSS documentation on District website to include AIG discussions in PLC.

Develop checklists to ensure active AIG instruction, communication and fidelity of processes across the county to ensure appropriate instructional opportunities at all levels.

#### Planned Sources of Evidence

\* DEP Timeline

\* MTSS Structure Flowchart

\* Meeting Notes from Principal meetings, Coach meetings and Special Events planning Meetings

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link

✿ AIG Differentiation Education  
Plan Review Dates and  
Expectations

✿ Parent Letter- Kindergarten  
through 3rd Grade Differentiation  
Plan

✿ Parent Letter- 4th and 5th  
Grade Identification Plan

✿ Parent Letter- 9th through  
12th Grade Identification Plan

### Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

#### Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0

### Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

#### \* Practice A

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

Instructional Coaches-AIG and AIG Lead teachers collaborate with general classroom teachers to discuss individual student needs and provide instructional assistance with identified AIG students. Additionally, the Instructional Coaches and AIG Leads plan with content area teachers to enrich the curriculum delivery within the general classroom. As part of our district's goal to integrate AIG identification and services into the MTSS process, our service options will be prescriptive tiers. As with all students, Tier 1 occurs within the general curriculum with differentiated core to meet AIG students' needs. At this tier, curriculum is modified and adapted to address the different levels of student need and interest. Teachers of AIG students modify or adapt core curriculum by content, process, and/or product. The content is differentiated by increasing the pace of instruction, or the deepening skills with the standard. The instruction should challenge gifted learning and re-design what mastery looks like for these students. AIG students are then able to demonstrate mastery and depth of knowledge by multiple venues - oral or written presentations, performance-based projects, etc. Moving into Tier II, supplemental instruction occurs in the form of enrichment or intervention. Students who require additional support to be challenged receive Tier II services. As noted earlier in Alexander County Schools' AIG Plan, the district's strategic plan states, "Principals and the School Improvement Teams will craft master schedules that incorporate structured opportunities for remediation and enrichment of student learning at a minimum of three times per week." Tier II instructional time and opportunities are built into all schools' instructional schedules. Instruction and learning opportunities for students take the form of enrichment opportunities, such as district-wide cross-grade level AIG performance-based project days, accelerated courses including Math I for eighth graders, and

curriculum compacting. The full continuum of support is to be made available to meet student needs. Finally, Tier III is for those students who need intensive acceleration and support. These students comprise a smaller portion of our AIG population. Service options for AIG students at this tier, with individual consideration, includes, grade acceleration, early promotion to elementary, middle or high, Advanced Placement and/or Capstone Courses, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, etc.

Alexander County Schools has adopted a curriculum model utilizing the Learning Focused Schools planning model. This planning model embeds highly effective instructional strategies that promote communication skills, writing to demonstrate conceptual understanding and higher order thinking skills. All staff are trained in these instructional techniques and new staff is trained as they enter our county. The NCSCOS for ELA, science and social studies has been paced for every grade level and content area in high school and teachers have developed Learning Focused lesson plans to cover each standard. Rigor and acceleration with extension and enrichment opportunities are built into each lesson.

Staff in every school have also been trained in blended learning and the first county cohort is currently finishing the Rethink Education professional development through NCDPI. This cohort will complete turn around training to bring blended learning to more classrooms in the coming years.

Common planning time is consistent in every school in Alexander County to allow AIG trained teachers and coaches time to plan with grade level teams. Data days and grade level planning ½ days are used each nine weeks to supplement the time teachers have to work together and discuss curriculum and best practices.

#### **\* 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.

Alexander County Schools provides ongoing professional development for classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators addressing best practices in curriculum and instruction, including with gifted students. Locally-endorsed



AIG teachers model and share expertise, fac grade level PLCs, and track student data. These teachers assist other teachers in development of lessons and instructional materials to address the needs of gifted students. Additionally, NWRESA is offering a Regional AIG Local Endorsement honored by all districts in the Northwest Region. Additionally, this training would prepare participants to take the AIG Praxis, should they choose. AIG District Lead and Instructional Coaches assist principals in scheduling or grouping students based on data.

Continued focus on Learning Focused Lesson Planning and the push into the Acceleration piece of this training will ensure continued emphasis and training on rigor, depth and complexity of materials, instruction and student product.

Training on personalized learning with playlists, hyperdocs and other strategies has been offered in Alexander County for teachers at all levels. Flipped classrooms, flex model and rotation model are all options which may be used to personalize instruction and meet the needs of AIG students. Socratic seminars, book clubs and learning contracts are other methods of instruction often utilized by classroom teachers. Pre assessments and teacher checks are built into each of these models to ensure continued learning and the appropriateness of the instructional model for individual students. Professional development on Breakoutedu with classroom kits was also available for all AIG teachers in the county. At least one set of materials has been delivered to each school with a trained teacher and additional sets are available for check out.

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

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

Alexander County School Department of Advanced Programs maintains a continuously updating professional and instructional resource library. The library includes resources such as a classroom set of Breakout Boxes and sets of STEAM resources that can be checked out by all instructional staff in the district. Resource topics include differentiation, problem, project, and performance-based learning, critical thinking, social and emotional needs of the gifted learner and multitudes of others. A Google Form can be found on the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted page on the Alexander County Schools District Website to request materials or book studies. For schools with higher AIG populations, materials have been given for those site-based resource libraries.

Books for Battle of the Books at Elementary and Middle School are purchased and provided annually. Competitions are organized to promote the love of reading. Elementary schools in partnership with Lenoir-Rhyne University Visiting Writer Series provide a novel, curriculum, and author meet and greet with book signing. Technology 1:1 Initiative (Grades K-12) allows students across grade spans to take classes ranging from STEM to NCSSM.

All Learning Focused Lesson Plans for science, social studies and ELA with acceleration and highly effective instructional strategies embedded are stored in a Google folder available to all district employees. These lessons are continually updated and improved through teams of instructional coaches, grade level leads and AIG teachers.

#### **\* Practice D**

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

Alexander County Schools has a 1:1 initiative. The high, middle, and elementary schools use a Learning Management System (LMS) to better individualize instruction and allow for collaboration, critical thinking, curiosity, communication, and creativity. Teachers utilize Google Classroom, Moodle, and Canvas to create differentiated lessons and instruction for advanced learners. The district also utilized the training available through NWRESA in Canvas to locally-endorse teachers in AIG. Through the experiential learning, the teachers experience the medium by which students can explore deep-dives in instructional content and interest topics.

Furthermore, we reach outside our school community to develop partnerships to offer our advanced students content and skill development at an advanced level. Many of these community partners provide material, experiences, instruction, and resources to our teachers and students through mentoring, job shadowing, and/or apprenticeships.

In Alexander County Schools we strive to bring an innovative practice into our classrooms. The majority of our classrooms are outfitted with interactive whiteboards, document cameras, teacher computers, and projectors. At each grade level, a variety of technologies are used to engage and motivate students. For instance, in the lower primary grades a number of teachers are using the SeeSaw to promote student-managed learning through the use of online journaling and blogging. Also, a number of teachers have attended professional development to learn best practices for using G Suite apps (Google Apps) for digital teaching and learning. In every school, there are technologically savvy teachers using tools such as Screencast-O-Matic, Annotate.net, Classkick, Sphero, Canvas, and Dolnk Green Screen (for student creation).

Furthermore, special interest clubs like Robotics Club and Rocket Club are offered, as well as soap box derby cars and other STEM activities, on a regular basis per our strategic plan. Our technology specialist works with each school to bring Virtual Reality, Spheros, Bee Bots, Merge Cubes, etc. into every grade level to spark creativity and a love for life long learning.

ELA, science and social studies instruction in Alexander County Schools is planned using a Learning Focused Lesson Plan. This plan automatically incorporates collaboration with turn and talk and pair activities, communication through speaking and listening activities and higher ordered thinking skills through a focus on rigor through writing and culminating assessments.

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**\* Practice E**

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

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Alexander County Schools, through the MTSS process, uses i-Ready as a universal screener. Other assessment tools like mClass and TRC are used to analyze individual needs. In addition, beginning with third grade, reading and math have pre- and post assessments, and district benchmark assessments are given and analyzed via SchoolNet. The data from these assessments is disaggregated at a district level to inform and improve core practices with a team of instructional coaches, principals and district leads. The data is also disaggregated at a school level with the principal, instructional coach and classroom teachers to inform school level core, classroom instruction and student grouping. This data can result in grouping changes continuously throughout the school year but changes will occur at least three times per year after county-wide benchmarks.

End of year assessment data informs student classroom placement to ensure that AIG students are grouped with students with similar learning styles and acceleration needs.

As with all useful data, formative assessments should be on-going. The Learning Focused Lesson Plans have formative assessments that follow each learning activity and summative assessments at the end of each lesson. These assessments are used to ensure mastery of content before the next lesson and are also used to identify students and groups of students who need intervention and acceleration of content.

Data from county and state benchmarks and end of grade assessments is broken down into 4 quadrants to analyze the relationship between student performance and student growth. Students who are high performing but low growth are discussed through PLCs to determine best practices to ensure growth for all students, including our highest AIG students.

#### **\* Practice F**

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

Summer Jumpstart opportunities allow AIG students transitioning from elementary to middle school and middle to high school to develop relationships with staff at their new school and allow students and guardians a forum to ask questions and express concerns. High school freshmen experience a Freshman Academy which creates a more personalized experience for these new high school students and has a counselor focused on their needs and in the same hall as the majority of their classrooms.

All students in Alexander County Schools are screened through PanoramaEd. These student surveys ask students to reflect on their mindsets and approaches to learning. This is a universal SEL Screener that informs our educational

practices and helps us continue to identify opportunities for growth and development with our students. Students in grades 6-12 respond to the surveys independently. For students in grades K-5, their teachers complete teacher-perception questions for each student. Our survey questions address the components of CASEL's 5 Core SEL Competencies, Self-Management, Self-Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making, Relationship Skills, and Social Awareness. The results of this survey are disaggregated at a district and school level to identify the needs of student groups including AIG students. MTSS teams including social workers and counselors work together to identify group and individual needs and create plans for addressing those SEL needs. Teachers have access to PanoramaEd lessons to use in their classrooms. Counselors and social workers have curriculum access as well for materials to use with small groups with identified needs.

Beginning in Kindergarten, elementary students have a range of instructional practices with social and emotional support. These options include:

- Cluster Grouping
- Flexible Grouping
- Differentiated Instruction
- Teacher consults with AIG Specialist/Instructional Coaches
- Interest-based activities
- Technology-based opportunities
- Differentiated instruction
- Enrichment activities
- AIG-IC consultation with student

For middle schools:

- Cluster Grouping

- Flexible Grouping
- Differentiated Instruction
- Teacher consults with Instructional Coaches
- Interest-based activities
- Technology-based opportunities
- Differentiated instruction
- Enrichment activities
- AIG-IC consultation with student
- Advanced math and/or language opportunities

For high school:

- Advanced and Honors classes
- Advanced electives
- Schedule planning with counselor
- AP Academy
- AP Capstone
- Governor's School opportunities
- Dual Enrollment

### **\* Practice G**

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

All students begin and progress at different rates. All students deserve to be taught and challenged to reach their highest potential. We encourage our teachers to complete the NWRESA Canvas class for AIG endorsement so they can utilize strategies and differentiated curriculum to meet the needs of AIG students. We have implemented iReady for identification and monitoring and will be tracking this implementation in all elementary schools. The district AIG program will work with principals to implement acceleration, enrichment, and advancement within their schools.

Early intervention and talent development begins in kindergarten with the observation and collection of data for NC ELI. This assessment encourages teachers to intentionally set up learning opportunities in their classrooms to identify levels of achievement for all students. Students are rated on a continuum of skill levels that range above to below grade level. The students at the higher end of the continuum are recognized as having potential for high achievement and needing differentiated opportunities.

K-2 classrooms use centers, STEM bins and robotics opportunities such as Merge Cubes and Bee Bots to encourage all students, and develop interests and strengths across grade levels while allowing time and opportunity for leveled instruction as well.

### **\* Practice H**

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

Similar to the majority of students, AIG students' school day is spent with content classroom teachers. As such, the bulk of enriched and/advanced instruction is provided by these teachers. In order to ensure appropriate instruction continued collaboration is tantamount. Instructional Coaches and AIG Lead teachers collaborate with general

classroom teachers to discuss individual student needs and provide instructional assistance with identified AIG students. Additionally the IC and AIG Leads plan with content area teachers to enrich the curriculum delivery within the general classroom. All instructional staff at grade levels have developed Learning Focused lesson plans for Science, ELA, and Social Studies. These plans are key to individualizing instruction to meet student needs. Acceleration and differentiation is often embedded right in the plan. The Honors Level focus maps have further been reviewed by the Superintendent of Curriculum, Director of Exceptional Children, Director of Advanced Programs, and Director of High School Curriculum.

In K-2 classrooms, small group leveled instruction in reading and writing allows students the opportunity to be challenged on their academic level. In K-8 classrooms, blended learning utilizing playlists and learning paths allow opportunities for students to extend learning beyond the basic level of understanding.

iReady instruction also allows students to work on their individual level. Students who test above grade level are automatically placed in appropriate lessons. Students who place out of iReady instruction at an 8th grade level can then be placed in Kahn Academy and receive lesson instruction to continue their accelerated path.

If students perform at an entire grade level ahead in a subject or overall, they can be placed in a higher grade level in a particular subject or even advanced to a grade level ahead of their age level peers.

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#### **\* Practice I**

Develops and documents a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/guardians to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

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DEPs are completed annually and teachers review strategies and plans. This process begins in PLCs with the school's Instructional Coach and the grade level team of teachers (at least one should be AIG certified). These DEPs are then discussed with parents at the first conference, changed to include parent/guardian input as needed, signed and added to the student's AIG folder annually.

If a parent/guardian has further questions, they can request a meeting with the school principal and/or the District AIG Lead. The results of this meeting will be documented and added to the student's AIG folder.

In transition years between elementary and middle school and then middle and high school, teachers evaluate AIG student progress and work with counselors and Instructional Coaches to ensure proper academic placement of all AIG students.

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


Develop set presentations for K-12 staff on student identification, especially identification of student groups who are often overlooked.

Develop set presentations for K-2 staff on Talent Development. Add resources to the AIG library for K-2 students specifically.

Create a checklist for school processes to maintain communication with staff and families concerning student placement and curriculum and instruction services.

### Planned Sources of Evidence

- \* Service Delivery Menu and Sample Service Options
- \* Curriculum Documents
- \* Resource Library Materials List and Checkout Sheet

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	 <a href="#"><u>Service Delivery Menu-Elementary, Middle and High School</u></a>

## Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

### Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0

#### Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

##### \* Practice A

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

The AIG District Lead is a state certified AIG teacher.

The job description of the District Lead for AIG includes:

- guiding, planning, developing, implementing, revising and monitoring the AIG plan and the AIG Program
- consulting with a team of three state certified AIG-licensed teachers, the district team of Instructional Coaches and the Associate Superintendent of Instruction
- makes decisions with the guidance of the team regarding guidance, planning, development, implementation, program revisions, and resources

This AIG team is included in district level MTSS meetings, planning and presenting professional development and maintaining and encouraging classroom teacher AIG certification in every grade level at every school.

The AIG team presents one standard of the AIG plan to the district team of Instructional Coaches at the beginning of the year to clarify processes. This team then helps review the AIG plan every three years and offers feedback on changes made.

### \* Practice B

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

Our identified AIG students are "AIG All Day Everyday" and as a result all teachers are responsible for delivering high level, differentiated and appropriate content. All teachers have the opportunity to attain regional AIG endorsement through NWRESA, with the district expectation that all core instruction teachers K-8 will attain through staggered cohorts. With the assistance of AIG District Lead and AIG certified Instructional Coaches, all teachers, including the locally endorsed, are responsible for:

- Implementing all six standards of the Alexander County Schools AIG Plan,
- Reviewing and analyzing formative and summative data for all AIG students,
- Differentiating curriculum appropriate for gifted students,
- Creating instructional and coaching targets based on data analysis,
- Collaborating with support staff to meet the cognitive, academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted students,
- Facilitating informal sessions to inform parents of the identification process and criteria.
- Examining demographic representation of school,
- Promoting extracurricular opportunities,
- Advocating for gifted learners,
- Participating and documenting AIG student discussion at MTSS as part of the decision making process,

High school teachers include all previous objectives but additionally will:

- Develop and discuss with AIG students the opportunities in the AP Academy, Honors Level Courses, Dual Enrollment, etc.
- Identifying AIG student course failures and facilitating counseling with support staff.

### \* Practice C

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

All certified teachers receive continuing professional development on highly effective teaching strategies through Learning Focused Schools training. This training includes an emphasis on rigor and acceleration of content.

All certified teachers are required to take continuing education classes to renew their teaching license. Alexander County Schools encourages continuing education for AIG certified teachers by paying for substitutes and registration fees for the NC AIG conference. Each teacher who attends then completes turn around training in their own PLC and school to share resources and strategies from the conference. The AIG District Lead also creates a yearly newsletter sharing highlights from the conference and each attending teacher's takeaway session with implementation ideas for our district.

Certified AIG teachers are also encouraged to deliver high quality professional development on best practices for their school and district wide. For example, this year, Breakoutedu professional development was delivered by a local AIG teacher and kits with individual site licenses were provided to all attendees.

Professional development on best practices is also job embedded as AIG certified teachers and Instructional Coaches lead and/or participate in MTSS meetings and PLC discussions planning acceleration opportunities for students based on school, classroom and individual data collected.

Instructional Coaches and Administrators will receive continued professional development through discussion of AIG best practices in weekly (IC) and monthly(administrators) district meetings.

**\* 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.

Elementary students demonstrating advanced academic achievement through assessment and observation will be clustered with peers of similar learning capacity in classrooms with teachers who have completed the thirty hours through the NWRESA AIG regional-endorsement or have earned state certification through an Institute of Higher Education. Students identified as AG, AR, or AM will be clustered or flexibly grouped in core academic areas.

Middle School AIG students will be placed in classrooms with other identified students in at least two core subjects in classrooms with teachers who have completed the thirty hours through the NWRESA AIG regional-endorsement or have earned state certification through an Institute of Higher Education.

High school students are given preferential admission to Honors, Advanced Placement, Capstone Courses, NCVPS, etc. classrooms with teachers who have completed the thirty hours through the NWRESA AIG regional-endorsement or have earned state certification through an Institute of Higher Education. All AP teachers are required to attend a content specific week long AP Summer Institute presented by the College Board. Each course has its own individualized training.

The AIG District Lead keeps documentation in a Google folder/file on staff at each school who have attained AIG certification. This information is shared with administration at the beginning and end of each school year to assist in

placement of AIG students with AIG certified teachers for core instruction.

Teachers who attain AIG certification will be recognized at a board meeting each spring.

**\* Practice E**

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

Information about teachers with AIG certification is updated and shared with principals twice a year. Information about NWRESA regional endorsement will be shared with all staff as available. County policies concerning stipends for attaining AIG certification will be shared with all staff to offer training opportunities to recruit teachers within the district to attain AIG certification. Teachers who successfully complete the NWRESA regional endorsement or a state licensing program will earn a \$500 county stipend. Alexander County Schools will also pay for one attempt at the AIG Praxis per teacher.

District recruiting techniques through TeacherMatch and College Job fairs will continue to search for and emphasize teachers with AIG certification to continue to develop our instructional AIG team.

**\* Practice F**

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

Alexander County Schools will develop a framework for K-2 identification complete with professional development for teachers about how to be a talent scout in early childhood and how to develop opportunities for talent development.

AIG District Lead will meet with Central Office staff to analyze demographic information about our AIG population as compared to the overall population. They will then work to develop ways to identify underrepresented populations to ensure equity and excellence in gifted education.

Our current MTSS processes use PLC and SST teams to identify students at all grade levels who are high achieving/high growth and/or high achieving/low growth as identified through Iready data disaggregation and local disaggregation of mClass and/or benchmark data. In these school based teams, service needs are determined or changed based on small group and individual needs.

The Alexander County AIG District Lead will update Instructional Coach teams and administration on the best practices as identified in the "Call to Action: Critical Actions to Realize Equity and Excellence in Gifted Education" and work within these teams to determine how these mindset, policy and practice changes work for Alexander County Schools.

#### **\* Practice G**

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

AIG Professional Development is developed in partnership with Alexander County Schools Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan Goal: Professional Excellence, Strategy 4 states that " Central office employees and school administrators will investigate and offer comprehensive staff development to classroom teachers and will support employees in the following areas (list is not all inclusive): Differentiation, inclusion, curriculum alignment..."



Further strategies under the same Strategic Plan Goal include writing a professional development plan that supports quality instruction and high achievement. As best practice in gifted education looks at each student and his/her needs, our professional development follows this practice and aligns with the MTSS framework in place in our system. In order to ensure all staff are receiving professional development regarding gifted learners, "AIG All Day Everyday" sessions will be held on topics ranging from curriculum compacting to emotional wellness. The AIG District Lead will work with the Associate Superintendent of Instruction, Counselor Lead and Instructional Coach Lead to embed professional development into the monthly/weekly meetings for administrators, coaches and counselors as appropriate. The presentations used for each topic will then be posted on the district website for access for turn around training in PLCs and MTSS meetings.

Following professional development opportunities, teachers are encouraged to share learning in PLCs and reflect on the effect of new learning on their classroom instruction and student learning. Follow up support is offered after professional development opportunities.

#### \* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

Develop and follow a district wide plan for certification of all teachers of reading and math K-8.

Create a professional development plan for AIG topics and have presentations available for all staff.

Work with lead county counselor to develop processes and lessons for AIG student mental health needs.

#### Planned Sources of Evidence

\* Attendance Rosters for Staff Development

\* List of Teachers who are AIG Certified

\* Fliers for Staff Development Offerings

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link



## Standard 5: Partnerships

### Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0

## Standard 5: Partnerships

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

### \* Practice A

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

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

In the fall of 2022, all AIG parents will be invited to join a parent advisory group which will meet twice a year to plan events for the AIG community and discuss academic and social/emotional needs of our AIG student population. Interest in PAGE (Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education) group in Alexander County will be gauged from this group.

AIG District Lead will partner with EC District Lead and EL District Lead to identify parent liaisons for these underrepresented AIG groups and participate in community outreach events with these groups to educate and involve parents from these populations.

### **\* Practice B**

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

Alexander County Schools is fortunate to have partnerships between Lenoir-Rhyne University, Duke TIP, CVCC, NCSSM, and our early college, high school, middle schools, and elementary schools. Through these partnerships, our students can execute special projects, video conferences for challenging material, participate in academic competitions, and mentorships. Elementary schools in partnership with Lenoir-Rhyne University Visiting Writer Series provide a novel, curriculum, and author meet and greet with book signing.

Alexander County Public Education Foundation offers grants for AIG teachers to use to meet AIG student needs in the classroom. The partnership between STEMWEST and Alexander County Schools brings opportunities for teacher professional development and student opportunities with Institutes of Higher Education such as Appalachian State University's Geology Department and Lego enrichment materials for K-8 students through Discovery Legos and Spike Prime Kits, etc.

At the high school level, community groups and businesses, such as the Lion's Club and State Employees Credit Union, give scholarships available to AIG students. CVCC partners with the district to sustain an Early College and Alexander Furniture Academy. Through partnerships with local fire departments and Anchor Richie, Alexander Fire Academy is currently in operation and available to AIG students. Internships are available through Apprenticeship Catawba; this program has increased from 8 students to 24 in just one year.

For our advanced CTE students, we offer Advanced Studies, in person and virtual internships and in-person job shadowing. We have a CVCC-CTE Advisory Council that is made up of business and industry partners to build relationships and opportunities for ACS students. CCP courses through CVCC are available that address both academic courses as well as things like welding and early childhood. CVCC and Alexander County Schools received a Golden Leaf grant and have started a Mechatronics lab with the first group starting in January 2022 which will eventually develop into a CCP course. Students participate in our CTSOs (Career and Technical Student

Organization) like FFA and Skills USA which offer advanced learning opportunities. They also have the opportunity to take part in regional and state level competitions in skills that are outside of the classroom such as FFA competitions include Parliamentary Procedure, Public Speaking, Poultry Judging, Cattle Handling, Hunter Safety and more. SkillsUSA competitions this year include drafting, carpentry, electrical wiring, firefighting, information technology services, etc.

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

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

An AIG advisory group has been developed to develop, implement, monitor and revise the current AIG plan. This team is composed of district-level curriculum and instruction leaders, AIG-licensed teachers, parents/guardians representing all demographic subgroups, counselors and instructional facilitators. This team meets bi-annually with the goal of improving identification practices, including underrepresented populations, enhancing gifted education, and the goals of AIG.

Advisory team discussion will be documented on the Google Checklist available on the district website and presented to the Board of Education during the annual AIG update. The AIG Advisory Team has the responsibility for monitoring the AIG Plan. This group will meet bi-annually and includes district-level curriculum and instruction leaders, AIG-licensed teachers, parents/guardians, community members and instructional facilitators. The team will review data and evaluate progress in the AIG Plan, review the AIG Plan, and increase parental membership on the team. The team examine the following questions routinely:

- What is the AIG population compared to total school population? What is the status of our underrepresented populations?
- How are placement decisions made? Are the decisions being made equitably? Are AIG students placed with AIG teachers (locally, regionally, or state-licensed)?
- How are schedules for AIG students arranged to support individual needs?
- What instructional resources are needed? How will these resources be utilized, and fidelity of implementation monitored?
- How are we ensuring rich AIG professional development for teachers?

Childcare will be provided as needed for this event if in person or this meeting may meet through Zoom if preferred by the group. An interpreter will be provided if needed to be inclusive of all groups invited to participate.

During this meeting, a school counselor will also be present to facilitate discussion of SEL concerns for the AIG population.

#### **\* Practice D**

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

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

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

The AIG Plan will be posted on the District AIG Website. An informational PowerPoint will be presented at a Board Meeting, Principal Meeting, Curriculum Team Meeting, Beginning of the Year Meetings and Open Houses. The high school options will be presented annually to eighth grade students before ninth grade registration. Offers will be made to present the plan to commissioners, Rotary Clubs, Delta Kappa Gamma meetings, etc. A report on Gifted Education and Students will be presented annually to the Board of Education and Advisory Team.

Specific topic presentations occur to inform parents and families and community of the opportunities, events, and applications for AIG students. Resources are posted on the District AIG Website and advertised through automated calls. When appropriate, the parent's or guardian's native language is used.

Sample resources include:

- AIG Processes
- AIG Documentation and Forms
- Links to the National Association of Gifted Children - Resources for Parents
- Information about Social Emotional Needs of the Gifted Child

Communication about the AIG program and opportunities for AIG students is on-going. Information is shared on the ACS district website, through social media, by individual schools, through school counselors and in yearly parent conferences each fall. Translator services are available as needed and all forms are available in multiple languages.

#### \* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

Update all information on district website.

Team with Multilanguage Learner Teachers to hold meetings to disseminate information and resources.

#### Planned Sources of Evidence

\* Parent Survey

\* Student Survey

\* Flier from Community Events

#### Documents

Type	Document Template	Document/Link
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AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources

N/A

✎ AIG - Certified Staff Survey.

✎ AIG - Certified Staff Survey.

✎ AIG - Parent Survey.



Standard 6: Program Accountability

**Alexander County Schools (020) Regular Local School District - FY 2022 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2022-2025 - Rev 0**

**Standard 6: Program Accountability**

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

**\* Practice A**

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

The District Lead surveyed various stakeholder groups including AIG parents/guardians, AIG secondary students and certified staff to update the 2022-2025 AIG plan. In person meetings have not been planned due to Covid restrictions but will be planned starting in the fall of 2022 on a bi-annual basis. School Improvement Teams with parent representation were also consulted regarding the 2022-2025 AIG Plan.

Alexander County Schools developed the AIG Plan for 2022-2025 using the updated AIG Standards and the Unpacking Document provided by the state. The plan was developed using the information from our program self-evaluation and in conjunction with the AIG Planning Team consisting of AIG certified Instructional Coaches and the District AIG Lead and the AIG Advisory Board consisting of The Planning Team and additional AIG certified teachers, parents/guardians and community members. The plan is expected to be submitted to the ACS Board of Education for approval at the June scheduled meeting. After approval, the AIG Plan for 2022-2025 will be submitted to NCDPI for review and comment.

**\* 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.

Advisory team will meet at least twice a year and discussion will be documented on the Google Checklist available on the district website and presented to the Board of Education during the annual AIG update. The AIG Advisory Team has the responsibility for monitoring the AIG Plan. This group will meet bi-annually and includes district-level curriculum and instruction leaders, AIG-licensed teachers, parents/guardians, community members and instructional facilitators. The team will review data and evaluate progress in the AIG Plan, review the AIG Plan, and increase parental membership on the team. The team examine the following questions routinely:

- What is the AIG population compared to total school population? What is the status of our underrepresented populations?
- How are placement decisions made? Are the decisions being made equitably? Are AIG students placed with AIG teachers (locally, regionally, or state-licensed)?
- How are schedules for AIG students arranged to support individual needs?
- What instructional resources are needed? How will these resources be utilized, and fidelity of implementation monitored?
- How are we ensuring rich AIG professional development for teachers?

#### **\* 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.

Alexander County Schools is a strong proponent of transparency and collaboration. As such, the AIG District Lead and the Director of Finance ensure that the state funds allocated are spent according to the state policy. The budget is developed and aligned with the District Strategic Plan Standards and AIG Standards. All expenditure decisions are based on student benefit. Sample expenditures include book purchases for the Little Read and Battle of the Books competitions, professional development including attendance at the NC AIG Conference, stipends for attaining AIG certification, etc.

**\* Practice D**

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

AIG student data (growth, achievement, underrepresented populations, dropout rates etc.) is shared annually with the ACS Board of Education, district leadership, principals, instructional coaches, and advisory board. This data is gathered by the District AIG Lead and Central Office staff and is analyzed by the AIG Planning team to determine trends and areas of improvement; annual targets can be developed and communicated to staff in order to support AIG resources and instruction.

**\* Practice E**

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

AIG student data is disaggregated annually for underrepresented populations. This data drives the selection of aptitude and achievement tests. Additionally, the data drives training and identification processes to target the populations not served, attempts to address this gap by educating teachers, and purposeful selection of non-verbal assessments.

If a student from an underrepresented population listed does not place by pathway, the student will be considered for testing. Retesting will be done using the NNAT-3 for students needing a non-verbal ability assessment, OLSAT for aptitude, or IOWA for achievement. Tests used in the pathways for identification and placement specifically include non-verbal assessments which research shows assist in the identification of underrepresented populations. Current underrepresented AIG student percentages are pulled and compared to the district student composition of the same populations. This ensures the exact target percentage is known. Particular attention is given to potentially gifted students from culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, or other challenged populations in the placement process.

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### Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	---	---	---	---	---	10.75%
Male	---	---	<5%	---	9.01%	---	9.86%
Total	---	---	<5%	---	6.22%	---	10.28%

### Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

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#### \* Practice F

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

The District AIG Lead maintains records of all state-licensed, locally-endorsed, and NWRESA regionally-endorsed AIG teachers in the district. Additionally, the AIG Lead maintains the cohort schedules for the local-endorsement process for the district. On-going, rich professional development is monitored and developed annually based on Strategic Plan and Professional Development Plan goals. In partnership with the district human resources department, records of professional development of all honors, AP, and Capstone course teachers are monitored. This data on credentials of personnel serving K-12 AIG students is utilized to form cohorts of teachers to attain AIG certification in order to work toward the county goal of 100% AIG certification for all ELA and math teachers in Alexander County Schools. This information is also shared with principals so that AIG students can be clustered and placed in the classrooms of AIG certified teachers.

**\* Practice G**

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

Alexanders County Schools solicits annual feedback from students, parents/guardians, teachers, and other stakeholders. The feedback on the AIG Plan and its implementation is gathered via a Google form. The District Lead gathers this data, analyzes it with the AIG Planning Team and presents the gathered information to the AIG Advisory Board. Parents are given time for questions and feedback at parent meetings at the beginning of school and transitional meetings. Parents are encouraged to contact the school principal with questions or concerns about implementation. This includes an email address for parents to contact on the district website.

**\* Practice H**

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

AIG data is collected and analyzed annually. Student data sources include, but are not limited to, EVAAS, state testing, and local assessment data. Teacher data is analyzed to determine best placement for gifted student growth, professional development, attendance, and licensure. Information is analyzed and trends are teased out. This information allows for progress monitoring of the AIG Plan. Sharing this data with stakeholders invites feedback for improvement and review of the plan while in cycle, ensuring the plan is reviewed and revised in a systematic method on a yearly basis. Every three years, the plan is fully revised and updated using the unpacking document provided by the state AIG team to the Local AIG Planning Team and reviewed by the local AIG Advisory Board. The plan may be revised between the formal revision set every three years by the state if the local AIG team determines revision is needed.

**\* Practice I**

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

Each spring, all releasable data will be presented to the ACS Board of Education in written and face-to-face report, including a question and answer session by the board. This will include student proficiency data and program evaluation data. Minutes of the meeting are reported county-wide to employees and the local newspaper. The report is

posted on the district website. This data is shared with parents, principals, and instructional facilitators at meetings during the school year. Principals disseminate this information to faculty and parent advisory groups.

**\* Practice J**

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

Parents/guardians must be fully informed and give consent for identification and placement. Instructional coaches or AIG certified teachers at each school will contact parents/guardians to share program details, resources, and answer questions prior to AIG placement.

If students are not identified as qualifying for AIG services, they will be placed on a watchlist maintained by the AIG District Lead and reevaluated after District and State end of year assessments are completed. Additional testing will be conducted by the AIG District Lead as required to confirm eligibility for AIG placement. This will occur each year after placement procedures in fall have been completed.

Students identified as AIG from other districts or states will be accepted as AIG students in Alexander County Schools with documentation provided by the other district or state.

Parents will sign consent for evaluation prior to testing. This must be done prior to a student being tested. There may be need for further assessment and nationally-normed tests may be administered more than one time, but not more than once within a two-year period. Prior approval is required from parents for all testing except for the initial screening in fourth grade (current AIG Plan) and all district-wide or grade-wide assessments. Consent for testing form can be found on the AIG website.

In Alexander County Schools, the procedure to resolve disagreements is outlined below and can be found on the District and District AIG website:

If a parent/guardian has a dispute with the gifted services within a classroom or with the determination of giftedness, a parent/guardian should follow the steps putlined below:

1. Meet with the classroom teacher and principal to discuss.
2. If this discussion fails to reveal a solution, the parent/guardian should meet with the principal and District AIG Lead.
3. If the parent/guardian after the aforementioned meetings continues to have dispute regarding gifted services within a classroom or with the determination of gifted need, the parent/guardian should follow the ACS BOE Policy 1740/4010 Student and Parent Grievance Procedure as found on the district website or can be provided by the school principal.

The following are excerpts from Policy 1740/4010 Student and Parent Grievance Procedure. The entire policy should be referenced in the event of a grievance.

“The Alexander County Board of Education strives to resolve concerns and complaints of students and parents whenever possible. To this end, the board has provided opportunities for students and parents to express their concern through processes established in board policies. Policy 1742/5060, Responding to Complaints, identifies these different processes, including a mechanism for resolving complaints in an informal manner.

While the board encourages resolutions of complaints through informal means, it recognizes that, at times, a formal process may be necessary for certain types of complaints or if the informal process did not produce satisfactory results. This policy provides a complaint procedure that may be used as described [in the ACS BOE Policy Manual].”

The following steps outline the official process for filing a formal complaint:

1. A grievance must be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the grievance. For a grievance submitted after the 30 day period that claims a violation, misapplication or misinterpretation of state or federal law, the superintendent or designee shall determine whether the grievance will be investigated after considering factors such as the reason for the delay; the extent of the delay; the effect of the delay on the ability of the school system to investigate and respond to the complaint; and whether the investigation of the complaint is necessary to meet any legal obligations. However, students and parents should recognize that delays in filing a grievance may significantly impair the ability of the school system to investigate and respond effectively to such complaints.
2. A student or parent who has a grievance must provide the following information in writing to the principal: (1) the name of the school system employee or other individual whose decision or action is at issue; (2) the specific decision(s) or action(s) at issue; (3) any board policy, state or federal law, state or federal regulation, or State Board of Education policy or procedure that the parent or student believes has been misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated; and (4) the specific resolution desired. (*Specific forms for reporting and documenting a grievance are located in Exhibit Code: 1740/4010-E-1 Student Grievance Board Appeal Form & Response.*) If there is not a specific decision or action at issue and no concern that state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated, then the procedure established in policy 1742/5060 is appropriate, and the principal shall address the concern following that policy.
3. Even if the principal is the employee whose decision or action is at issue, the student or parent must submit the grievance first to the principal in order for the principal to address the issue within the formal process. If, however, the grievance claims that a state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted, or violated, the student or parent may submit the grievance directly to the superintendent or designee.
4. If a student or parent wants to initiate a formal grievance regarding a decision by the superintendent that directly and specifically affects the student or parent, the general process described in this policy will be used, except that the grievance will be submitted to the executive director of human resources, who shall forward the grievance to the board chairperson.
5. Investigation Processes The principal shall schedule and hold a meeting with the grievant within five school days after the grievance has been filed with the principal. The principal shall conduct any investigation of the





facts necessary before rendering a decision.

6. Response by Principal: The principal shall provide a written response to the grievance within 10 days of meeting with the grievant. The response will include the principal's decision regarding resolution of the grievance and the basis for the decision. In responding, the principal may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law. A copy of the grievance and the principal's response shall be filed with the superintendent.
7. Response by Superintendent: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the principal's decision, the grievant may appeal the decision to the superintendent. The appeal must be made in writing within five days of receiving the principal's decision. The superintendent may review the written documents and respond or the superintendent may schedule and hold a conference with the grievant, principal, and any other individuals the superintendent determines to be appropriate within five school days after receiving the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal. In responding, the superintendent may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law.
8. Appeal to the Board: If the grievant has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, the grievant will have the right to appeal a final administrative decision to the board of education (see Mandatory Appeals below). If a grievant has not alleged such specific violations, he or she may request a board hearing, which the board may grant at its discretion (see Discretionary Appeals below).
9. Mandatory Appeals: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response to his or her grievance and has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, the grievant may appeal the decision to the board within five days of receiving the superintendent's response. A hearing will be conducted pursuant to board policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board. The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.
10. Discretionary Appeals: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response to his or her grievance but has *not* alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, then within five days of receiving the superintendent's response, the grievant may submit to the superintendent a written request for a

hearing before the board of education. If the full board will be meeting within two weeks of the request for a hearing, the board will decide at that time whether to grant a hearing. Otherwise, the board chairperson will appoint a three-person panel to review the request and determine whether to (1) deny the appeal; (2) review the superintendent's decision on the written record only; or (3) grant a hearing. The panel will report the decision to the board. The board may modify the decision of the panel upon majority vote at a board meeting. If the board denies the appeal, the decision of the superintendent will be final and the grievant will be notified within five days of the board's decision. If the board decides to grant a hearing, the hearing will be conducted pursuant to board policy 2500. The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of the decision to grant an appeal, unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

11. Notice: The superintendent or designee is responsible for providing effective notice to students, parents and school system employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating grievances.


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

Exit surveys or interviews with student drop outs.  
Annual data targets/goals for underrepresented population growth.

#### **Planned Sources of Evidence**

- \* School Board Policy for Resolving Disputes
- \* Presentation Documentation from School Board Information Meetings
- \* Minutes from Meetings with Parent and Stakeholder Groups

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	 <a href="#"><u>AIG - Advisory Board 2022-2025</u></a>