

# Roanoke County Public Schools

## Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted 2020 - 2025

<b>LEA#</b>	<b>080</b>		
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<b>Date Approved by School Board</b>	<b>August 2020</b>		

## **Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted**

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

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

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

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

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

## General Information regarding the Gifted Program in Roanoke County Public Schools

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

Area of Giftedness Identified by the Division	Grades Served
General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA)	K-12
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) VISUAL	3 - 12

### Part I: Statement of Philosophy and Local Operational Definition of Giftedness for the School Division (8V AC20-40060A.1)

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

This section includes a statement of philosophy for the gifted education program

The mission of Roanoke County Public Schools is to ensure quality learning experiences designed to equip all students with the skills to adapt and thrive in a changing global environment.

#### Beliefs and Assumptions

1. All children can learn.
2. The individual school controls enough variables to assure that virtually all children can be motivated to learn.
3. A school's stakeholders are the most qualified people to implement needed changes.
4. School-by-school change is the best hope for reform.

It is the mission of Roanoke County Public Schools that identified gifted and talented students are afforded the opportunity to participate in experiences which meet their wide range of needs and challenge their abilities.

Gifted and talented students are those students who possess unique talents and/or superior abilities that differ profoundly from those of their peers. Recognizing that gifted students come from diverse backgrounds, the identification process is multifaceted and relies upon a variety of objective and subjective data. In order for gifted students to maximize their potentialities and to foster their pursuit of lifelong learning, differentiated programming will be provided to nurture their academic and socio-emotional growth and development.

The gifted staff of Roanoke County Public Schools is committed to providing gifted learners at the elementary level with an instructional program, provided along a continuum, which develops convergent, divergent, visual-spatial and evaluative thinking skills. At the middle school level, gifted learners will further develop the 4 C skills for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners: collaboration, communication, critical and creative-thinking.

Utilizing a cluster/resource model, the gifted staff works within the RCPS model of inclusion by collaborating with classroom teachers and school administrators to facilitate the implementation of appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction strategies to challenge high-ability learners to realize their full potential.

**B. Division Operational Definition of Giftedness**

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

RCPS recognizes and identifies students in grades K – 12 who demonstrate high levels of academic accomplishment or who show the potential for higher levels of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment. These students will be identified by professionally qualified individuals through the use of multiple criteria as having a General Intellectual Aptitude for learning. General Intellectual Aptitude students are those students who possess unique talents and/or superior abilities that differ profoundly from those of their peers. Recognizing that gifted students come from diverse backgrounds, the identification process is multifaceted. The data used in the identification process may include: achievement test scores (Composite); ability test scores (verbal, non-verbal and composite); grades for the end of the previous school year in language arts/English and mathematics or the most recent nine week's grades in language arts/English and mathematics; behavior rating scales; anecdotal evidence; and performance-based tasks. In order for academically gifted students to maximize their potentialities and to foster their pursuit of lifelong learning, differentiated programming will be provided to nurture their academic and socio-emotional growth and development.

RCPS recognizes and identifies students in grades 3 – 12 who demonstrate exceptional abilities in their artistic endeavors. Artistically talented students are those students who possess unique talents and/or superior abilities that differ profoundly from those of their peers. Recognizing that artistically gifted students come from diverse backgrounds, the identification process is multifaceted. The data used in the identification process for artistically gifted students may include a score from a controlled art experience, review of a portfolio of the student’s artwork, a Hartman-Renzulli art rating scale, a classroom teacher observation of art behaviors checklist and a parent observation of art behaviors checklist. In order for artistically gifted students to maximize their potentialities and to foster their pursuit of lifelong learning, differentiated programming will be provided to nurture their academic and socio-emotional growth and development.

The RCPS division does not allow any single criterion to deny or guarantee access to gifted services.

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

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

### **Program Goals and Objectives for: General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA) (K-12)**

**A. Identification:** Ensure that all students will be evaluated in a fair and non-biased manner for inclusion in the General Intellectual Aptitude program.

**Objective 1:** The Central Placement/Appeals Committee selects and reviews all screening instruments at the end of each school year.

**B. Delivery of Services:** Review and reinforce the efforts of the classroom teacher to use appropriate differentiation strategies in the delivery of services for the General Intellectual Aptitude program in elementary, middle, and high schools.

**Objective 1:** Elementary and middle school teachers will complete a Plan of Differentiation yearly which will be reviewed by the principal.

**Objective 2:** High school teachers of Honors, Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment classes are encouraged to have appropriate training and licensure to instruct these advanced level courses.

**C. Curriculum and Instruction:** Provide guidance to the gifted resource staff in delivering appropriate differentiation to identified gifted students in the General Intellectual Aptitude program.

**Objective 1:** Roanoke County Public Schools will review yearly the broad range scope and sequence document for elementary and middle schools. Included in the scope and sequence document will be threads for convergent, divergent, visual-perceptual and evaluative thinking.

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The middle school scope and sequence includes the 4 Cs for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners: collaboration, communication, critical and creative-thinking.

**D. Professional Development:** Equip educators with the knowledge and strategies to differentiate instruction for academically gifted students.

**Objective 1:** Roanoke County Public Schools will offer professional development training through onsite in-services, publications, and online courses for part-time teachers of the gifted.

**Objective 2:** Core area teachers in RCPS are required to fulfill five (5) hours of gifted training (or training in strategies that benefit gifted learners) every five (5) years.

**E. Equitable Representation of Students:** Gifted Department staff will review yearly the current population of identified gifted students (GIA) and compare it to the general population of RCPS to assess the equitable representation of all sub-groups (i.e. students who are economically disadvantaged, who have disabilities, who have limited English proficiency, and/or who are culturally diverse.)

**Objective 1:** Gifted Department staff will complete a yearly data analysis of RCPS students identified as gifted (GIA) at the end of each school year.

**Objective 2:** Gifted Department Staff will review the testing options available to ensure they do not discriminate against students who are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency, and/or who are culturally diverse.

**F. Parent and Community Involvement:** Enhance communication regarding the gifted program to parents, students, and community members.

**Objective 1:** The Gifted Resource Staff provides informational meetings on topics of specific interest to the gifted.

**Objective 2:** The Gifted Resource Staff will maintain a parent handbook which is to be made available to parents of gifted students and other interested parties. Information included in the parent handbook is provided to educate parents about gifted terminology, instructional strategies, and specifics of the Roanoke County Public Schools gifted program.

### **Program Goals and Objectives for: Visual Arts (3-12)**

**A. Identification:** Roanoke County Public Schools will design the process to ensure the fair and unbiased evaluation of all age-eligible students for the artistically gifted program.

- B. Delivery of Services:** Roanoke County Public Schools will deliver consistent and equally accessible programs for students in grades 3-8 identified for the artistically gifted program in the form of after school programs at each elementary and middle school, as well as summer programs at a central location. Students in grades 9-12 can apply for the Visual Arts Specialty Center and/or take AP Studio Art in their high school coursework.
- C. Curriculum and Instruction:** Roanoke County Public Schools will create a scope and sequence document in the summer of 2015 to serve as the framework for designing appropriate lessons and activities for the artistically gifted program.
- D. Professional Development:** Roanoke County Public Schools will offer staff development training, onsite in-services, publications, and online courses for part-time teachers of the artistically gifted.
- E. Equitable Representation of Students:** The screening process is designed to insure no student is discriminated against due to economic disadvantage, limited English proficiency, or a disability.
- F. Parent and Community Involvement:** Roanoke County Public Schools will provide clear and consistent communications regarding the gifted art program and its course and activity offerings to parents, students and the public.

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

- A. Screening Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**  
This section should provide screening procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures should include the annual review of student data used to create a pool of potential candidates for further assessment. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

#### **Screening Procedures for: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

- Notification of onset of gifted screening is published in school mailings and websites (August and January).
- If needed, RCPS staff will provide professional development to faculties regarding screening procedures, screening instruments, and characteristics exhibited in students with gifted potential, including those from special populations.
- In the fall, classroom observation forms/checklists detailing typical gifted characteristics and behaviors are distributed to all teachers grades K - 12. Teachers are instructed to observe all students (including special populations) for these behaviors.
- In the fall, all 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students are administered the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test2 (NNAT2). Students scoring two (2) standard deviations

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above the mean will be referred for screening. Students who score close to two standard deviations above the mean are discussed in the In-School Review Committee or with appropriate school staff.

- Also in the fall, all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are administered the Otis Lennon School Abilities Test (OLSAT). Students scoring two (2) standard deviations above the mean will be referred for screening. Students who score close to two standard deviations above the mean are discussed in the In-School Review Committee or with appropriate school staff.
- Observation forms/checklists (as well as other supporting data such PALS, Fountas and Pinnell results, formative assessment tests) for referred students are brought to the In-School Review committee for review and discussion. Students are chosen for screening by consensus of the committee.
- Names of all students to be screened are forwarded to the screening coordinator.

### **Screening Procedures for VPA: Visual Arts (3-12)**

- Parents, classroom teachers, and art teachers are asked to refer students to the program through school newsletters and electronic communication.
- Parents of students referred to the program receive a permission to screen form.
- Referred students whose parents have given permission to screen are administered a controlled one hour art experience.
- The district Visual Arts Identification/Placement committee reviews the products of the controlled one hour art experience and the Hartman-Renzulli art rating scale completed by an art specialist.

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

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

#### **Referral procedures for: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12).**

- Any K-12 student may be directly referred for participation in the identification process by any interested individual - including self, parents, guardians, teachers, administrators, or community members. Parties who wish to refer a child to be a part of the identification process may access a gifted referral form from any elementary, middle or high school Guidance coordinator or Gifted Department. The referral information must be returned to the screening coordinator. Upon receipt of the referral document(s), the student is added to the direct referral list.

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- Notification of the beginning gifted referral process is published in school mailings and on websites.
- Referring individuals complete a packet which includes an anecdotal description of the student (K-1), a behavior rating scale (K-12), and a permission to screen form (K-12). This packet is returned to the screening coordinator.
- Referring teachers complete a referral form for students who display many gifted characteristics.
- Names of referred students are brought to the In-School Review committee for additional input from committee members.
- Screening pool is established by the screening coordinator by combining lists of students identified in the screening process and by direct referral
- Any student who has transferred into the Roanoke County Public Schools (K-12) after the identification process has begun is eligible for participation in the identification process upon their enrollment in the school system.
- Screening will be initiated for any student who has transferred from a gifted program in another school district within 30 days of enrollment. Evaluation will be completed within 90 days. Formal identification/placement will be determined based on the RCPS gifted assessment process and is determined by the Central Placement Committee.
- With the exception of new students, gifted referrals are solicited at the beginning of each semester. Parent referrals are accepted for action within the school year if they are received by April 1 of that school year.

### **Referral procedures for VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

- Any interested parent or school district staff may nominate any second through twelfth grade student for consideration for the gifted art program.
- Notification of the onset of gifted art screening is published in school mailings and on the Roanoke County Public Schools website. (January)
- Classroom observation/nomination forms detailing artistically gifted characteristics are distributed to all art teachers and second-seventh grade classroom teachers. (December)
- Each of the eight full-time elementary art teachers is asked to recommend 20 students each year for the gifted art program to help distribute nominations for the program equitably throughout the school district. Fifty percent or more of the students nominated by the art teachers should be in the second grade, the first year they can be identified for services the following year. (February)
- Classroom teachers may recommend that a student be screened for the gifted art program, using a nomination form with an observational checklist. This form is sent to all second- twelfth grade classroom teachers and is posted on the school district website. (January)
- Parents may nominate a student to be screened for the gifted art program, using a nomination and permission form. This form is posted on the school

district website and parents are made aware of the opportunity to nominate through school publications.

- All nominations are sent to the Art Coordinator.

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

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

Identification in CTA and VPA programs shall be at the discretion of the school division. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

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

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

- 1. Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio (K-1)
- 2. Record of observation of in-class behavior
- 3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires (K-12)
- 4. Individual interview
- 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s) (must be included for GIA) (K-12)  
and/or
- 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
- 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.) (2-12)
- 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures

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Specify: For special populations, data gathered by School Psychologists through the Child Study process may be included or considered in the screening process.

2. Additional identification information for: **General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Aptitude Tests: (may include)            Otis Lennon Test of School Abilities, Eighth Edition (2003)  
   Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test2 (2004)  
   Wide Range Intelligence Test (2000)  
   Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales (2003)  
   Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test2 (2003)

Rating Scales:                                Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) – School Rating Scale and Parent Rating Scale (K-1)  
   General Intellectual Ability and Creativity completed by both teacher and parent

   Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (2004) (2-12)  
   Learning and Motivation scales completed by classroom teacher(s)  
   Creativity scale completed by parent(s)

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

- Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio
- Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires

Specify:

1. Art teacher rating form with Hartman-Renzulli Art rating scale
2. Controlled art experience with a still-life drawing and a creative drawing

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

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

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

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

- Classroom Teacher(s)
- 1- 5 Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s) (acts as advocate for student)
- Counselor(s)
- 1 School Psychologist(s)
- Assessment Specialist(s)
- 1 Principal(s) or Designee(s)
- 3 Other(s) Specify: Director of Elementary Instruction and Technology  
Coordinator of School Counseling Services  
Associate Director of Testing/Remediation

b. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

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

- School-level                       Division-level

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

- Art teachers
- Art coordinator
- Professional artist from the community

c. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

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

- School-level                       Division-level

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

This section includes a chart detailing all criteria that could be considered in the identification process for a specific area of giftedness identified by the division. A description of the eligibility process used by the committee to make decisions regarding eligibility for services shall follow the chart. It includes a timeline for

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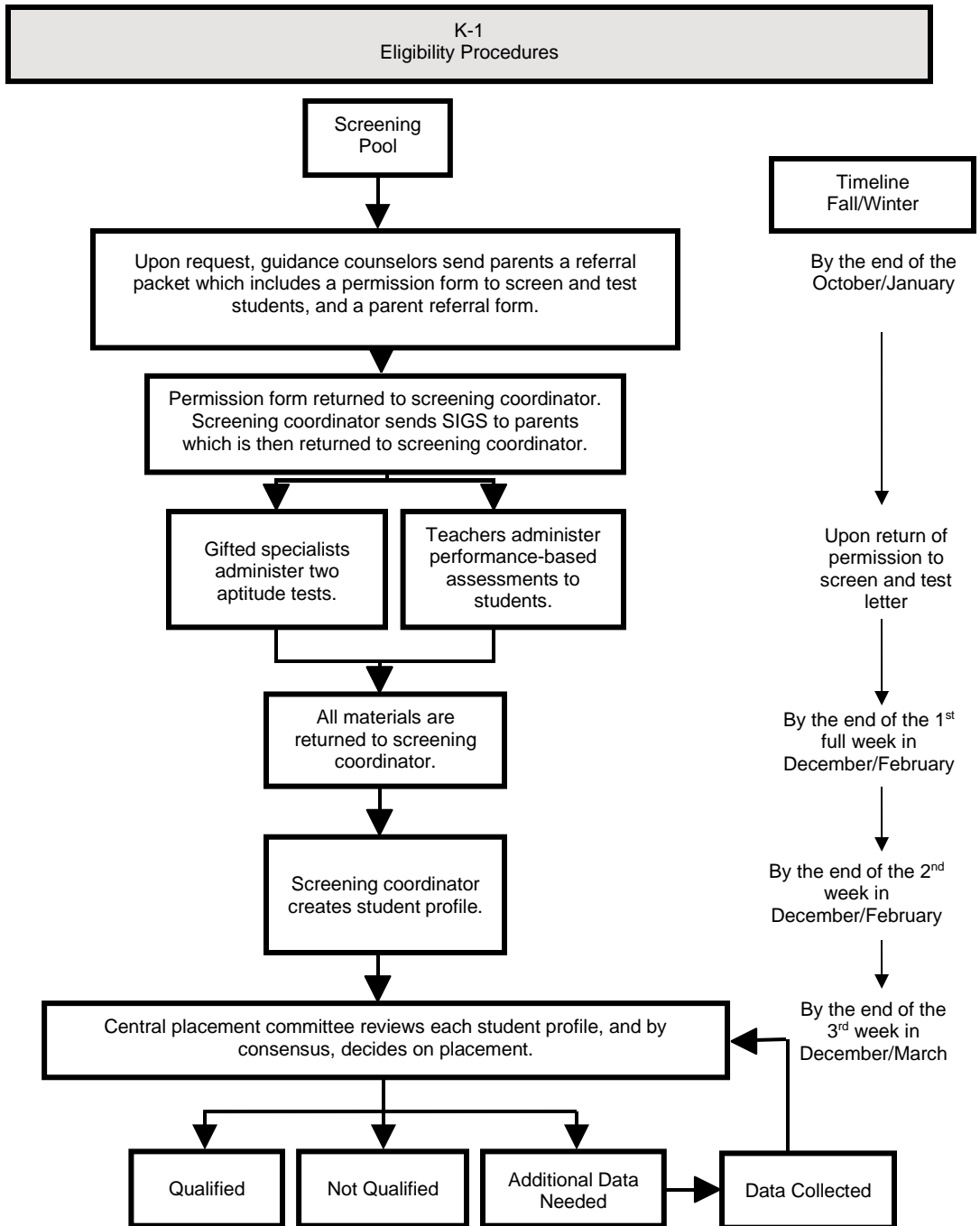
making eligibility decisions within 90 instructional days of the school division's receipt of the parent's(s') or legal guardian's(s') consent for assessment.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Administered/ Completed by</b>	<b>Scored by</b>	<b>Provided to the committee by</b>
Scales for Identifying Gifted Students/Parent (K-1)	Parent of Student	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Scales for Identifying Gifted Students/Teacher (K-1)	Teacher(s) of Student	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students/Motivation and Learning (2-12)	Teacher(s) of Student	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Scales for Rating Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students/Creativity (2-12)	Parent of Student	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Aptitude Test #1 (K-12) (KBIT)	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Aptitude Test #2 (K-12) (WRIT or RIAS)	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Aptitude Test #3 (2-12) OLSAT	Gifted Resource Teacher(s) and Classroom Teachers	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Aptitude Test #4 if needed (K-12) (WRIT, RIAS, Naglieri)	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Gifted Resource Teacher(s) (NNAT3 computer scored)	Screening Coordinator
Performance Based Assessment (K-1)	Classroom Teacher	Gifted Resource Teachers	Screening Coordinator
Record of previous achievement (K-1)	Parent of Student	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator
Achievement Test (if available, often Stanford10) (2-12)	Classroom Teacher(s)	Testing Agency	Screening Coordinator
Grades for Language Arts and Math (2-12)	Classroom Teacher(s)	Gifted Resource Teacher(s)	Screening Coordinator

The chart below reflects Eligibility Procedures for grades K-1.

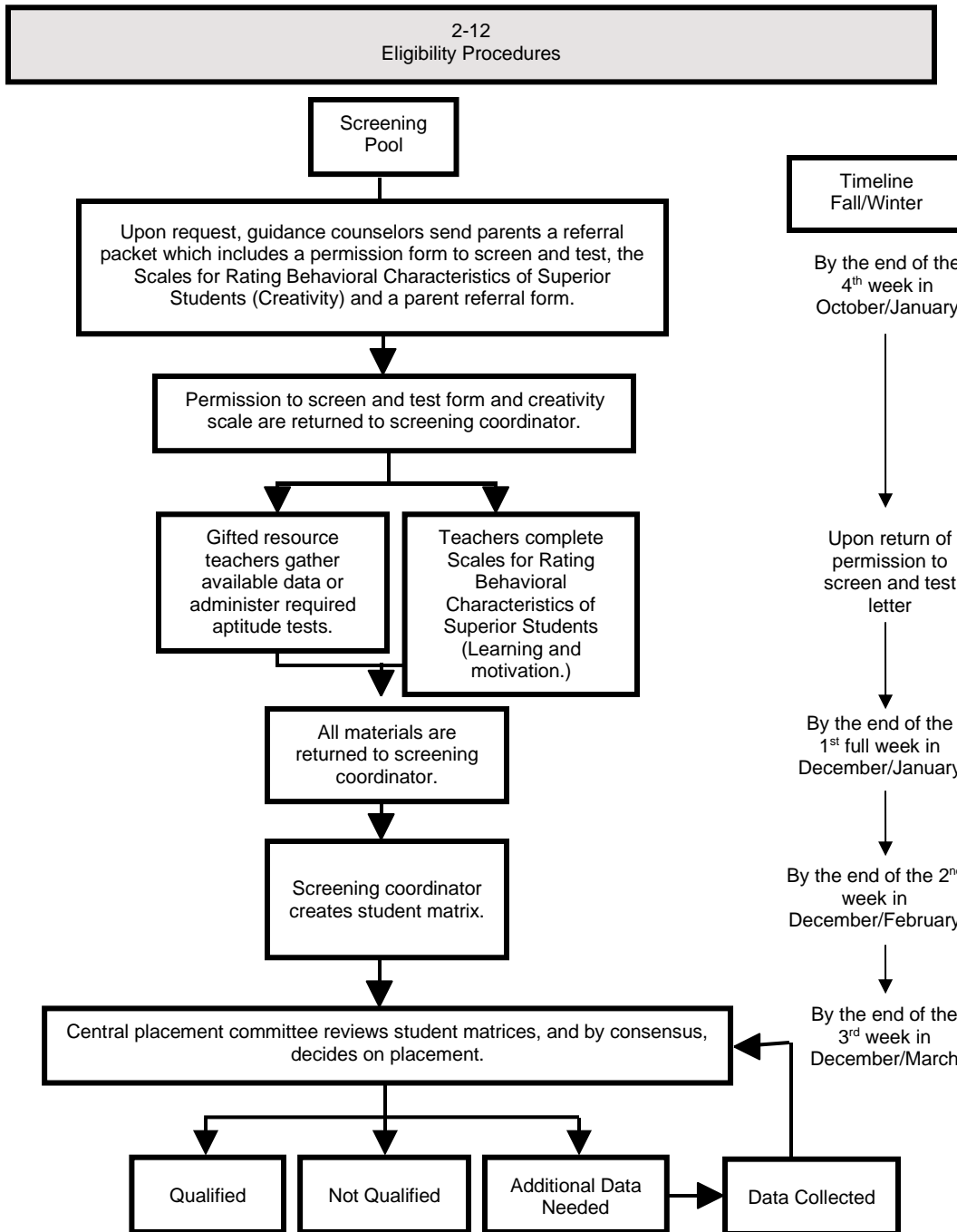
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Parents/Guardians will be notified by Gifted Department staff of the placement decision within 90 instructional days of receipt of the parent’s/guardian’s consent for assessment.

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The chart below reflect Eligibility Procedure for grades 2-12.



Parents/Guardians will be notified by Gifted Department staff of the placement decision within 90 instructional days of receipt of the parent/guardian's consent for assessment.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Administered/ Completed by</b>	<b>Scored by</b>	<b>Provided to the committee by</b>
Art teacher rating form	Art teacher	Identification/placement committee	Art coordinator
Nomination and permission form	Parent or instructional staff	Identification/placement committee	Art coordinator
Controlled art experience	Art coordinator	Identification/placement committee	Art coordinator

January-February	Parents of students referred to the program receive the nomination/permission to screen form.
February-March	Referred students whose parents have given permission to screen are administered a controlled one hour art experience.
March-April	The district Visual Arts Identification/Placement committee reviews the products of the controlled one hour art experience and the Hartman-Renzulli art rating scale completed by an art specialist. The screening committee then by consensus decides on placement.

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

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**



After eligibility has been determined, parents are asked to sign the Parental Permission form to indicate that their child may participate in the gifted program. Services begin when the parental form to participate has been received.

### **Elementary School**

After eligibility is determined, the gifted resource teacher and the classroom teacher collaborate to determine strategies for differentiation for each identified student based on the student's academic and social and emotional needs. A Differentiation Education Plan is developed which outlines the strategies to be used in the classroom to address the student's needs. The contents of the Differentiation Education Plan are communicated to parents by the classroom teacher. After parental permission is obtained, the strategies outlined in the plan are implemented by the classroom teacher. A copy of the differentiation plan is provided to the parent and the principal. This plan is updated on a yearly basis. Gifted resource teachers provide small group enrichment experiences for identified gifted students on a regular basis and implement a curriculum that emphasizes convergent, divergent, visual spatial, and evaluative thinking. Additionally, at the beginning of each school year, the identified gifted students at each grade level are cluster-grouped for language arts and math with teachers who have met the RCPS Gifted Training Requirement. These teachers are made aware of the presence of gifted students in their classroom, Hybrid and fully-online students will be offered optional remote programming.

### **Middle School**

In the middle school years, identified gifted students are counseled by the school guidance staff on appropriate courses based on their academic and social and emotional needs. A variety of advanced and pre-accelerated placement (Pre-AP) courses are available in all core areas. The gifted resource teacher may work with the classroom teacher (of classes in which gifted students are clustered, and specifically the pre-AP teachers) to develop strategies of differentiation for identified students in that cluster. The classroom teacher develops a Plan of Differentiation which is then provided to the parent(s) and principal. Additionally each nine weeks, the gifted resource teachers work with all identified gifted students in each middle school (by grade level) for one block period on activities designed around the Middle School Gifted Scope and Sequence (4 Cs for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners). Hybrid and fully-online students will be offered optional remote programming.

### **High School**

In the high school years, identified gifted students are counseled by the school guidance staff on appropriate course selection based on their academic and social and emotional needs. A variety of advanced, pre-accelerated placement, AP, dual enrollment, and interest-based elective courses are available. Students in grades 11 and 12 are offered an opportunity to enroll in the INSIGHT mentoring program. INSIGHT is a 0.5 credit elective course that gives eleventh and twelfth grade students the opportunity to work with a mentor in a career area of interest, while simultaneously participating in seminars related to personal and professional development. Hybrid and fully-online students will be offered optional remote programming.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

**Elementary and Middle School**

After eligibility has been determined, parents receive registration mailings for the after school and summer programs through the student's eighth grade year. Registration for the programs is at the discretion of the parents.

**High School**

The Burton Center for Arts & Technology houses a Specialty Center for Visual Arts and Museum Studies for which rising 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders may apply. This program offers artistically gifted students the opportunity for extended and advanced study of visual art. AP Studio Art and other interest art electives are also offered at each of the five high schools in the district.

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

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Parents are sent a notification letter at the onset of the identification process. This letter explains the identification/eligibility process, gains parental permission to screen and, if necessary, administer appropriate tests to the student or gather any additional information.

Following determination of eligibility (on or before the first full week of January/March), parents are notified of placement or non-placement in the gifted program. If the student qualifies for the gifted program, parental permission is requested for implementing the appropriate services recommended by the committee. If the student does not qualify, parents are notified of the committee decision and the process for requesting an appeal form which will begin the appeal process. Notification of eligibility of students who undergo the screening and identification process outside of this timeline, will be made within 90 days from the onset of the process. A confidential folder, containing permission to screen/test (K-1, 2-12), Student Profile Sheet (K-1), Anecdotal Evidence (K-1), Matrix (2-12) and permission to participate (where applicable) is created for each student screened and filed within the cumulative folder in the home school.

Once final decisions regarding placement have been made, any involved individual may request an appeal. The request for appeal should be submitted in writing to the Screening Coordinator within thirty days of notification of the placement decision. A letter attached to the appeal form should include the rationale for appeal as well as additional pertinent data that the Central

Appeals Committee should consider. The additional data may be gathered outside of the school division. Individuals who wish to address the committee should request this on the appeal form. They may also be invited to appear before the committee and/or to submit a portfolio of student-produced materials for the committee's consideration.

Within thirty days of the receipt of the letter of appeal, the Central Placement/Appeals Committee will convene to consider the appeal. Members of the Central Placement/Appeals Committee include the Director of Elementary Instruction and Technology (Chair), the Screening Coordinator, the Associate Director of Testing, a Coordinator of Guidance Services, a School Psychologist, a principal, and a gifted resource teacher(s). If needed, a teacher is invited to participate in the appeals process. The gifted resource teacher serves as the student's advocate.

An appeal can be accepted (student is identified as gifted) or declined (student is not identified as gifted). This decision is final. The Central/Appeals Committee may also request additional data. If this decision is made, additional data is gathered and the committee re-convenes to review the student's entire screening/appeals file. At this point the appeal can be accepted or declined. This decision is final. The Screening Coordinator communicates by letter the committee's decision to the parent/guardian and if applicable, the person(s) who initiated the appeal.

#### **AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

- Parents of students referred to the program receive a permission to screen form in January or February.
- Parents are notified of placement or non-placement in the gifted art program in April.
- Parents of students not placed in the program may appeal the decision with a letter sent to the art coordinator requesting reconsideration, along with examples of the student's artwork. Letters must be received by the end of the academic year.
- The art Visual Art Identification/Placement Committee makes a decision regarding placement based upon the child's appeal artwork, by scoring the child's artwork using the same rubrics used for the controlled art experience.
- Students not placed in the gifted art program in a given school year may be referred again for screening in subsequent years.

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

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Once identified for services, students are not reevaluated yearly for the gifted program in RCPS. However, school staff or the parents/guardians can recommend a change in instructional services by making recommendations to the Central Placement Committee. The Central Placement Committee will consider the recommendation with supporting data and may make changes or modifications in instructional services currently received if they are judged to no longer be appropriate. Such decision will be communicated to the parent.

The parent/guardian, teacher, or student, with consent of parent/guardian, may initiate a suspension of participation in the gifted program for the academic year. The request is followed by a conference with the classroom teacher(s) and/or principal to discuss reasons for the request. A signed written request from the parent/guardian is obtained and placed in the student's confidential folder.

Any student who suspends participation in the gifted program remains eligible for future services and may re-enter the program in subsequent years. The gifted resource teacher reviews the student's information and a parent conference takes place prior to the student reentering the program.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

Once identified for the gifted art program, students remain eligible for services through their eighth grade year without being re-screened for the program.

Parents may choose to exit students from the gifted art program by writing a request or by not registering them for offered programs for the remainder of their eligible school years.

Teachers may request that students be exited from the program. Such a request is followed by a conference involving the parent, the teacher, and the art coordinator.

An agreement is reached on whether the student will be exited from or remains in the program.

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

This section provides evidence that gifted education service options from kindergarten through twelfth grade are offered continuously and sequentially, with instructional time during the school day and week to (i) work with their age-level peers, (ii) work with their intellectual and academic peers, (iii) work independently; and (iv) foster intellectual and academic growth of gifted students. Parents and legal guardians shall receive assessment

of each gifted student's academic growth. Career and Technical aptitude programs and Visual and/or Performing Arts programs are offered at the discretion of the school division.

**A. Service Options are Continuous and Sequential**

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Within the framework of the SOL curriculum, classroom teachers in grades K – 12 differentiate instruction to provide appropriately challenging learning experiences for gifted students. Through the use of flexible grouping models and other differentiation strategies such as tiered assignments, classroom teachers differentiate content, process and product based on readiness, interest, and learning style.

At the elementary level, the gifted resource teachers plan activities that work within the Roanoke County Schools Elementary Gifted Scope and Sequence. The Elementary Gifted Scope and Sequence outlines five strands of instruction: convergent thinking, divergent thinking, visual/perceptual thinking, and evaluative thinking. Within those strands, instruction is continuous and sequential across the grade levels.

At the middle school level, the gifted resource teachers plan activities that work within the Roanoke County Schools Middle School Gifted Scope and Sequence. The Middle School Gifted Scope and Sequence offers instruction in the 4 Cs: communication, collaboration, critical and creative-thinking. Within those strands, instruction is continuous and sequential across the grade levels.

In the high school years, identified gifted students are counseled by the school guidance staff on appropriate course selection based on their academic and social and emotional needs. A variety of advanced, pre-accelerated placement, AP, dual enrollment, and interest-based elective courses are available. RCPS also offers Specialty Centers (grades 9 – 12) in Engineering, Mass Communication, Performing Arts, and Visual Arts and Museum Studies. Students with interests in those areas may apply for admittance to those programs beginning with their 9th grade year. Students in grades 11 and 12 are offered an opportunity to enroll in the INSIGHT mentoring program. INSIGHT is a 0.5 credit elective course that gives eleventh and twelfth grade students the opportunity to work with a mentor in a career area of interest, while simultaneously participating in seminars related to personal and professional development.

At all levels, hybrid and fully-online students will be offered optional remote programming.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

- After school programs with at least twenty instructional hours are offered for students identified as artistically gifted in the third through eighth grades.
- Summer camp programs with twelve instructional hours are offered for students identified as artistically gifted in the third through eighth grades.
- An advanced program of study, the Specialty Center for Visual Arts and Museum Studies, is offered on a competitive application basis for students in grades 9-12.

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

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Identified gifted students (K-12) are serviced within their home school. At the elementary level, they are cluster grouped with 4-6 other gifted students for language arts and math. For the remainder of the school day, they may be placed in heterogeneous groups for science, social studies, and the special areas of art, music and physical education. At the middle school level, identified students choose their course of study and may be participating in pre-AP or advanced study classes for some core areas. For interest block and perhaps other core areas, students may be placed in heterogeneous classes. At the high school level, gifted students have many options: AP classes, Dual Enrollment, Distance Learning, Online Learning, the Regional Governor's School for Math and Science, the INSIGHT Mentoring Program, or participation in any of the RCPS Specialty Centers (Engineering, Visual Arts, Mass Communication, Performing Arts). Each of these options allows gifted students to interact with their age-level peers during the school day and week.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

The gifted art after school programs, summer camps, high school art electives, and Visual Arts Specialty Center offer students an opportunity to have instructional time with other artistically gifted students.

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

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

At the elementary level, gifted students are cluster grouped (4-6 students) for language arts and math. This grouping allows the classroom teacher to design appropriately challenging activities that will enrich and expand the content for gifted learners. At the middle school level, gifted students are encouraged to participate in one or more pre-AP courses and/or the Accelerated Math Program. Pre-AP courses are offered in English, Social Studies and Science. Students may be nominated for participation in these courses by their teachers, or waived into them by their parents. Admittance to the Accelerated Math Program is determined by a combination of factors: test scores (standardized and SOL), classroom performance and recommendations. The purpose of the AMP program is to provide mathematically inclined students the opportunity to accelerate content within the math curriculum strand. Students who successfully complete the 6<sup>th</sup> grade year of the AMP are eligible to take Algebra in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. At the high school level, gifted students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of enriched and accelerated learning opportunities: AP classes, Dual Enrollment, Distance Learning, Online Learning, the Regional Governor's School for Math and Science, the INSIGHT Mentoring Program, or participation in any of the RCPS Specialty Centers (Engineering, Visual Arts, Mass Communication, and Performing Arts).

Additionally, at the elementary school level, identified gifted students meet regularly with the gifted resource teacher for small group enrichment activities designed to enhance the Elementary Gifted Scope and Sequence (convergent, divergent, visual-spatial, and evaluative thinking). Instruction is aligned with individual student strengths and provides gifted students with rigorous learning opportunities. At the middle school level, identified gifted students meet once every nine weeks for one block period to participate in activities designed to enhance the Middle School Gifted Scope and Sequence (4 Cs for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners).

At all levels, hybrid and fully-online students will be provided with remote programming options.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

The content for gifted art after school and summer programs is designed to bring art content from the middle school level to elementary aged gifted art students and art content from the high school to middle school aged gifted art students.

**D. Service Options Provide Instructional Time to Work Independently**

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Classroom teachers are encouraged to use a variety of differentiation strategies to allow gifted learners to work independently. These strategies may include the use of independent learning contracts, choice menus and independent projects. In addition, activities provided by the gifted resource teachers may offer the opportunity for students to work independently.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

The after school and summer programs offer students extended periods of time (2-3 hour periods) during which art concepts and projects not feasible during normal art instruction time can be explored independently.

**E. Service Options Foster Intellectual and Academic Growth**

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

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Cluster grouping at the elementary and middle school levels allows the classroom teacher to have an identifiable group of like-minded students within the classroom for whom to plan appropriately challenging activities. These students can often times work at a higher level of knowledge than many of their age peers, and possess the ability to process information in the higher realms of Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). Teachers are encouraged to use flexible, small group instruction or tiered lessons with appropriately challenging material and to allow creativity and individuality in the choice of assignments and products that students create. Cooperative learning, creative problem solving, critical and creative thinking and higher order questioning are other strategies that foster intellectual and academic growth. At the high school level, students self-select the classes that will offer them the appropriate level of challenge to foster intellectual and academic growth. Teachers are encouraged to use teaching models such as



problem-based learning, simulations, Socratic questioning, and critical and creative thinking tied to the curriculum.

Identified gifted students have unique social and emotional needs. The gifted resource teachers serve as advocates for the identified gifted students within the school community and articulate the students' academic, social, and emotional needs to facilitate understanding and acceptance. Gifted resource teachers may also work with the guidance counselor to provide counseling services for gifted students in grades K-12, which may include socialization assistance, emotional support, course selection, and college career counseling.

### **AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

While recognizing the need for a strong foundation in the basics of art, specialists provide differentiated instruction in terms of content, process, and product. Strategies include providing individual and small group instruction, involving opportunity for experiences earlier than in the regular curriculum, providing specialized equipment, giving students time-intensive experiences in various media, encouraging experimentation, advancing the understanding of the elements of design, improving perception skills and allowing for development of the creative process. During after school and summer programs, students are exposed to and given the opportunity experiment with media and techniques not normally offered within the general art curriculum.

### **F. Procedures for Assessing Academic Growth in Gifted Students**

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

### **AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Gifted students in the elementary schools receive a 'Gifted Program Classroom Progress Report' from the classroom teacher(s) at the end of the first semester and again at the end of the year. This report measures classroom performance in the core areas with a focus on creative thinking skills, critical thinking skills, work habits, interpersonal relationships, and communication.

At the end of the year, gifted students in the elementary schools also receive a "Gifted Teacher's Progress Report" that measures growth in the areas outlined by the Gifted Scope and Sequence: Convergent Thinking, Divergent Thinking, Visual/Perceptual Thinking and Evaluative Thinking.

For middle and high school students, current, real-time academic achievement may be monitored via the grade book feature of Blackboard. Gifted students at the middle and high schools also receive report cards every 9 weeks which detail the grades earned in the curriculum chosen by the students.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

Identified gifted art students in the regular classroom are most frequently assessed using the same tools and measures used to assess all children within the classroom. These measures might include traditional tests, portfolios, journals, teacher evaluations, peer assessments, self-assessments, rubrics, and checklists. The art teacher is responsible for the assessment of in-class work and is encouraged to use a variety of assessment tools.

Gifted art students in grades 3-8 who participate in after school or summer programs do so as an enrichment activity and no formal evaluations are conducted.

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

The *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students* defines appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction as curriculum and instruction adapted or modified to accommodate the accelerated learning aptitudes of identified students in their areas of strength. Such curriculum and instructional strategies provide accelerated and enrichment opportunities that recognize gifted students' needs for (i) advanced content and pacing of instruction; (ii) original research or production; (iii) problem finding and solving; (iv) higher level thinking that leads to the generation of products; and (v) a focus on issues, themes, and ideas within and across areas of study. Such curriculum and instruction are offered continuously and sequentially to support the achievement of student outcomes, and provide support necessary for these students to work at increasing levels of complexity that differ significantly from those of their age-level peers. This section provides a description of the school division's appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction demonstrating accelerated and advanced content for gifted learners.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

In order to meet the needs of the gifted population, as well as all children, Roanoke County Public Schools promotes differentiation of instruction as articulated by Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson in numerous works including:

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- The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners (1999),
- How to Differentiate Instruction in a Mixed Ability Classroom (2001) ,
- Leadership for Differentiating Schools and Classrooms (2000),
- Differentiation for Gifted and Talented Students (2004),
- Differentiation in Practice A Resource Guide for Differentiation Curriculum (2005)
- Integrating Differentiated Instruction & Understanding by Design (2006)

Through differentiation, teachers react responsively to their students' needs. To ensure effective teaching and learning, teachers examine and modify three key elements of curriculum: content, process and product. Teachers ensure that these three elements are incorporated into experiences that lead students to engage with and genuinely understand the subject. Using curriculum based on the Virginia Standards of Learning, students who indicate particular readiness are challenged using a variety of strategies. Emphasis is placed on giving students choice in the high interest, high relevance curriculum.

As in all differentiated instruction, the core of what the students learn remains relatively steady. How the students learn, including degree of difficulty, working arrangements, modes of expression and types of scaffolding, may vary considerably. We support our teachers in addressing the many modes of learning as outlined in current brain research (Eric Jensen, *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*, 2005, ASCD) and theories of intelligence (Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind, The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, 2011, Basic Books).

Identified gifted students in grades K – 5 are mandated to be cluster grouped. To take advantage of this cluster grouping, the gifted resource teachers serve as collaborators and consultants to the classroom teachers who serve the gifted clusters (Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles, *The Cluster Grouping Handbook: A School-wide Model*, 2008, Free Spirit Publishing). By requiring the cluster grouping of gifted students and by flexibly grouping all students, teachers and students will use time and resources more effectively and efficiently for learning. Flexible grouping enables teachers to vary content, product, and/or process according to the students' interests, learning styles or readiness levels. Opportunities for acceleration can be provided to allow all learners to move through materials at an appropriate pace both within and outside their age-relative grades via compacting (Joyce Van Tassel-Baska, *Acceleration Strategies Teaching Gifted Learners*, 2005, Prufrock Press) or through grade advancement (*The Templeton Report: A Nation Deceived*, 2004, [www.accelerationinstitute.org](http://www.accelerationinstitute.org)).

Secondary level content options for gifted learners include course selection, independent study, research projects, and differentiated lessons provided by the classroom teachers. Gifted middle school students have options for classes in foreign languages and advanced mathematics. Additional curricular options available to gifted high school students may include the Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology, Advanced Placement Program, Dual Enrollment with VWCC, Early College Scholars, and an Associate's Degree program available through VWCC.

The gifted department supports a variety of instructional strategies to be used to accelerate and enrich content, process and product for identified gifted and high ability children in the regular education classroom. Teachers have access to online training modules on differentiation strategies

including: Characteristics of Gifted Learners/Identification of the Gifted in RCPS, Introduction to Differentiation Strategies, Managing the Differentiated Classroom, Bloom's Taxonomy, Brainstorming, Creativity, Six-Hat Thinking, R.A.F.T.s, Carousel Brainstorming, and Creative Problem Solving. Book studies are offered within the school and district-wide. Attendance is supported at conferences such as the VAG Conference, Children's Engineering, etc. District-wide speakers and in-service opportunities are provided for teachers and administrators. STEM activities are mandated each 9 weeks in various subjects.

Teachers are expected to apply appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction adapted or modified to accommodate the learning needs of gifted learners in their identified areas of strength. In order to facilitate instruction, classroom teachers in the core subject areas are required to complete five hours of training specific to gifted learners every 5 years.

Teachers are first encouraged to continuously pre-assess students to determine interest, readiness and/or learning style for units of study. Based on the results of the pre-assessment, teachers utilize flexible grouping in order to implement a variety of instructional strategies including, but not limited to the use of:

- tiered assignments
- think-tac-toe (study choices)
- curriculum compacting and learning contracts
- interest centers
- independent study

Higher order critical and creative thinking skills are promoted through the use of problem-based learning, creative problem solving, technology and complex questioning strategies.

When a student is determined (through testing, anecdotal evidence, etc.) to be academically and socially above their age group, grade-level acceleration is an option. Central office personnel will work with school personnel to determine appropriate placement.

All classroom teachers are supported by their school's gifted resource teacher in offering differentiated instruction in their classroom. The gifted resource teacher is available to help plan pre-assessment activities, organize larger units of studies, provide useful resources, and, at the elementary level, assist in classroom instruction.

### **AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

Differentiation has been adopted by Roanoke County schools as the means of meeting the needs of its highly diverse learners, including the identified artistically gifted students. The goal in providing service for artistically gifted students is to ensure that there is challenge for these students during their regular art classes, as well as supplementary services outside the school day to expand and enrich their artistic understandings and skills.

After school and summer programs are offered to those identified as gifted in art in order to provide enrichment opportunities for these students to pursue:

- Advanced content and pacing of instruction
- Original art production
- Problem finding and solving
- Higher level thinking that leads to the generation of products
- Focus on issues, themes, and ideas within and across areas of study

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

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

#### **AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Identified gifted students in grades K – 5 are mandated to be cluster grouped. Flexible grouping enables teachers to vary content, product, and/or process according to the students' interests, learning styles or readiness levels. Opportunities for acceleration can be provided to allow all learners to move through materials at an appropriate pace both within and outside their age-relative grades via compacting or through grade advancement.

The RCPS Registration Guide lists the following options for middle and high school students interested in advanced courses of study. Information regarding program/course requirements is available from the guidance department at each high school.

**Pre-Advanced Placement Classes:** Pre-AP classes are rigorous classes that prepare middle school students for the Advance Placement Program in high school. The classes strengthen the skills every student needs to succeed in Advanced Placement, in college, and in careers. Pre-AP classes help students develop thinking and problem-solving skills. There is a heavy emphasis on developing analytical writing and critical reading and thinking. Students may be referred for Pre-AP classes by the previous year's teacher(s) or by parents.

**Advanced Placement Program:** Advanced Placement courses offer students the opportunity to do college-level work while still in high school. They are available to qualified, academically oriented students in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Current AP offerings include:

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Biology, Calculus AB, Chemistry, Computer Science A, English 11: Language and Composition, English 12: Language and Composition, French Language, German Language, Physics B, Spanish Language, Statistics, Studio Art, US Government and Politics, US and Virginia History, and World History. Students will be required to apply for admission to any AP course.

**Dual Enrollment:** RCPS/Virginia Western Community College: RCPS offers a rigorous course of study that includes the offering of dual enrollment classes for college credit. Virginia Western Community College has agreed to give credit for courses being offered at each of the high schools. The course will be taught at the high school by a college-accredited high school staff member. Students who successfully complete the course will earn college credit.

**Associate's degree available through Virginia Western Community College:** A Roanoke County student may earn an associate's degree through VWCC by taking dual enrollment courses and AP courses (a 3 or better must be achieved on the AP College Board exam before VWCC credit is awarded).

**Early College Scholars:** Early College Scholars is a program that encourages juniors and seniors who are prepared and interested in accelerating their coursework toward a college degree while still in high school. A student who wishes to be a part of this program must sign an agreement along with his parent, counselor, and principal and agree to: have a "B" average or better; be pursuing an Advanced Studies Diploma; and, be completing or have completed college level course work that will earn at least 15 transferable college credits.

**RCPS Online:** RCPS Online is a program that allows students to work independently. Three sessions are offered: summer, fall, and spring. During the year (fall and spring sessions) the RCPS Online courses are offered in addition to the regular school day and are open to any rising 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade student who chooses to take additional classes, provided they meet the criteria for the class.

### **Virtual Virginia**

Virtual Virginia is a state online course provider that offers required or supplemental courses as available. These courses may be available if they are not otherwise provided in the home school or are not accessible due to scheduling conflicts. Principals must approve any student who takes a class through the Virginia Virtual Advanced Placement School.

**Independent Study:** An independent study provides the senior student the opportunity to pursue a program of his/her own design in the areas of mathematics, world languages, music, art, or science. An independent study will only be considered if all other Roanoke County courses in that field of study have been completed by the student. This is a highly selective program designed for seniors who have shown academic excellence, a high interest level, and the ability to work independently. Eligible students will be asked to confer with a member of the respective department involved. Upon mutual agreement, final selection for the independent study program will be made by the Director of Instruction, principal, subject area supervisor, and teacher.

**Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology:** The Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology opened August, 1985. It offers a rigorous half-day program designed for ninth through twelfth grade students who have creative, capable minds, and a strong interest in science and technology. Positions are awarded based on the strength of the student's application.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

The Roanoke County Public Schools Gifted Art Program offers enrollment in after school and summer enrichment programs for students in grades three (3) through eight (8) identified as exceptionally talented in art.

The Center for Visual Arts and Museum Studies is a four year advanced art program for 9th - 12th graders that all students can apply to attend. The program is held at the Burton Center for Arts & Technology and the Taubman Museum of Art.

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

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

1. Understanding of principles of the integration of gifted education and general education, including:
  - a. Strategies to encourage the interaction of gifted students with students of similar and differing abilities; and
  - b. Development of activities to encourage parental and community involvement in the education of the gifted, including the establishment and maintenance of an effective advisory committee.
2. Understanding of the characteristics of gifted students, including:
  - a. Varied expressions of advanced aptitudes, skills, creativity, and conceptual understandings;
  - b. Methodologies that respond to the affective (social-emotional) needs of gifted students; and
  - c. Gifted behaviors in special populations (i.e., those who are culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, or physically disabled).
3. Understanding of specific techniques to identify gifted students using diagnostic and prescriptive approaches to assessment, including:
  - a. The selection, use, and evaluation of multiple assessment instruments and identification strategies;
  - b. The use of both subjective and objective measures to provide relevant information regarding the aptitude/ability or achievement of potentially gifted students;

- c. The use of authentic assessment tools such as portfolios to determine performance, motivation/interest and other characteristics of potentially gifted students;
  - d. The development, use, and reliability of rating scales, checklists, and questionnaires by parents, teachers and others;
  - e. The evaluation of data collected from student records such as grades, honors, and awards;
  - f. The use of case study reports providing information concerning exceptional conditions; and
  - g. The structure, training, and procedures used by the identification and placement committee.
4. Understanding and application of a variety of educational models, teaching methods, and strategies for selecting materials and resources that ensure:
- a. Academic rigor through the development of high-level proficiency in all core academic areas utilizing the Virginia Standards of Learning as a baseline;
  - b. The acquisition of knowledge and development of products that demonstrate creative and critical thinking as applied to learning both in and out of the classroom; and
  - c. The development of learning environments that guide students to become self-directed, independent learners.
5. Understanding and application of theories and principles of differentiating curriculum designed to match the distinct characteristics of gifted learners to the programs and curriculum offered to gifted students, including:
- a. The integration of multiple disciplines into an area of study;
  - b. Emphasis on in-depth learning, independent and self-directed study skills and meta-cognitive skills;
  - c. The development of analytical, organizational, critical, and creative thinking skills;
  - d. The development of sophisticated products using varied modes of expression;
  - e. The evaluation of student learning through appropriate and specific criteria; and
  - f. The development of advanced technological skills to enhance student performance.
6. Understanding of contemporary issues and research in gifted education, including:
- a. The systematic gathering, analyzing, and reporting of formative and summative data; and
  - b. Current local, state, and national issues and concerns.

**AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

Teachers responsible for the instruction of gifted learners include the following:

K-12 full-time gifted resource teachers (GRTs)

K-8 classroom teachers who instruct gifted students with the cluster grouping model

9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers of Honors, Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment classes.



Gifted Resource Teachers (GRTs) in RCPS must hold a current Virginia teaching license with a Gifted Education endorsement. They should also have an understanding of the characteristics and needs of gifted learners as well as knowledge of differentiation strategies and curriculum development. Attendance at professional development opportunities (conferences, workshops, classes, etc.) allows GRTs to stay current on topics of interest and trends in gifted education at the state and national levels. The GRTs work closely with administrators, teachers and parents to provide gifted learners with appropriately challenging educational experiences.

Part-time teachers of the gifted (i.e. teachers in the core areas who teach gifted students) are required to complete 5 hours of in-service training in the field of gifted education (characteristics, identification, strategies, etc.) within every 5 year cycle. Teachers may complete these hours by attending conferences, taking college level courses or short courses designed by gifted department personnel and housed on Blackboard, participating in county-wide in-service opportunities, or taking part in specially designed activities within their schools. Principals may also approve other activities that they believe will improve the teacher's understanding of working with the gifted student. Additionally, all teachers at the elementary level are involved in collecting formative and summative data on a regular basis throughout the school year.

9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers of Honors, Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment classes should have appropriate training and licensure to instruct these advanced level courses.

Each principal selects the teachers who will be responsible for the instruction of the identified gifted students in their schools. Consideration is given to the teacher's demonstrated skill and desire to work with gifted students and their ability to provide learning experiences that meet the needs of the gifted learner. The GRTs are available for consultation related to specific student needs.

#### **AREA OF GIFTEDNESS: VPA - Visual Arts (3-12)**

Part-time teachers of the artistically gifted will participate in a one-hour on-site in-service on gifted education in the fall of each year that they will be teachers for the gifted art after school or summer programs.

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

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

year. However, reviews shall be based on multiple criteria and shall include multiple sources of information.

The RCPS gifted education program (General Intellectual Ability and Visual Arts) shall be in compliance with the Code of Virginia and the Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Services. The RCPS gifted staff will perform an annual review of the effectiveness of the gifted education program that includes:

- A report on division screening and selection processes that includes the number of students referred, screened, and found eligible
- Ongoing assessment of screening tools and procedures to ensure that no student is discriminated against due to gender, cultural diversity, socioeconomic status, learning exceptionality or other factors.
- Collection of data to determine the percentage of the RCPS gifted population at the high school level who are enrolled in Honors, AP, and dual enrollment courses.
- Analysis of data regarding the effectiveness of the program solicited from students, parents, and teachers with the use of surveys and questionnaires
- Assess student outcomes and academic growth through the report card and Gifted Progress Reports (classroom teacher and gifted resource teacher editions at the elementary level).
- Evaluate progress made toward reaching Program Goals and Objectives as outlined in Part II

The Central Placement/Appeals Committee reviews the policies and procedures provides input and recommendations. The Local Plan is revised as necessary by Gifted Department personnel and presented for approval to the School Board.

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

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

In lieu of a Local Advisory Committee, the gifted department staff will offer informational sessions to all parents of gifted students on various topics which may

include, but are not limited to, the social and emotional development of gifted students; opportunities for gifted students in RCPS at the elementary, middle and high school levels; and college planning for gifted students. Each informational session will be followed by a question/answer period where parents may share feedback about the gifted program.

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

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

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

Pursuant to these requirements, I hereby certify that the school division is in compliance with this language, within our ability to safely provide them given the current Covid-19 crisis.

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Division Superintendent’s Signature	Printed Name	Date
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