


Gifted Resource-Cluster Program:

Comprehensive Evaluation

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By Noël G. Williams, Ph.D., Program Evaluation Specialist,
Heidi L. Janicki, Ph.D., Director of Research and Evaluation,
Paul R. Evans, Educational Data Specialist, and
Allison M. Bock, Ph.D., Program Evaluation Specialist

Planning, Innovation, and Accountability
Office of Research and Evaluation
Virginia Beach City Public Schools

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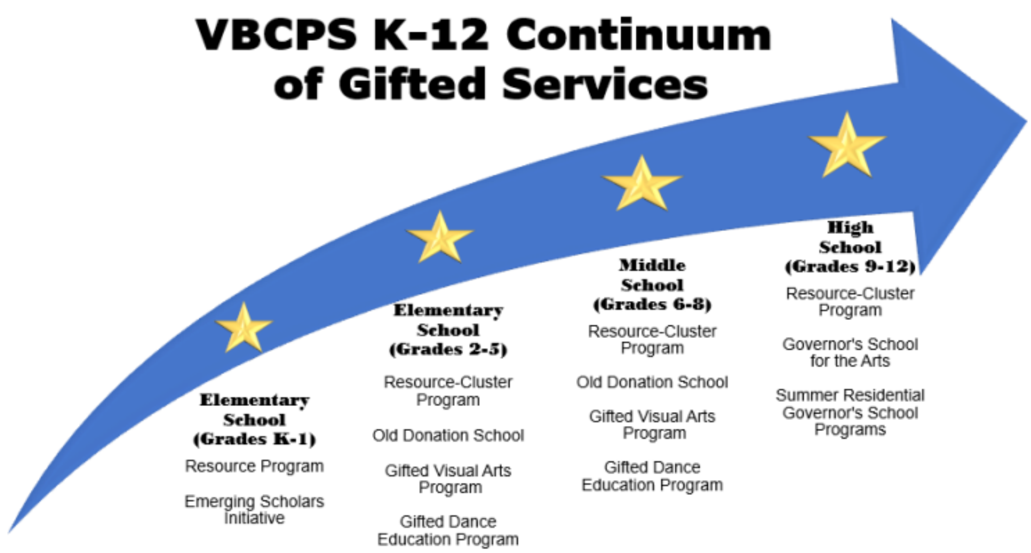
Introduction

Background of Program

The Gifted Education Program in Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) is a kindergarten through grade 12 program consisting of multiple service delivery models for intellectually and artistically gifted students (see Figure 1).[1] According to the Local Plan for Gifted Education, VBCPS defines gifted students as those whose abilities and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding they require special programs to meet their educational needs. The local plan also indicates the gifted program is based on the school division's mission to empower students to become life-long learners who are responsible, productive, and engaged citizens within the global community. Specifically, the mission of the VBCPS Gifted Program is to challenge students with differentiated interdisciplinary opportunities, to provide a flexible, innovative curriculum which promotes self-efficacy, productivity, creativity, and leadership, and to develop individual talents, special abilities, and a commitment to excellence.[2] According to the Local Plan for Gifted Education, because gifted students learn quickly, they require school experiences that are differentiated from the experiences provided for other students. They need learning experiences that provide deep and complex content, accelerated and enriched processes, and authentic and relevant products. These experiences need to be based on their readiness level, their interest, and their learning preference. Dynamic curriculum that deals with complex issues and requires probing for depth of learning provides the framework for gifted students to reach their academic potential.

Figure 1: VBCPS K-12 Continuum of Gifted Services



This program evaluation is focused on the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program which is one model within VBCPS for providing gifted services to students identified as intellectually gifted in grades 2 through 12. The resource-cluster model is an arrangement in which a group (cluster) of identified intellectually gifted students is assigned to a classroom with a teacher, referred to as a cluster teacher, who collaborates with the gifted resource teacher (GRT) to provide differentiated curriculum and instruction. Students are assigned to cluster classrooms according to specific program guidelines, and the cluster teacher is responsible for delivering gifted services in collaboration with the GRT. The GRT provides continuous training and coaching support to the cluster teacher in the development of curriculum and the implementation of differentiated instruction in the classroom. The GRT also works with small groups of gifted or high academic-ability students who have demonstrated mastery of skills on special assignments in flexible groups. The program provides opportunities for gifted students to work independently, with intellectual peers, and with chronological peers.[3]

Background and Purpose of Program Evaluation

The Gifted Resource-Cluster Program was selected and approved for the Program Evaluation Schedule based on criteria specified in School Board Policy 6-26, adopted by the School Board on September 5, 2007. The following excerpt is from School Board Policy 6-26:

Existing programs will be evaluated based on an annual Program Evaluation Schedule which will be developed by the Program Evaluation Committee and approved by the School Board annually. On a yearly basis, the Program Evaluation Committee will present a list of programs recommended for evaluation to the Superintendent and the School Board. This listing will include the rationale for each recommendation based on an approved set of criteria. All programs will be prioritized for evaluation based on the following factors:

1. Alignment with the school division’s strategic plan and School Board goals;
2. Program cost;
3. Program scale;
4. Cross-departmental interest;
5. Community/stakeholder interest in the program;
6. Availability of information on the program’s effectiveness; and
7. Date of most recent evaluation.

In July 2021, members of the Program Evaluation Committee were provided instructions to review a list of 12 existing educational programs within VBCPS and were asked to rank the programs based on the factors noted above. Based on the criteria in School Board policy 6-26, the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program was recommended for inclusion on the Program Evaluation Schedule. This recommendation was due to its potential to have a large, positive impact on VBCPS reaching its goals, the cost of the program, and the overall scale of the program operating divisionwide. Because the program had existing goals and objectives, it was determined that the Gifted-Resource Cluster Program would be scheduled for a comprehensive evaluation during the 2021-2022 school year. The proposed Program Evaluation Schedule was presented to the School Board on August 24, 2021, and approved on September 14, 2021. On May 3, 2022, the School Board was informed that the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program Evaluation would be postponed until the 2022-2023 school year due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the ability to conduct a valid assessment of the program. Essential components of the program were impacted by the pandemic including professional learning and staffing.[4] The purpose of the comprehensive evaluation during 2022-2023 was to provide program leadership, the school division administration, and the school board with information related to the implementation and operation of the resource-cluster program as well as outcomes for intellectually gifted students served by the program.

Program Goals and Objectives

The goals for the Gifted Program are outlined from the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted. Section 8VAC20-40-60A of the *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students* 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." The local plan outlines six goals:

1. To provide a systematic identification process that reflects the delivery of services.

2. Provide a comprehensive continuum of services which addresses the needs of all identified gifted learners.

3. Provide differentiated curriculum and learning opportunities that are responsive to the unique cognitive, social, and emotional needs of all gifted students.

4. Provide continuous differentiated professional development for all school staff (e.g., teachers, school counselors, teacher assistants, school administrators) on identification and education of gifted and talented students.

5. Establish processes and opportunities that are inclusive of students with diverse abilities, beliefs, and cultures during the identification and education of gifted and talented students. VBCPS employs a focus on equitable representation of students and diversity while creating learning environments in which students of all backgrounds can thrive. To that end, the VBCPS Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted maintains an emphasis on embedding culturally conscious processes and activities in each area of this plan.

6. Develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships among parents/guardians of gifted learners, school and district staff, and the community to advocate for the unique learners for all gifted students.

These local plan goal areas will be assessed through multiple evaluation questions focused on student identification processes, staff selection and professional learning for the program, components of the program delivery and curriculum and instruction, and collaboration with families.

In addition to the program implementation focus areas, there were four student outcome goals that were identified by the Gifted Education Program team in the Department of Teaching and Learning and were based on previous VBCPS program evaluations of the gifted program. These four student outcome goals focused on challenge and engagement in the learning process, gifted students becoming scholars and leaders, gifted students' social and emotional development, and gifted students becoming future ready. The specific outcomes goals are noted below. Specific objectives within each goal were assessed as part of the evaluation question focused on progress being made toward meeting the student outcome goals and can be found in that section of the report.

1. Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program are challenged and fully engaged in instruction at levels that commensurate with their abilities.

2. Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program become scholars and leaders.

3. Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program develop and demonstrate social emotional competence and cultural awareness.

4. Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program are future ready through participating in work-based experiences and having a plan for their future.

Evaluation Design and Methodology

Evaluation Design and Data Collection

The evaluation included mixed methodologies to address each of the evaluation questions, including assessing the extent to which the goals and objectives were met. Qualitative data were collected through discussions with the Office of Gifted Programs staff, document reviews, and open-ended survey questions. Quantitative data were gathered through the VBCPS data warehouse and closed-ended survey questions. The Office of Research and Evaluation evaluators used the following data collection methods:

- Communicated with staff from the Department of Teaching and Learning to gather implementation-related information, including the director of K-12 and gifted programs and gifted coordinators.
- Reviewed gifted program documentation on the division's intranet (internal) website and the public vbschools.com website, including the 2020-2025 Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted.
- Administered surveys to gifted resource teachers, gifted cluster teachers, building administrators, students in grades 5 through 12, and parents of students who received gifted services in the 2022-2023 school year or parents of students who were recently identified and had not yet received services.
- Collected data from the VBCPS data warehouse related to referrals for gifted services, demographic characteristics for students identified as intellectually gifted, and academic achievement (e.g., Standards of Learning assessments, course performance, Advanced Placement (AP) exam scores, diploma type earned).

Surveys

As part of a larger survey effort of multiple divisionwide initiatives, the Office of Research and Evaluation invited all students in grades 5 through 12 and parents of students in grades 2 through 12 to complete survey items about their educational experience. The survey link was made available to students on their ClassLink dashboard in April 2023, and schools were asked to administer the survey during the school day during a time that was least disruptive to instruction. To improve the accuracy and efficiency of student surveys, rather than asking students to identify their gifted status, demographic information including gifted status was included from the Student Information System in the survey results. No other identifying information, such as name or student number, was included in the results to maintain anonymity. Because students were not asked to identify their gifted status, survey items were written to focus on students' educational experience in general. For example, items assessed students' level of engagement, pace of instruction, course difficulty, teacher support, and student learning habits. Results included in this evaluation were based on students who had been identified as intellectually gifted and were attending schools with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program (i.e., all schools with the exception of Old Donation School). Of the intellectually gifted students in grades 5 through 12 who were eligible for the resource-cluster program, 68 percent responded to the survey. Student survey response rates by school level are displayed in Table 1. Student respondents were relatively evenly distributed across the grade levels (ranging from 11% to 15% for each grade level from grades 5 through 11), with somewhat less representation in the results for grade 12 (9% of all survey respondents).

Parents received an email invitation with a link to participate in the online survey in April 2023. Parents received all or some survey items related to the gifted program depending on whether they indicated their child had received gifted services during the 2022-2023 school year as a result of being identified as intellectually gifted, or they had a child who was recently identified as intellectually gifted but had not yet received gifted services. Parents who indicated they did not have a child who had been identified as intellectually gifted did not receive any survey items related to the gifted program. Of the parents with students in grades 2 through 12, 8 percent responded to the survey item asking about their child's gifted status. Parent survey response rates by school level are displayed in Table 1. Of those parents who responded to the survey item, 30 percent (n=1,754) indicated they had a child who received gifted services during the 2022-2023 school year, 5 percent (n=264) indicated they had a child who had recently been identified as intellectually gifted but did not receive services yet, and 65 percent indicated they did not have a gifted child. Of the parents who indicated their gifted child was receiving services (n=1,754) and therefore, completed the survey items for the gifted evaluation, there was a relatively even distribution across the grade levels (ranging from 8% to 12% for each grade level from grades 2 through 11), with somewhat less representation in the results for grades 12 (5%) and 7 (7%). In terms of the extent to which parent responses represented intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program, there were 9,333 identified gifted students from grades 2 through 12, and there were 1,754 parent responses to at least one of the gifted-related survey items. Therefore, parent respondents represented an estimated 19 percent of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program at the division level (see Table 1 for representation by school level).

For the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program staff, the Office of Research and Evaluation surveyed cluster teachers, GRTs, and building administrators including principals, and assistant principals. The building administrators and GRTs were identified based on data from the Department of Human Resources, and the cluster teachers were identified based on a list provided by the Department of Teaching and Learning after collecting this information from the schools. The staff surveys were administered online in February and March 2023. Survey items assessed overall perceptions of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program including identification, professional learning, curriculum and instruction, assessment, and collaboration. Staff received an email invitation with a link to participate in the online survey. Of the staff invited to complete the survey, 59 percent of GRTs, 27 percent of cluster teachers, and 34 percent of administrators completed the survey. Staff survey response rates by school level are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Survey Response Rates by Respondent Group

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total	Overall Number of Respondents
Cluster Teachers (Grades 3-12)	31% (n=138)	26% (n=88)	19% (n=46)	27% (n=272)	272
Gifted Resource Teachers (GRTs)	58% (n=33)	62% (n=8)	58% (n=7)	59% (n=48)	48
Administrators	37% (n=40)	32% (n=14)	31% (n=17)	34% (n=71)	71
Students (Grades 5-12)	81% (n=754)	67% (n=2,174)	65% (n=2,603)	68% (n=5,531)	5,531
All Parents (Grades 2-12)	9% (n=2,331)	8% (n=1,529)	7% (n=1,937)	8% (n=5,797)	5,797
Parents of Gifted Students (Grades 2-12)	23% (n=707)	18% (n=442)	16% (n=605)	19% (n=1,754)	1,754

In addition to the survey specific for staff involved with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, all classroom teachers and other instructional staff were asked on the divisionwide annual spring survey about the availability of resources for the gifted referral and identification processes. The spring survey was administered online in April 2023, and the response rate for staff on this survey was 49 percent for classroom teachers and 35 percent for other instructional staff.

For all stakeholder surveys, survey agreement percentages reported in the evaluation are based on those who answered the survey item (i.e., missing responses are excluded from the percentages). Survey results for each stakeholder group are reported at the division level as well as by school level (i.e., elementary, middle, and high). Open-ended comments were analyzed for common themes and summarized.

Student Information From Data Warehouse

Quantitative data collected from the VBCPS data warehouse included data regarding the following: referral for gifted services, identification, student demographic characteristics, and academic data such as course enrollment and performance, performance on SOL tests, performance on national assessments (e.g., PSAT, SAT, Advanced Placement), type of diploma earned, participation in work-based or service learning experiences, and career and technical education (CTE) credentials. Unless otherwise noted in the report, the group of students for which data were collected and analyzed was generally based on students who were identified as intellectually gifted in the fall Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Student Record Collection and were attending a school other than Old Donation School. A few data elements were based on other groups of students. For example, graduation diploma data were based on all graduates during the 2022-2023 school year and data regarding work-based, service learning, or CTE experiences were based on 2023 graduating cohort students.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions for this report were developed by evaluators following a review of the VBCPS Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted with input and feedback from staff in the Office of Gifted Programs. While the intent of the evaluation was not to evaluate all pieces of the local plan itself, the local plan served as an information source about important components of the Gifted Education

Program and as a framework for the evaluation questions. Evaluation questions one through four were aligned with concepts and topic areas addressed in the goals and objectives of the local plan including identification (Goal 1), delivery of services (Goal 2), curriculum and instruction (Goal 3), professional development (Goal 4), and parent and community involvement (Goal 6). Goal 5 of the Local Plan is focused on equity, equitable representation of students, and culturally conscious practices, and this goal is addressed throughout the evaluation questions where appropriate based on the topic.

The evaluation questions established for the comprehensive evaluation were as follows:

1. **What was the student identification process and characteristics of students served by the resource-cluster program?**
   - This evaluation question was aligned with Goal 1 (identification) and elements of Goal 5 (equitable representation of students) in the local plan.
2. **What was the selection process, characteristics of teachers, and professional learning for the resource-cluster program?**
   - This evaluation question was aligned with Goal 4 (professional learning) and elements of Goal 5 in the local plan.
3. **What were the components of the resource-cluster program during 2022-2023, including the role of the gifted resource teacher (GRT)?**
   - This evaluation question was aligned with Goal 2 (delivery of services), Goal 3 (curriculum and instruction), and elements of Goal 5 (delivery of services and curriculum and instruction) in the local plan.
4. **What family and community involvement and collaboration opportunities were available related to gifted education?**
   - This evaluation question was aligned with Goal 6 (parent involvement) and elements of Goal 5 in the local plan.
5. **What progress is being made toward meeting student outcome goals of the program?**
6. **What were stakeholders' general perceptions of the resource-cluster program?**

Evaluation Results and Discussion

Identification Process and Characteristics of Students

Identification Process

The first evaluation question is focused on the identification process and characteristics of students served by the resource-cluster program which is aligned with Goal 1 of the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted which focuses on a systematic identification process that reflects the delivery of services. Within the local plan goal related to identification, there are several objectives which focus on equitable assessment measures, utilization of multiple criteria for identification, communication about gifted identification and placement with stakeholders, training opportunities, and ensuring equitable access for all students to gifted education services from identification to program placement. This section of the report addresses referral processes including screening procedures for giftedness in the division and identification procedures for the 2022-2023 school year. In addition, changes that were made in October 2023 to these processes are noted. The details about the referral and identification processes in this section include information about practices within the division to increase opportunities for students in underrepresented groups to be identified for services. Practices or strategies discussed in the literature include implementing universal screening, using local norms for identification, and having gifted services available in each school.[5] VBCPS employs these practices within the program.

To qualify for the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, students must first be identified as intellectually gifted which begins with the referral process. VBCPS utilizes a universal screening process for both first- and fifth-graders which includes all students in these grades taking an assessment in the fall of the school year. In 2021-2022, in preparation for identifying gifted students for services during the 2022-2023 school year, all first- and fifth-grade students were screened with the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT, 3rd Edition), described by the publisher as a language free, culture-fair test on nonverbal reasoning. The NNAT does not require a child to read, write, or speak; rather it requires examination of the relationships among the parts. The NNAT3 includes four types of questions, including pattern completion, reasoning by analogy, serial reasoning, and spatial visualization. Parents were informed their child would be taking the NNAT and had the opportunity to opt them out of the testing. First- and fifth-grade students who scored at the 90th percentile or higher on the screening test (i.e., they scored better than 90 percent of all other test takers) were recommended for additional testing using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT, Form 8). The CogAT is a group test designed to assess students' abilities in reasoning and problem-solving in three domains: verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative. The Verbal Battery is comprised of three subtests: Picture (Verbal) Analogies, Picture (Verbal) Classification, and Sentence Completion. The Nonverbal Battery is comprised of three subtests: Figure Matrices, Paper Folding, and Figure Classification. The Quantitative Battery is comprised of three subtests: Number Analogies, Number Puzzles, and Number Series. Psychologists have cautioned that nonverbal reasoning tests, like the NNAT and CogAT, may not capture the same ability construct that is measured by tests that use language and therefore, should not be used alone to make decisions about academic giftedness or general intellectual competence.[6]

In addition to universal screening at first and fifth grades, students may be referred for gifted services any time by parents/guardians, students, teachers, other staff who may have knowledge or expertise to make such referrals (e.g., GRT, members of the Student Support Team), and community members. There is no limit to the number of times a student may be referred for gifted services. Students who move to VBCPS from another state or school division must be assessed by the processes utilized by the VBCPS Gifted Testing Office. Testing scores and prior identification in other states or divisions are noted and highlighted during the identification committee meeting.

Once a student has been tested or referred for gifted services, data are compiled and forwarded to an identification and placement committee that determines eligibility for gifted services. The Gifted Identification and Placement Committee is composed of school system personnel including gifted assessment specialists, coordinators and instructional specialists of gifted education, curriculum coordinators, administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, and GRTs. In accordance with the Code of Virginia[7], eligibility for gifted services is determined through the review of multiple measures including the following: online application from the parent or guardian, teacher information form, student achievement as indicated on report cards, standardized test scores, first-grade performance-based task (grade 1 only), and student response to interview questions (grades 5 to 12 only).[8] The Gifted Identification and Placement Committee reviews each profile and seeks evidence that the student demonstrates potential for exceptional performance and has academic needs that cannot be met through the general education curricula. No single instrument, score, or criterion is used to exclude or include a child for eligibility. Decisions are based on a consensus of the committee.[9] Following the committee determination, identification status is provided to parents in the spring via e-mail including information about the various gifted services in the division and providing them information related to opting out of services. Students who are identified for gifted services retain their identification from the point of identification until graduation in VBCPS.

Parents or guardians may appeal the decision of the Gifted Identification and Placement Committee if the parent is able to provide a concise explanation of an unforeseen or change in circumstance that may have impacted the committee's decision if they had been aware of it at the time of the application review. The appeal committee's decision may include the following: a) upholding the original decision of the identification and placement committee; b) reversing the decision of the identification and placement committee; or c) gather additional or updated data.[10]

Identification Process Changes

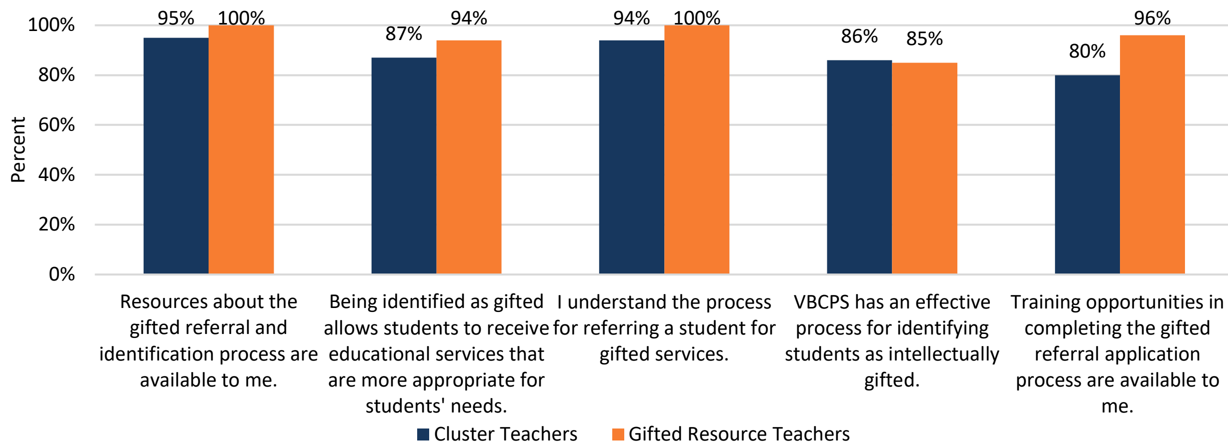
Beginning in 2022-2023, all first-grade students were screened using both the NNAT and the CogAT. Fifth-grade students continued to be screened with the NNAT. Beginning in 2023-2024, if a student scores in the 90th percentile, their parent or guardian will receive notification that they are recommended to continue with the gifted identification process and the steps to take to submit an application. In order to continue with the identification process, parents must "opt-in" and complete an application for their student in order to continue testing and to be considered by the committee. Parents can submit an application at any time and have their student be considered for gifted services. These changes to the identification process were approved by the School Board in October 2023 and the local plan was amended to reflect these changes.

In 2022-2023, the identification process utilized local norming as an additional method for identifying first-grade students for gifted services. In past years, students were referred for further gifted testing if they scored in the 90th percentile or higher based only on a national norming group, which is based on comparing students from the same age group across the United States. Local norms are based on comparing students' performance to other students at the same grade level in their school building. Rather than comparing students to a national norm to identify their academic strength and potential, local norms identify students who need different levels of academic challenge than the typical student in *their school.* The purpose of local norming is to ensure all students are appropriately challenged in their general education classroom. Local norming allows schools to tailor their gifted identification to the specific school population, therefore, gifted instruction can be tailored to each local school's context.[11] A local norm for each student based on the performance of students at their school was calculated which created a local percentile ranking based on the population of students at their school.[12] To be as equitable as possible, any first-grade student who scored in the 90th percentile on *either* their school's local norm or the national norm was referred for further gifted testing. Fifth-grade students continued to be recommended for further testing if they scored in the 90th percentile or higher based on national norms.

Perceptions of Student Identification Process

Survey data were collected to address perceptions of the VBCPS student identification process, including elements related to an effective process. The survey items varied somewhat based on stakeholder group. As displayed in Figure 2, high percentages of cluster teachers and GRTs agreed resources about the gifted referral and identification process were available to them (at least 95%), being identified allowed students to receive educational services that were more appropriate for their needs (at least 87%), and staff understood the process for referring a student for gifted services (at least 94%). When asked whether VBCPS has an effective process for identifying students as intellectually gifted, 85 percent of GRTs and 86 percent of cluster teachers agreed. A high percentage of GRTs agreed training opportunities were available to them about completing the gifted referral application process, along with a somewhat lower percentage of cluster teachers (80%). Administrators were also asked their perceptions of the student identification process. Administrators agreed (98%) that resources about the referral and identification process were available to them, 97 percent agreed being identified allowed students to receive educational services that were more appropriate for their needs, and 95 percent agreed VBCPS has an effective process for identifying students as intellectually gifted.

Figure 2: Teachers' Perceptions of Gifted Referral and Identification Processes



In addition to staff involved with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, all instructional staff were asked about their perceptions of the availability of resources about the referral and identification processes on the divisionwide spring survey. Results were very positive overall and across school levels with 91 percent of classroom teachers and 93 percent of other instructional staff agreeing resources about the referral and identification processes were available (see Table 2).

Table 2: Instructional Staff Members' Perceptions of Resources about the Gifted Referral and Identification Process Being Available to Them

Staff Group	Elementary	Middle	High	Total
Classroom Teachers	94%	94%	86%	91%
Other Instructional Staff	94%	93%	91%	93%

Note: Excludes staff who responded Not Applicable.

Parents of intellectually gifted students were also asked various survey items about the identification process, and results for those who responded to the survey are shown in Table 3. Overall, parents had relatively high agreement that resources about the gifted referral and identification process were available to them, being identified allowed students to receive more appropriate educational services, they understood the process for referring a student for services, and they understood the process for identifying a child as a gifted learner.

Table 3: Parents' Perceptions of Gifted Referral and Identification Processes

Survey Item	Total
Resources about the gifted referral and identification process are available to me.	87%
Being identified as gifted allows students to receive educational services that are more appropriate for students' needs.	83%
I understand the process for referring a student for gifted services.	86%
I understand the process of identifying a child as a gifted learner.	87%

Note: The survey items in this table were answered by parents of students who received gifted services and parents of students who were recently identified as gifted but had not yet received services.

Referrals for Gifted Services

This section of the report provides information about the students referred for services for intellectual giftedness. The numbers in Table 4 represent the number of students who were referred for gifted services from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 and had been enrolled in VBCPS at some point during the school year. Information for the overall VBCPS population was based on cumulative enrollment during the regular school year and the same grade levels of students who were referred for comparison purposes (e.g., grades 1 through 12). Based on the analysis, 4,011 students had a record indicating that they had been referred for gifted services during the 2022-2023 school year which was 6 percent of the total student population in the division. The grade levels with the highest percentages of students being referred were in grades 1 (30%) and 5 (13%) which corresponds to the grade levels with universal screening.

Table 4: Grade Levels of the 2022-2023 Students Referred for Gifted Services

Grade Level of Referred Students	# of Students Referred (Unduplicated)	# of Students Enrolled*	% of Student Population Referred
1	1,679	5,646	30%
2	413	5,332	8%
3	417	5,443	8%
4	278	5,359	5%
5	682	5,281	13%
Elementary School Total	3,469	27,061	13%
6	185	5,287	3%
7	156	5,376	3%
8	110	5,530	2%
Middle School Total	451	16,193	3%
9	24	6,020	< 1%
10	54	5,662	1%
11	13	5,209	< 1%
12	0	5,404	0%
High School Total	91	22,295	< 1%
Total	4,011	65,549	6%

When examining data related to the referral source for students who were referred for gifted services during the 2022-2023 school year, the primary sources for referrals at the division level were the first-grade universal screening process and parent referrals (see Table 5). In elementary school, 36 percent of the referrals for intellectually gifted services were based on the first-grade screening and 29 percent were parent referrals. In middle school, 42 percent of referrals for gifted services were from teachers and 33 percent were from parents. In high school, the largest percentage of records did not have a referral source noted in the data warehouse (43%) or from a source noted as “other” (19%). Data showed of these 4,011 students referred for gifted services during 2022-2023, 2,008 or 50 percent were ultimately identified for gifted services.

Table 5: Reasons Students Were Referred for Intellectually Gifted Services

Referral Reason	Elementary (n=3,469)	Middle (n=451)	High (n=91)	Total (n=4,011)
First-Grade Screening	36%	n/a	n/a	31%
Parent Referred	29%	33%	14%	29%
Teacher Referred	10%	42%	10%	13%
No Referring Source Noted	8%	5%	43%	8%
Fifth-Grade Screening	8%	n/a	n/a	7%
GRT Referred	8%	6%	1%	7%
Other Source	2%	< 1%	19%	2%
Record Review	< 1%	8%	7%	1%
Self-referral	< 1%	1%	7%	< 1%
Other Staff Referred	< 1%	2%	0%	< 1%

The data in tables 6 and 7 present the demographic data for students who were referred for intellectual giftedness along with demographic data for the VBCPS student population as a whole. Information was based on September 30, 2022 data except for economic status which was based on students’ status as of the end of the school year. Demographics for referred students are presented for each school level and overall for all school levels (see Table 6), and for grades 1 and 5 only due to grades 1 and 5 being the primary grade levels when students are referred due to the divisionwide screening that occurs (see Table 7). Any differences of 5 percentage points or more between the referred students and the division’s population are noted in tables 6 and 7. In comparison to the division, students referred for gifted services in 2022-2023 had notably higher percentages of White students and military-connected students, and notably lower percentages of Black students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. Similar results were found at the elementary school and middle school levels, with the exception of military-connected students at elementary school. In comparison to the division at the high school level, students referred for gifted services in 2022-2023 had notably higher percentages of female students, Hispanic students, English learners, economically disadvantaged students, and military-connected students, and notably lower percentages of male students, Black students, and students with disabilities.

Table 6: Demographic Characteristics of Students Referred for Intellectually Gifted Services in 2022-2023 in Relation to School Division Population

Student Characteristic	Elementary (Grades 1-5)		Middle (Grades 6-8)		High (Grades 9-12)		Total (ES, MS, & HS)	
	Referred	Division	Referred	Division	Referred	Division	Referred	Division
Total Number of Students	3,469	27,061	451	16,193	91	22,295	4,011	65,549
Female	48%	49%	49%	48%	67%*	49%	48%	49%
Male	52%	51%	51%	51%	33%*	51%	52%	51%
Asian	10%	6%	9%	6%	9%	6%	10%	6%
Black	13%*	22%	16%*	24%	18%*	25%	14%*	24%
Hispanic	11%	14%	12%	13%	20%*	13%	11%	14%
Multiracial	12%	11%	11%	11%	9%	10%	11%	11%
White	53%*	45%	51%*	45%	44%	45%	53%*	45%
Economically Disadvantaged	30%*	40%	36%*	41%	41%*	36%	31%*	39%
English Learner	6%	6%	9%	5%	12%*	3%	6%	5%
Military Connected	25%	22%	27%*	18%	23%*	14%	25%*	18%
Students with Disabilities	3%*	13%	3%*	12%	3%*	11%	3%*	12%

*Difference of 5 percentage points or more.

When focused exclusively on students in grades 1 and 5 who were referred due to universal screening, in comparison to the division, students referred for gifted services in 2022-2023 had a notably higher percentage of White students and notably lower percentages of Black students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities (see Table 7). In addition, in grade 5 only, students referred for gifted services in 2022-2023 had notably higher percentages of Asian students and military-connected students.

Table 7: Demographic Characteristics of Students Referred for Intellectually Gifted Services in 2022-2023 in Relation to School Division Population in Grades 1 and 5

Student Characteristic	Grade 1 Only		Grade 5 Only	
	Referred	Division	Referred	Division
Total Number of Students	1,230	5,646	274	5,281
Female	50%	49%	51%	48%
Male	50%	51%	49%	52%
Asian	9%	5%	13%*	6%
Black	11%*	22%	8%*	23%
Hispanic	11%	15%	14%	14%
Multiracial	13%	12%	9%	11%
White	56%*	45%	55%*	45%
Economically Disadvantaged	31%*	40%	28%*	41%
English Learner	5%	5%	7%	6%
Military Connected	26%	24%	33%*	21%
Students with Disabilities	4%*	11%	2%*	13%

*Difference of 5 percentage points or more.

Characteristics of Gifted Students in Gifted Resource-Cluster Program

This section of the report focuses on characteristics of gifted students as part of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program. Goal 5 of the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted is focused on equitable representation of students and the aim is to establish processes and opportunities that are inclusive of students with diverse abilities, beliefs, and cultures during the identification and education of gifted and talented students. The objectives of this goal in the local plan include identification, delivery of services, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and parent and community involvement which are described in other evaluation questions in greater detail. The following section describes the demographic characteristics of students identified as intellectually gifted and in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program in relation to the division's population as a whole. As a reminder, students who are identified for gifted services retain their identification from the point of identification until graduation in VBCPS.

Demographic characteristics of intellectually gifted students are shown in Table 8. As of September 30, 2022, a total of 9,333 students were identified as intellectually gifted in grades 2 through 12 who were not enrolled at Old Donation School during the fall. Therefore, approximately 17 percent of the division's student population in grades 2 through 12 would be provided services for intellectual giftedness through the resource-cluster program. Student characteristics were based on data as of September 30 with the exception of economic status which was based on data as of the end of the 2022-2023 school year. Any differences of 5 percentage points or more in comparison to all students enrolled at any point during the 2022-2023 school year throughout the division are noted in Table 8.

At all school levels, in comparison to all enrolled students, there were notably higher percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who were White and notably lower percentages of students who were Black (see Table 8). Also at the high school level, there was a notably lower percentage of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who were Hispanic compared to the division. At all school levels, there were notably lower percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who were economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities.

Table 8: Demographic Characteristics of Students Identified as Intellectually Gifted in Resource-Cluster Program

Student Characteristic	Elementary (Grades 2-5)		Middle (Grades 6-8)		High (Grades 9-12)	
	Intellectually Gifted	Division	Intellectually Gifted	Division	Intellectually Gifted	Division
Total Number of Students	3,121	18,978	2,462	14,510	3,750	20,127
Female	47%	48%	47%	49%	48%	49%
Male	53%	51%	53%	51%	52%	51%
Asian	9%	6%	8%	7%	11%	7%
Black	9%*	22%	10%*	23%	9%*	24%
Hispanic	10%	14%	10%	13%	8%*	13%
Multiracial	11%	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%
White	60%*	46%	60%*	46%	61%*	46%
Economically Disadvantaged	23%*	42%	24%*	42%	18%*	37%
English Learner	4%	6%	2%	5%	1%	3%
Military Connected	24%	23%	22%	19%	15%	15%
Students with Disabilities	3%*	12%	3%*	12%	2%*	11%

*Difference of 5 percentage points or more.

Representation of the division's student population in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, as well as all gifted programs, has been an area of focus within the local plan as well as the division's Equity Plan. In comparison to the 2019-2020 school year prior to the pandemic, at the high school level, there were small increases in the percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program in 2022-2023 who were Asian (9% to 11%), Black (8% to 9%), Hispanic (7% to 8%), and Multiracial (9% to 11%) with a corresponding decrease in the percentage of those who were White (66% vs. 61%) (see Appendix A). There were smaller changes in the percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program for the various race/ethnicity groups from 2019-2020 to 2022-2023 at the elementary school and middle school levels. There were no notable differences based on other student characteristics.

Staff Selection Process, Staff Characteristics, and Professional Learning

The second evaluation question focused on staff selection, staff characteristics, and professional learning. The Gifted Resource-Cluster Program is implemented by the gifted resource teachers (GRTs) and the cluster teachers who teach intellectually gifted students in the neighborhood schools.

Staff Selection

This section provides information about the selection process for the GRTs and the cluster teachers and the characteristics and requirements for these particular roles. VBCPS resource-cluster program handbooks outlined various characteristics and/or requirements for GRTs and cluster teachers that are to be considered during the selection process.

Gifted Resource Teachers (GRTs)

The GRT serves as a facilitator, coach, designer, trainer, and collaborator at each school site. Each neighborhood school has a GRT assigned to work with cluster teachers and the intellectually gifted students. During the 2022-2023 school year, Renaissance Academy did not have an assigned GRT, but the local plan indicates that advocating for a GRT to serve this site is needed.

Desired characteristics of the GRT are described in the handbooks for the *Elementary, Middle, and High School Gifted Resource Program: Resource-Cluster Program Handbook.* The handbooks state that an effective GRT may exhibit many of the following characteristics:

- Is able to develop appropriately rigorous, engaging, and student-centered gifted curricula differentiated according to the readiness, interests, and learning profile of learners;
- Is able to lead professional learning initiatives in a professional and efficient manner consistent with the plan provided by the Office of K-12 and Gifted Programs;
- Is a creative, innovative, and flexible thinker who is willing to take risks and set high goals for self and students;
- Displays empathy, diplomacy, enthusiasm, energy, commitment, reflection, integrity, and perseverance;
- Seeks opportunities to collaborate with teachers, administrators, community members, and other specialists;
- Is open to change as well as other points of view;
- Fosters change and has a passion for learning;
- Appreciates and responds to students' different learning profiles and cultural backgrounds;
- Organizes and manages time efficiently;
- Collaborates well with colleagues, administrators, gifted staff, parents, and community members;
- Exhibits successful interpersonal skills and communicates effectively with diverse audiences through written and oral communication;
- Develops performance-based assessments and rubrics and evaluates students' work with varied assessment tools in collaboration with cluster teachers;
- Approaches instruction in an individualized, responsive, and flexible manner;
- Utilizes gifted pedagogy and technology effectively in developing differentiated curricula;
- Manages a classroom effectively; and
- Is sensitive to the characteristics and needs (cognitive and affective) of gifted learners.

According to the Office of Gifted Education, GRTs are expected to coach and work collaboratively with classroom teachers and assist classroom teachers in meeting the academic and social and emotional needs of gifted learners. GRTs work in collaboration with teachers to provide compacted, accelerated, and differentiated curriculum, instruction, and assessment for intellectually gifted students; support artistically gifted students served in related programs; plan and conduct professional learning activities and workshops; develop and manage gifted program communication; assist in the screening and referral processes; and work collaboratively with parents of gifted and talented students. The requirements for the GRT position include:

- Bachelor’s degree,
- At least three years successful classroom teaching experience in either a regular or gifted education setting,

- Degree or endorsement in gifted education and knowledge of gifted pedagogy and coaching is preferred. For candidates without a degree or endorsement in gifted education, an add-on endorsement in Gifted Education from the Commonwealth of Virginia is required by the end of the third full year of employment in the position.[13]

According to the Office of Gifted Programs, new GRTs are offered the opportunity to earn their gifted endorsement through the College of William and Mary. This endorsement includes four masters' level courses which meets the state's requirement. The Office of Professional Growth and Innovation pays the tuition for these courses. Staff members must absorb additional related costs including textbooks and the fee to add the endorsement to their license.

According to the Office of Gifted Programs, teachers who are interested in becoming a GRT apply to the gifted resource teacher candidate pool vacancy. From there, the Gifted Leadership Team selects qualified applicants to interview. After interviewing potential candidates, a GRT candidate pool is created. This is typically done annually. Principals can then interview candidates from the pool. Principals also have the option to interview candidates who are not in the pool and if this occurs, a member of the Gifted Leadership Team is part of the interview process and provides feedback about the candidate's potential fit for the position. Ultimately, principals make the final decision of who to hire for the GRT position for their school.

Cluster Teachers

Cluster teacher characteristics are described in the handbooks for the *Elementary, Middle, and High School Gifted Resource Program: Resource-Cluster Program Handbook.* The handbooks state that an effective cluster teacher may exhibit many of the following characteristics:

- Is willing to collaborate with the gifted resource teacher on a regular basis;
- Is willing to differentiate curriculum and instruction according to students' readiness levels, areas of interest and learning profiles on a regular basis;
- Is willing to use differentiated resource units, exemplary curriculum for the gifted and varied instructional tools to supplant traditional curricula and resource materials;
- Is sensitive to the diverse characteristics and needs of gifted learners;
- Develops skills necessary to differentiate curriculum and instruction for the gifted learner;
- Utilizes appropriate instructional strategies with gifted learners;
- Is sensitive to the needs of others and demonstrates respect for students' opinions and individual learning styles;
- Is organized, self-motivated and self-directed;
- Demonstrates a positive attitude, enthusiasm for learning and sense of humor;
- Creates a learning environment in which all students are challenged to learn;
- Is a facilitator of learning who emphasizes the process of learning, in addition to clear outcomes, learning goals and products;
- Is a risk taker, creative thinker and effective problem solver;
- Appreciates the need for an individualized and flexible approach to instruction with gifted learners and communicates this need with professional colleagues;
- Encourages self-discipline, self-evaluation and personal responsibility in students;
- Fosters collegial sharing through communication and respect for peers, parents and students;
- Evaluates students; skills and work with varied assessment tools; and
- Provides opportunities for students to connect with real-world situations and use community resources.

According to the handbooks, cluster teacher selections are made by school administrators. Their roles and responsibilities include but are not limited to the following: attending regular professional learning sessions, working collaboratively with the GRT to develop/refine assessments and rubrics, collaborating with GRTS to plan differentiated curriculum and instruction to addresses the range of learners, participating in data-driven decision making, using a variety of instructional models and strategies associated with gifted pedagogy, providing flexible grouping for all students, and being knowledgeable about gifted characteristics.

Characteristics of Gifted Resource-Cluster Program Staff

Demographic characteristics and data related to professional experiences were examined for GRTs and cluster teachers. Division staff data were also included for reference purposes. Relative to all instructional staff throughout the division, there was a higher percentage of female GRTs (96% vs 82%) and a lower percentage of male GRTs (4% vs 18%) (see Table 9). There was a higher percentage of White GRTs compared to the division instructional staff and a lower percentage of Black GRTs compared to division instructional staff members. The cluster teachers generally mirrored the characteristics of the division's instructional staff with differences no greater than three percentage points (see Table 9).

For professional experience, the average number of years teaching and percent with graduate degrees was higher for GRTs than division instructional staff (see Table 9). The cluster teachers were similar to the division's instructional staff in terms of graduate degrees and average years of experience. Both GRTs and cluster teachers were less likely to be new to VBCPS compared to all division instructional staff. While few cluster teachers had a gifted endorsement, 65 percent of GRTs across the division had the gifted endorsement, which according to information provided by the Office of Gifted Programs is a requirement by the end of the third year of employment as a GRT. A higher percentage of elementary GRTs had the endorsement (72%), followed by high school GRTs (58%) and then middle school GRTs (38%). According to the Office of Gifted Programs, any GRT that does not currently have the gifted endorsement is working toward it at William and Mary's gifted endorsement program. Moreover, according to the Office of Gifted Programs, because there is a large number of staff members working toward their gifted endorsement currently, PGI and DTAL are splitting the cost of tuition. The Office of Gifted Programs, the licensure office in the Department of Human Resources, and building principals monitor the status of GRTs progress in completing the endorsement.[14]

Table 9: Characteristics of Instructional Staff

Staff Group	Gifted Resource Teachers (N=82)	Cluster Teachers (N=1,036)	Division Instructional Staff (N=4,978)
Female	96%	84%	82%
Male	4%	16%	18%
American Indian	0%	0%	0%
Asian	<1%	3%	3%
Black	6%	8%	11%
Hispanic	4%	3%	4%
Multiracial	2%	2%	2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	<1%	0%
White	87%	83%	80%
Percentage New to the Division	0%	<1%	10%
Average Years of Experience Total	21 years	14 years	14 years
Elementary	22 years	13 years	13 years
Middle	18 years	14 years	13 years
High	20 years	15 years	15 years
Percent Graduate Degrees Total	70%	53%*	54%
Elementary	70%	53%	56%
Middle	77%	51%	52%
High	58%	57%	53%
Percent Gifted Endorsement Total	65%	2%	n/a
Elementary	72%	2%	n/a
Middle	38%	1%	n/a
High	58%	3%	n/a

*This percentage is based on the number of cluster teachers with degree information listed. Eleven cluster teachers did not have degree information available. According to the Department of Human Resources, there have been delays at the VDOE in verifying transcripts.

Professional Learning

This section of the report focuses on the professional learning for staff as part of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program. Goal 4 of the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted is focused on professional learning and the aim is to provide continuous differentiated professional development for all school staff, including teachers and school administrators, on identification and education of gifted and talented students. Within the goal related to professional learning found in the local plan, several objectives are focused on developing and implementing professional learning for all gifted and instructional staff related to the following: academic and social and emotional needs, the needs of twice-exceptional students, identifying underrepresented gifted students, and the latest pedagogical practices. The professional learning could occur through graduate courses and degree programs as well as collaborative opportunities between staff who work with gifted students. The local plan outlines six professional learning topics based on teacher competencies that staff will participate in. These topics include: understanding the principles of the integration of gifted education and generation education; understanding of the characteristics of gifted students; understanding the specific techniques to identify gifted students; understanding and application of a variety of educational models, teaching methods and strategies; understanding and application of theories and principles of differentiating curriculum; and understanding of contemporary issues and research in gifted education.

In 2022-2023, the Office of Gifted Programs provided a variety of professional learning opportunities. In total, 23 professional learning activities were held from August through May. Professional learning opportunities were mainly for GRTs, although the Gifted Summer Symposium held in August 2022 was open to cluster teachers, administrators, gifted parents, and school counselors. Professional learning topics included instructional strategies and resources, program elements, coaching/collaboration, gifted data analysis, concept-based curriculum, DTAL coaching framework, Project E-Ignite, lesson sharing, and book studies. The professional learning opportunities were presented by gifted coordinators, instructional specialists, mentors, and outside consultants.

Participation and Perceptions of Professional Learning

Building administrators, cluster teachers, and GRTs were surveyed about their participation in professional learning related to the education of gifted students, including the unique characteristics of gifted learners; the referral process for gifted learners; the identification of gifted learners; the differentiation principles and practices; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; understanding the various needs of gifted learners; making connections with the strategic plan; and implementing culturally responsive practices. Overall, relatively high percentages reported participating in professional learning on various topics related to the gifted program, and at least 83 percent of GRTs at all school levels indicated they participated (see Table 10).[15] At the division level, from 73 to 79 percent of cluster teachers indicated they participated in professional learning with some variation in the percentages by school level for certain topics. For example, 69 percent of elementary school cluster teachers reported participating in professional learning to help them understand the needs of twice-exceptional learners and 84 percent of high school cluster teachers reported participating in professional learning to help them understand under-represented populations. Administrators were less likely to report participating in professional learning related to the gifted program with percentages ranging from 53 to 71 percent depending on the topic. While the percentage of administrators reporting participation in gifted program-related professional learning topics was relatively low, the director of K-12 and gifted programs indicated there were opportunities for them to do so.[16] For example, the Gifted Leadership Team presents at the summer Administrator's Conference and various administrators can choose to attend those sessions. Also, as administrators request professional learning, the Gifted Leadership Team develops and presents professional learning based on the request. Further, administrators are invited to join monthly GRT professional learning sessions alongside their GRTs.

Table 10: Staff Members' Reported Participation in Professional Learning

Participation	Administrators				Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Unique characteristics of gifted learners	64%	60%	42%	59%	74%	75%	75%	75%	97%	100%	100%	98%
Referral process for gifted learners	78%	80%	42%	71%	75%	77%	75%	76%	95%	100%	100%	97%
Identification of gifted learners	69%	80%	42%	66%	78%	82%	75%	79%	90%	100%	100%	93%
Differentiation principles and practices	64%	70%	42%	60%	74%	71%	78%	73%	93%	100%	100%	95%
Curriculum, instruction, and assessment	60%	70%	42%	58%	75%	75%	75%	75%	90%	83%	100%	91%
Academic needs of gifted learners	64%	80%	42%	62%	75%	78%	78%	76%	90%	100%	100%	93%
Social emotional needs of gifted learners	69%	90%	42%	67%	74%	80%	78%	76%	93%	100%	100%	95%
Underrepresented, underserved, and under-resourced populations	61%	80%	42%	60%	71%	74%	84%	74%	93%	100%	100%	95%
Needs of twice-exceptional learners	61%	80%	42%	60%	69%	78%	75%	73%	90%	100%	100%	93%
Making connections to the VBCPS strategic plan	69%	80%	33%	64%	71%	77%	72%	73%	87%	83%	100%	88%
Implementing culturally responsive practices in the classroom	53%	70%	42%	53%	75%	80%	81%	77%	93%	83%	100%	93%

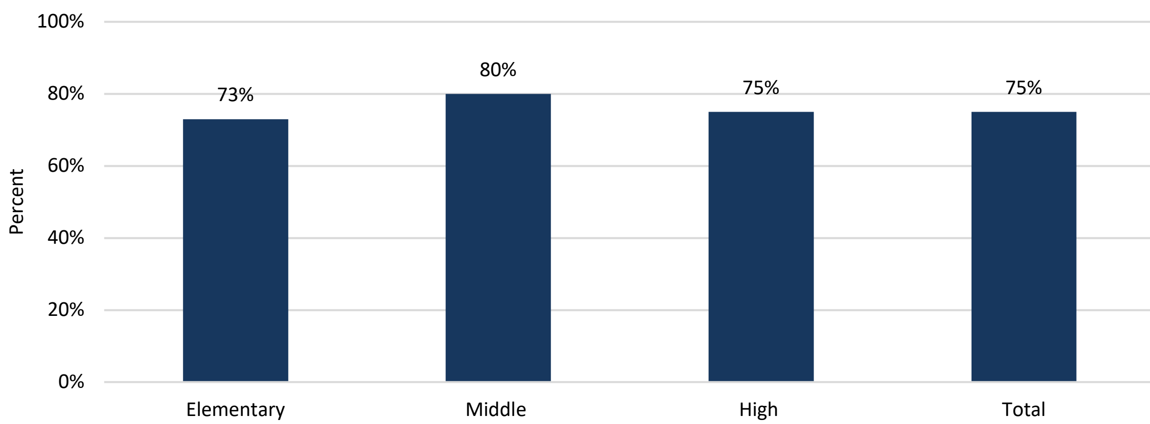
Staff who indicated they attended professional learning were surveyed about their perceptions of effectiveness using a scale of Very Effective, Somewhat Effective, or Not Effective. Overall, perceptions of the effectiveness of professional learning were relatively high with at least 81 percent of administrators, cluster teachers, and GRTs at all school levels indicating the professional learning in all areas was either very or somewhat effective at providing them with information about various topics (see Table 11).

Table 11: Perceptions of Effectiveness of Gifted Education Program's Professional Learning Initiatives

Survey Item: How effective are the Gifted Education Program's professional learning initiatives at providing you with information on the following topics:	Administrators				Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Unique characteristics of gifted learners	96%	100%	100%	97%	100%	98%	83%	97%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Referral process for gifted learners	96%	100%	100%	98%	99%	98%	92%	97%	98%	100%	100%	98%
Identification of gifted learners	96%	100%	100%	97%	96%	98%	92%	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Differentiation principles and practices	96%	86%	100%	94%	96%	98%	84%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Curriculum, instruction, and assessment	95%	100%	100%	97%	95%	98%	83%	94%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Academic needs of gifted learners	96%	100%	100%	97%	96%	96%	84%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Social emotional needs of gifted learners	96%	100%	100%	97%	97%	96%	88%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Underrepresented, underserved, and under-resourced populations	91%	100%	100%	94%	96%	96%	100%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Needs of twice-exceptional learners	91%	100%	100%	94%	93%	92%	88%	92%	93%	83%	100%	93%
Making connections to the VBCPS strategic plan	96%	100%	100%	97%	95%	98%	83%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Implementing culturally responsive practices in the classroom	95%	86%	100%	94%	96%	98%	81%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%

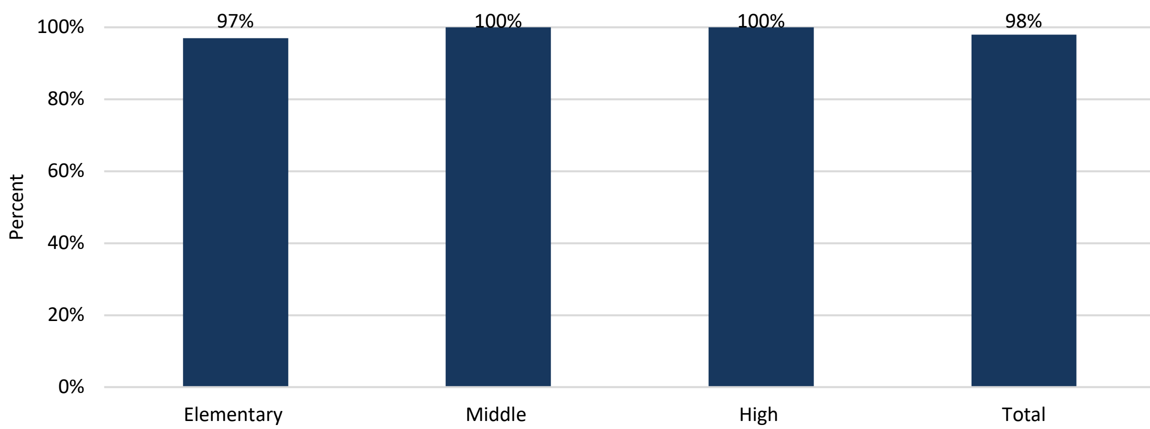
When building administrators were asked about their perceptions regarding the Office of K-12 and Gifted Education providing effective professional learning opportunities related to gifted education in general, agreement levels ranged from 73 percent at the elementary school level to 80 percent at the middle school level as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Administrators' Perceptions of Effectiveness of Professional Learning



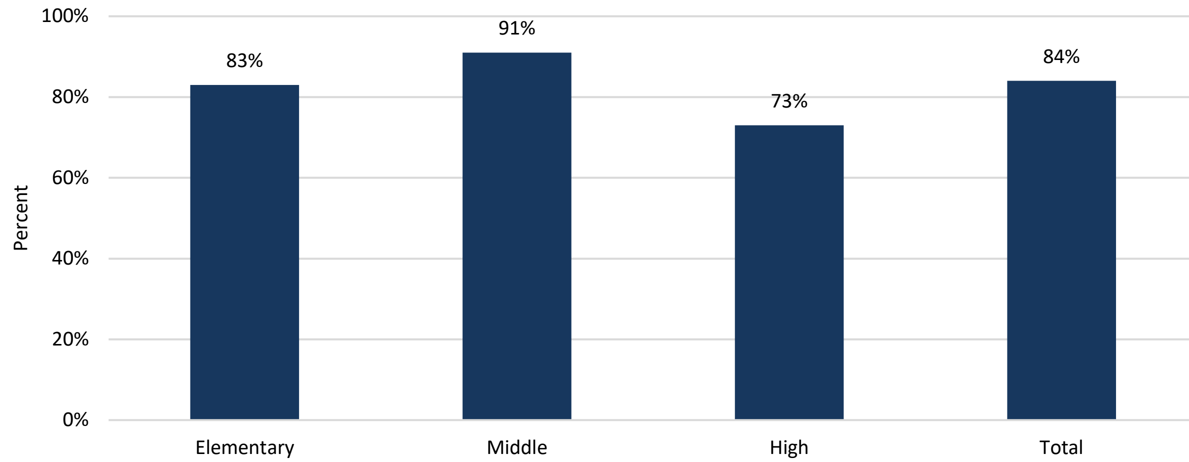
When building administrators were asked about the support they received from the Office of Gifted Education, agreement levels were very high ranging from 97 percent to 100 percent at each school level as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Administrators' Perceptions of Support From Office of Gifted Education



Cluster teachers were asked whether opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding of gifted learners was supported at their school including through professional learning and graduate-level study. As displayed in Figure 5, 84 percent of cluster teachers across the division agreed they were supported in these opportunities. Across school levels, middle school cluster teachers had the highest agreement percentage (91%), and high school cluster teachers had the lowest agreement percentage (73%).

Figure 5: Cluster Teachers' Perceptions of Opportunities to Increase Knowledge and Understanding of Gifted Learners



GRTs were surveyed about the types of professional learning opportunities they provided to school staff and were asked to indicate all the types they provided on the survey, including informal pedagogy/strategy workshops, coaching, peer observations, formally planned professional learning sessions, and other types of professional learning opportunities. Overall, based on GRTs who responded to the survey item selecting at least one type of professional learning opportunity, 100 percent at each school level indicated they provided coaching which included co-planning, co-teaching, modeling, and providing feedback (see Table 12). Consistent with the GRT survey data, the highest percentage of cluster teachers (89%) also indicated GRTs provided professional learning through coaching across the division, with percentages ranging from 79 to 96 percent depending on school level.

Table 12: Professional Learning Opportunities Provided by Gifted Resource Teacher

Professional Learning Opportunities	GRTs				Cluster Teachers			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Informal pedagogy/strategy workshops	70%	50%	71%	67%	48%	64%	59%	55%
Coaching (co-planning, co-teaching, modeling, and providing feedbacking)	100%	100%	100%	100%	96%	84%	79%	89%
Peer observations	40%	33%	100%	49%	31%	44%	45%	38%
Formally planned professional learning sessions	33%	17%	86%	40%	40%	61%	52%	49%
Other (e.g., asynchronous learning, whole staff PD, pedagogy)	10%	0%	14%	9%	6%	5%	10%	6%

Perceptions of Collaborative Work Among Teachers

Within the professional development goal of the local plan, collaboration between GRTs and cluster teachers is noted. Teachers and GRTs work collaboratively to develop engaging, inspiring, challenging, and differentiated learning experiences for intellectually gifted students. Multiple survey items addressed collaboration among the GRTs and cluster teachers. They focused on the various purposes of collaboration within the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program and respondents’ perceptions of those collaborative efforts. Survey items for GRTs asked about the collaboration between the GRT and classroom teachers, while survey items for cluster teachers asked about their collaboration with the GRT assisting them in various ways.

As shown in Table 13, at least 90 percent of GRTs at all school levels agreed collaboration between the GRT and classroom teachers assisted with the development of specific curriculum units and lessons and that it equipped teachers of gifted students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to differentiate instruction on their own for their gifted learners. At least 80 percent of GRTs agreed the collaboration resulted in teachers demonstrating high levels of self-efficacy with regards to teaching and continuously striving to improve their practice. Cluster teachers also generally had positive perceptions of the collaboration especially at elementary (85% to 90%) and middle schools (88% to 93%). Cluster teachers at high schools had somewhat lower agreement levels regarding collaboration with the GRTs (76% to 79%).

Table 13: Teachers' Perceptions of Collaboration Among GRT and Cluster Teachers

Survey Items	Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Collaboration assists with the development of specific curriculum units and lessons.	87%	88%	79%	86%	93%	100%	100%	96%
Collaborative planning equips teachers of gifted students with the knowledge, understanding, and skills to differentiate instruction on their own for their gifted learners.	86%	91%	76%	86%	90%	100%	100%	93%
As a result of collaboration, teachers of gifted students demonstrate high levels of self-efficacy with regards to teaching.	85%	90%	76%	85%	80%	100%	100%	86%
As a result of collaboration, teachers of gifted students continuously strive to improve their practice.	90%	93%	79%	89%	80%	100%	100%	86%

Gifted Resource-Cluster Program Delivery of Services and Curriculum and Instruction

The third evaluation question is focused on the components of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program during the 2022-2023 school year, including the role of the GRT. This aligns with Goal 2 and Goal 3 of the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted. Goal 2 in the local plan is focused on the delivery of services with the goal of providing a "comprehensive continuum of services which address the needs of all identified gifted learners." Within the local plan related to delivery of services, several objectives focus on providing a high-quality challenging program; alignment between delivery of services and gifted identification components; supporting all students' social-emotional growth; providing evidence-based enrichment offerings; and providing appropriate staffing.

Delivery of Services: The Resource-Cluster Model

This section of the report focuses on elements of Goal 2 of the local plan related to the delivery of services and the specific role and responsibilities of the GRT. The resource-cluster model is an arrangement in which a group (cluster) of identified gifted students is assigned to a classroom with a cluster teacher who collaborates with the GRT to provide differentiated curriculum and instruction. Students are assigned to cluster classrooms according to specific program guidelines depending on school level. The program is grounded in general education curriculum and differentiated to provide rigorous learning challenges.

Elementary School Level

According to the Elementary School Gifted Resource Handbook, the number of cluster teachers is determined by the number of gifted students in a given grade level. Further, the number of cluster classrooms per grade level should be kept to a minimum with one cluster teacher per grade level unless numbers are greater than eight. Identified intellectually gifted students in grades 2 through 5 are clustered in heterogeneous classrooms at their neighborhood school, typically in groups of six to eight and are taught by a cluster teacher trained in gifted education. If team teaching takes place, both cluster teachers should have identified gifted students, but it is recommended to not split groups with less than eight students. A GRT assists the cluster teachers in delivering differentiated instruction.

Elementary school administrators were asked to respond to an open-ended survey question to describe the process for creating gifted cluster classes at their school, including considerations when determining which students will be placed in a cluster class. Ninety-three percent of elementary administrators who responded to the survey answered this item. The majority of elementary school administrators described a similar process of working with the school's GRT and cluster teachers to create classes based on the number of identified students. Some administrators highlighted their attempts to limit the number of students per class, the use of teacher/parent recommendations, previous cluster formations, and creating a "balanced" classroom.

Middle School Level

In the middle school resource-cluster program, gifted students are grouped with their peers in cluster classes and are offered opportunities for enrichment and differentiation to meet their needs. According to the VBCPS Student Course Guide, middle school gifted students have the opportunity to take advanced classes in English, science, and mathematics and may begin a world language. According to the guide, the pace of instruction is rapid, and students explore subjects in great depth and with intensity.

While clustering is left at the discretion of the different teams, according to the Middle School Gifted Resource Program Handbook, it is suggested that the teacher of advanced-level classes not always be selected to be the cluster teacher. The reason for this recommendation is so it is possible for gifted students to be assigned to a cluster team, even if students do not select advanced classes. It is recommended that schools tightly cluster intellectually gifted students with no more than two to three teams per grade level. At the middle school level, GRTs collaboratively plan, team teach, and support differentiated instruction with all cluster teachers.

Middle school administrators were asked to respond to an open-ended survey question to describe the process for creating gifted cluster classes at their school, including considerations when determining which students will be placed in a cluster class. Seventy-nine percent of middle school administrators who responded to the survey answered this item. Middle school administrators described either grouping gifted students together in classes or identifying cluster teachers as part of a team to support gifted students.

High School Level

Currently, within the high school resource-cluster program, cluster grouping of intellectually gifted students is expected in grades 9 and 10, and it is an option for schools to extend clustering to grades 11 and 12.[17] While the focus of clustering is in the earlier high school grades, the program provides educational experiences to students in grades 9 through 12 through direct teaching of seminar courses and collaborative work with teachers, as well as administrators in the school. In the VBCPS Student Course Guide, there are three high school courses specific to Gifted Education. These three courses include: Independent Study, Think Tank for Super Thinkers, and SPARKS. Independent Study is for students in grades 9 through 12 and allows students to pursue self-initiated, academically advanced study projects in their identified interest areas. Think Tank for Super Thinkers is for students in grades 9 and 10 and utilizes an interdisciplinary approach where students learn to research, assimilate, and respond through individual group work. The instructional focus requires students to think critically about current social, political, economic, and environmental issues. SPARKS is for students in grades 11 and 12 and allows students to participate in a course designed to encourage discovery and discussion of new and invigorating ideas, the development of critical thinking skills, and synthesis of complex issues. While these courses are included in the course guide, enrollment in these courses during 2022-2023 was low. Across the division, 143 students enrolled in the gifted Independent Study course, 24 students enrolled in Think Tank for Super Thinkers, and 2 students enrolled in SPARKS. According to the Office of Gifted Programs, there are several potential reasons for low student enrollment in the gifted program courses such as changes in how courses are offered (hybrid vs. traditional face-to-face), scheduling conflicts due to the 4x4 schedule, and competition with newer courses.[18]

The formation of cluster classrooms is at the discretion of the high school principal, who must determine the most appropriate teachers, courses, and sections for cluster classrooms. The High School Resource Program Handbook provides recommended guidelines for forming cluster classrooms. A recommended practice is reviewing the advanced and honors courses the intellectually gifted students in the school are taking which can then be used to naturally cluster a group of gifted learners. Another suggestion is forming cluster classes based upon students' academic strengths and areas of interest or identifying a core team of teachers who teach honors level courses and schedule the gifted learners in sections taught by identified teachers.

At the high school level, the GRTs provide resources, support, guidance, specialized curricula, and instructional strategies, as well as whole-group and small-group instruction. High school GRTs coach and collaborate with designated gifted cluster teachers to provide experiences that extend the regular education curriculum to meet the specific learning needs evidenced by gifted students who have demonstrated mastery of skills through pre-assessment activities.[19]

High school administrators were asked to respond to an open-ended survey question to describe the process for creating gifted cluster classes at their school, including considerations when determining which students will be placed in a cluster class. Sixty-five percent of high school administrators who responded to the survey answered this item. High school administrators described the process as identifying the cluster teachers first and then ensuring gifted students are assigned to their courses. Two principals discussed this process being done primarily in ninth and tenth grades.

To assess the extent to which purposeful clustering was occurring in high schools, high school GRTs and administrators were surveyed about whether their high school purposefully clustered gifted students in classes during 2022-2023. Overall, 86 percent of GRTs and 73 percent of administrators indicated their high school purposefully clustered students. Of the 11 administrators and 6 GRTs who stated their school purposefully clustered gifted students in classes, 100 percent indicated they clustered in grades 9 and 10. A majority of administrators, although not GRTs, also reported clustering in grades 11 and 12 (see Table 14).

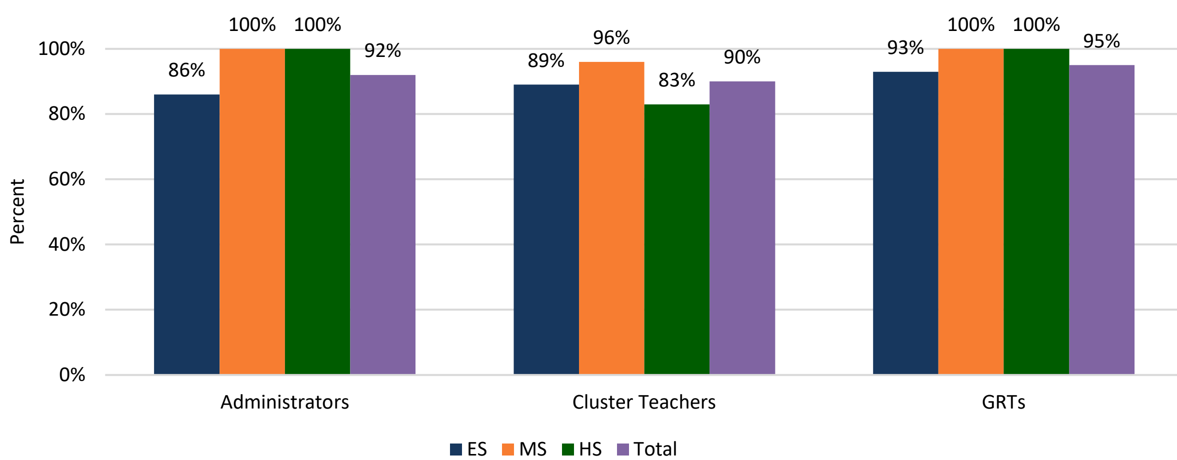
Table 14: Grade Levels of Cluster High School Students

At what grade levels are gifted students purposefully clustered?	GRTs (n=6)	Administrators (n=11)
9	100%	100%
10	100%	100%
11	17%	64%
12	17%	55%

Perceptions of the Resource-Cluster Model Delivery of Services

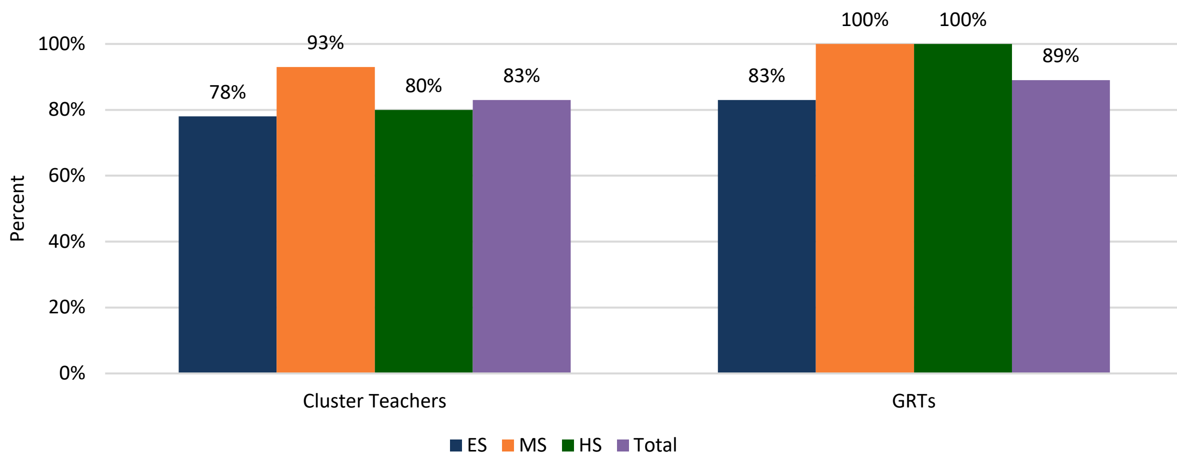
Staff members were asked about their perceptions of the resource-cluster model. At least 86 percent of administrators, at least 83 percent of cluster teachers, and at least 93 percent of GRTs at all school levels agreed cluster grouping assisted teachers in the differentiation of curriculum and instruction (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Perceptions of Clustering Assisting Teachers in Differentiation of Curriculum and Instruction



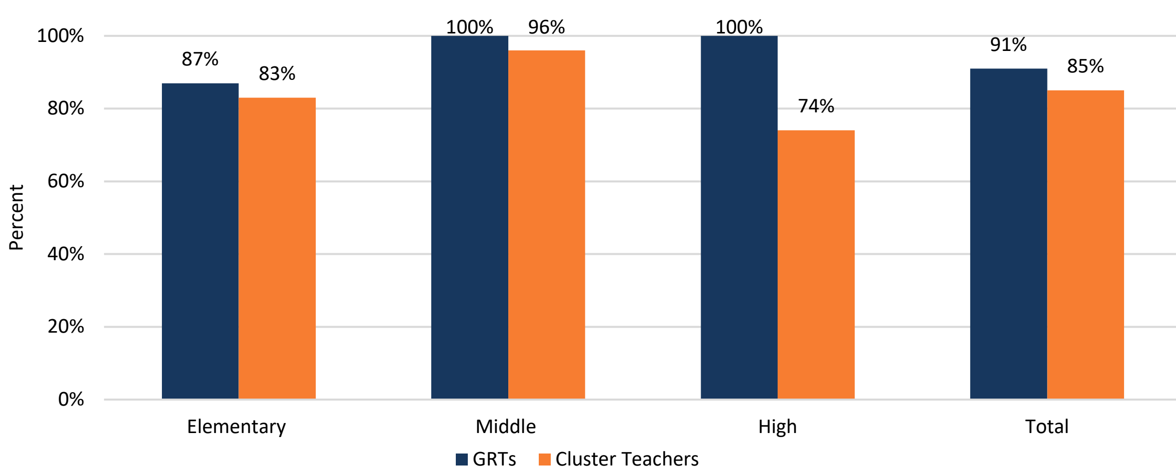
Additionally, GRTs and cluster teachers were asked about the clustering of gifted students being manageable for teachers. All secondary GRTs agreed the clustering of gifted students in classrooms in the resource-cluster model provided a range of learners in the classroom that was manageable for the teachers, while 83 percent of elementary school GRTs agreed (see Figure 7). Similarly, higher percentages of secondary cluster teachers (from 80%-93%) agreed than elementary school teachers (78%).

Figure 7: Perceptions of Clustering Providing a Range of Learners That is Manageable for Teachers



Part of the delivery of services is providing support to intellectually gifted students as they progress through their education in VBCPS and at grade level transitions. GRTs and cluster teachers were asked their perceptions of gifted students receiving support when they transitioned from one grade level to the next with special attention to rising sixth, ninth, and twelfth grades. As displayed in Figure 8, overall 91 percent of GRTs and 85 percent of cluster teachers across the division agreed gifted students received support when transitioning from one grade level to the next. There was some variability across school levels. At the high school level, cluster teachers had lower levels of agreement (74%) that students received support, while middle school cluster teachers had higher levels of agreement (96%).

Figure 8: Teachers' Perceptions of Gifted Students Receiving Support When Transitioning From One Grade Level to the Next



Parents were also asked about their experience with the gifted program continuum. Of the 326 parents who indicated their child participated in the gifted resource-cluster program in VBCPS at each school level (elementary, middle, and high school) and responded to the survey item, 72 percent agreed the gifted program provided a consistent delivery of gifted education services from elementary through high school. Based on parent comments to an open-ended survey item, parents of high school intellectually gifted students noted the program's inconsistency, particularly between elementary and high school. For example, one parent noted the high school gifted services were the "weakest" of all three levels and others indicated they did not see benefits or there were fewer opportunities to participate at the high school level.

GRT Responsibilities Within the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program

Staff Perceptions of GRT Responsibilities

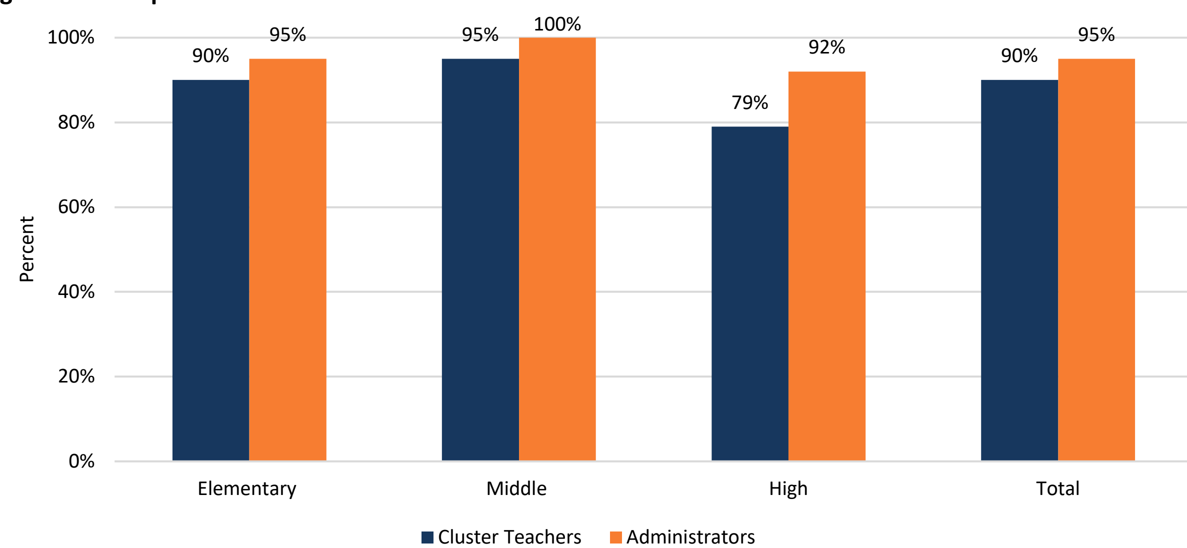
Staff members including administrators, cluster teachers, and GRTs were surveyed about their perceptions of GRTs' responsibilities within the resource-cluster program. The survey items for administrators and cluster teachers asked whether the GRT engaged in the activity, while the items for the GRTs asked whether they engaged in the activity as the GRT. Overall, all GRTs across all school levels agreed they communicated the needs of gifted learners and disseminated information regarding options for gifted learners (see Table 15). In addition, overall, a high percentage of GRTs (98%) agreed they assisted classroom teachers in working with gifted students; team taught with classroom teachers (98%); collaborated with classroom teachers to differentiate curriculum, instruction, and assessment (95%); and provided training in gifted education curriculum models and instructional strategies for classroom teachers (86%). Comparing across school levels, middle school GRTs had lower agreement percentages on offering professional learning for classroom teachers and providing training in gifted education curriculum models and instructional strategies for classroom teachers than elementary or high school GRTs (see Table 15). Cluster teachers across all levels had relatively high agreement on all items regarding the GRT engaging in various activities, ranging from 80 to 89 percent. The cluster teachers were most likely to agree GRTs team taught with classroom teachers; collaborated with classroom teachers to differentiate curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and disseminated information regarding options for gifted learners. Comparing across school levels, high school cluster teachers had lower levels of agreement across all the items compared to elementary and middle school cluster teachers. Overall, administrators had high levels of agreement GRTs engaged in the various activities (88% to 97%).

Table 15: Staff Members' Perceptions of Responsibilities of Gifted Resource Teachers Within the Program

Survey Item: Within the gifted program, the GRT:	Administrators				Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Offers professional learning for classroom teachers.	86%	90%	92%	88%	81%	88%	76%	83%	73%	67%	100%	77%
Provides training in gifted education curriculum models and instructional strategies for classroom teachers.	84%	100%	92%	88%	81%	74%	68%	80%	87%	67%	100%	86%
Collaborates with classroom teachers to differentiate curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	92%	100%	100%	95%	88%	88%	79%	87%	93%	100%	100%	95%
Team teaches with classroom teachers.	95%	100%	100%	97%	91%	88%	82%	89%	97%	100%	100%	98%
Assists classroom teachers in working with gifted students.	95%	100%	100%	97%	90%	85%	76%	86%	97%	100%	100%	98%
Disseminates information regarding options for gifted learners.	92%	90%	100%	93%	88%	88%	79%	87%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Communicates the needs of gifted learners.	89%	100%	100%	93%	87%	85%	73%	84%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Cluster teachers and administrators were asked about the GRTs being visible and reliable sources of information about the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program overall. As shown in Figure 9, across the division, 90 percent of cluster teachers and 95 percent of administrators agreed the GRT was a visible and reliable source of information on the needs of gifted learners. Agreement percentages were somewhat lower for cluster teachers at the high school level (79%).

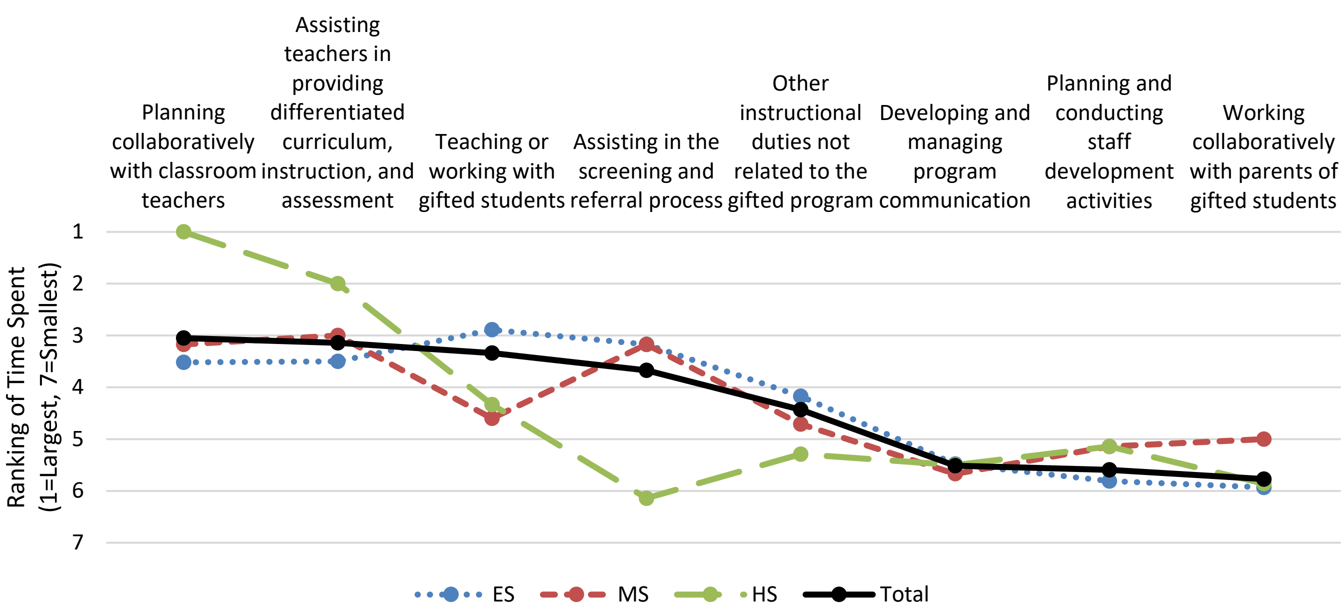
Figure 9: Perceptions the GRT is a Visible and Reliable Source of Information on the Needs of Gifted Learners



GRT Rankings for How Their Time is Spent

GRTs were asked on the survey to rank the various activities that were part of their position based on how much time they spent working in each area from 1 (spent the most time) to 7 (spent the least time). Average rankings by school level were calculated and are displayed in Figure 10. Results varied by school level, but planning collaboratively with classroom teachers and assisting teachers in providing differentiated instruction were ranked as top areas where the largest amount of time was spent by GRTs at all school levels. Developing and managing program communication, planning and conducting staff development activities, and working collaboratively with parents of gifted students were areas where GRTs reported spending relatively less time across all levels. On average, elementary school GRTs indicated they spent the most time on teaching or working with gifted students. Middle school GRTs reported spending the most amount of time on assisting teachers in providing differentiated instruction, and high school GRTs reported spending the most time planning collaboratively with classroom teachers. As expected, elementary and middle school GRTs spent more time assisting in the screening and referral process than high school GRTs. At the division level, GRTs reported spending more time on other instructional duties not related to the gifted program than developing and managing program communication, planning and conducting staff development activities, and working collaboratively with parents of gifted students.

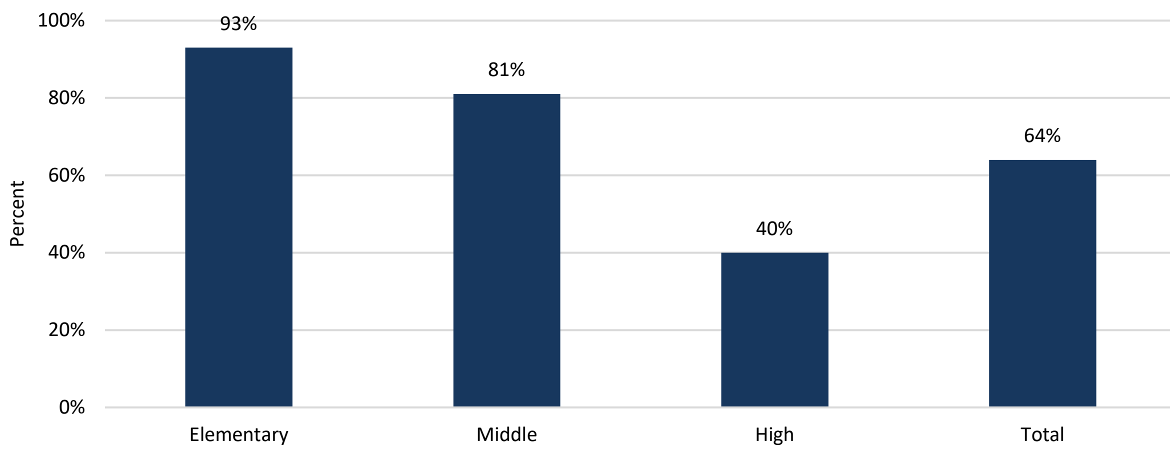
Figure 10: GRTs Reported Time



Students Working with GRT

One of the responsibilities of the GRT is working with gifted students. Students were asked on the survey to select various staff members who they worked with at their school during 2022-2023 with one of the listings being the GRT. Of the students who made at least one staff selection (i.e., they answered the survey item), 93 percent of elementary and 81 percent of middle school students selected their GRT. At the high school level, 40 percent of students who responded indicated they worked with their school's GRT, while the others did not select the GRT as someone they worked with during the school year (see Figure 11). High school student survey results were examined in more depth by grade level, and results showed slightly higher percentages of grade 10 (45%) and 11 (44%) students indicated they worked with the GRT than grade 9 (34%) and 12 (39%) students.

Figure 11: Percentage of Students Reporting They Worked with Gifted Resource Teacher at Their School in 2022-2023



According to the Office of Gifted Education, the GRTs at high school may work with their identified gifted students in a multitude of ways such as through collaboration with the cluster teachers; by facilitating Think Tank, SPARKS, and independent study classes for gifted students; or by sponsoring gifted advisory boards (GABs) or similar groups that work with their gifted population and meet during one lunch or in other clubs or organizations.[20] While there are various avenues for GRTs to work with students at high school, a high percentage of individual students may not participate in one of those opportunities.

Curriculum and Instruction Within the Resource-Cluster Model

Within the local plan, Goal 3 is focused on curriculum and instruction and on providing "differentiated curriculum and learning opportunities that are responsive to the unique cognitive, social, and emotional needs of all gifted students." Within the local plan goal related to curriculum and instruction, several objectives focus on concept-based curriculum units based on themes, issues, and real-world problems; authentic performance-based assessments; curriculum that attends to social-emotional, cultural, and academic needs; promoting problem-solving; strengthening communication and collaboration; providing opportunities for learners to develop sense of self; and implementing culturally responsive practices. This section describes the elements of the curriculum and instruction within the resource-cluster model.

According to the Local Plan for Gifted Education, the resource-cluster model facilitates challenging and appropriately modified curriculum and instruction designed to meet the learning needs of gifted students and to promote the excellence of all students. Gifted students' unique characteristics and needs are most effectively met through specialized curriculum, instruction, pacing, and grouping arrangements. According to the local plan, no one model provides the theoretical framework for the VBCPS gifted curriculum. It is an eclectic mix that incorporates best practices of several gifted education models, such as Robert J. Sternberg's Triarchic Theory, facets of Renzulli's Enrichment Triad model, the differentiated instruction model of Carol Ann Tomlinson, the integrated curriculum model of Joyce Van Tassel-Baska, and the Depth and Complexity Model developed by Sandra Kaplan, as well as other research-based gifted pedagogical practices. According to the Local Plan for Gifted Education, curriculum and instruction in the resource-cluster program is grounded in general education curriculum but is differentiated, modified, and expanded to provide appropriate learning challenges through additional depth and complexity.

Concept-based experiences focus on major universal themes in grades K-12. The level and pace at which the curriculum is delivered is dependent on the readiness level of the student and complexity and depth are grounded in a strong content base which helps differentiate regular education curriculum units. According to the Local Plan for Gifted Education, the evaluation of student learning through appropriate and specific criteria occurs regularly through the use of performance-based assessments and rubrics based on local and state standards and gifted curriculum benchmarks and indicators.

Gifted curriculum benchmarks are available for grades K-1, 3, 5, 8, and 12. Although students in kindergarten and first grade have not been formally identified as gifted, according to the Office of Gifted Programs, lessons have been developed using gifted resources and pedagogy in order to challenge students prior to the formal identification process in first grade.

At the elementary school level, there are specific gifted benchmarks for students in grades K-1, 3, and 5. Select examples of K-1 benchmarks include: students will think creatively; students will think critically; students will think logically. Select examples of grade 3 benchmarks include: gifted students will create their own examples and non-examples of a concept; gifted students will demonstrate fluent, flexible, elaborative, and original thinking; gifted students will identify their own style of learning. Select examples of grade 5 benchmarks include: gifted students will apply or adapt generalizations to a new situation or context; gifted students will develop alternative solutions for a problem; gifted students will apply knowledge of self to product selection.

At the middle school level, there are specific gifted benchmarks for students in grade 8. Select examples of grade 8 benchmarks include: gifted students will reflect on issues that impact society noting personal biases and prejudices; gifted students will apply various techniques of problem solving to problem situations (e.g., mathematical, scientific, literary, technological); gifted students will capitalize on strengths and compensate for weaknesses in their learning processes.

At the high school level, there are specific gifted benchmarks for students in grade 12. Select examples of grade 12 benchmarks include: gifted students will recognize and empathize with perspectives of a given concept, theme, or issue that is not his or her own; gifted students will evaluate the feasibility of various solutions to problems; gifted students will compare their ideas, abilities, and goals to those of practicing professionals.

According to the Office of Gifted Programs, the gifted benchmarks are used in tandem with standards of learning (SOLs) and Virginia Beach Objectives (VBOs) to differentiate curriculum and instruction. During collaborative planning and coaching sessions, GRTs utilize the benchmarks to increase rigor and ensure lessons and assessments are developed with the gifted learners' social-emotional and academic needs in mind. They are not formally assessed.[21]

Perceptions of Curriculum and Instructional Components Within the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program

Perceptions of Content and Lessons

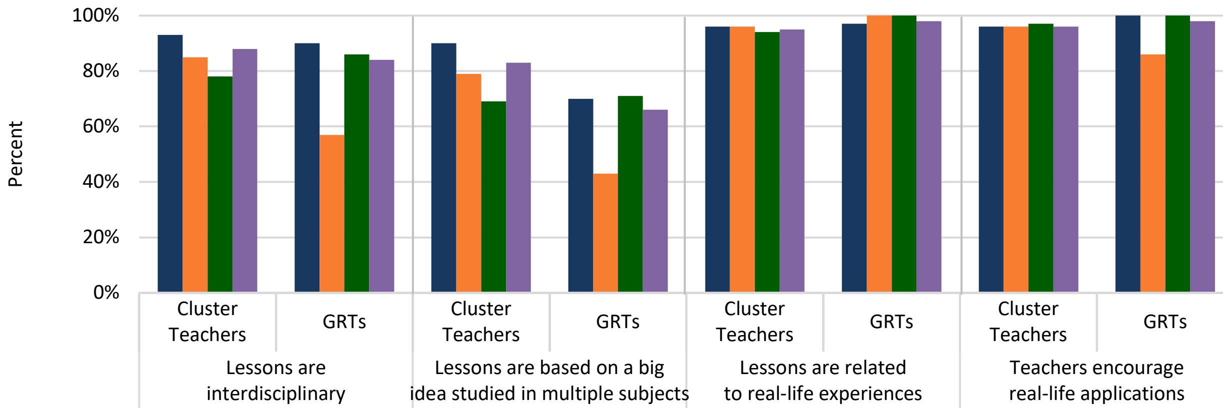
Gifted staff were asked their perceptions of the curriculum content and lessons provided for students. Overall, 98 percent of GRTs and 85 percent of cluster teachers agreed instruction as part of the gifted program includes concept-based curriculum units with themes, issues, and real-world problems with the culture of students represented in the classroom. There were some differences in agreement percentages among cluster teachers across school level with high school cluster teachers having somewhat lower agreement percentages compared to middle and elementary school cluster teachers (see Table 16). Overall, 98 percent of GRTs and 87 percent of cluster teachers agreed instruction as part of the resource-cluster program included topics of understanding, empathy, and respect for those of diverse abilities, beliefs, and cultures. When cluster teachers and GRTs were asked about gifted students being provided access to resources or people in the community to enhance their learning experience, agreement was highest at the middle and high school levels compared to elementary school (see Table 16).

Table 16: Teachers' Perceptions of Instruction as Part of Resource-Cluster Program

Survey Items	Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Instruction as part of the gifted program includes concept-based curriculum units with themes, issues, and real-world problems with the culture of students represented in the classroom.	84%	89%	80%	85%	97%	100%	100%	98%
Instruction as part of the gifted program includes topics of understanding, empathy, and respect for those of diverse abilities, beliefs, and cultures.	85%	90%	88%	87%	97%	100%	100%	98%
Gifted students are provided access to resources or people in the community to enhance their learning experience.	65%	87%	75%	73%	57%	86%	86%	66%

Cluster teachers and GRTs were asked additional survey items about their perceptions of teachers' lessons within the resource-cluster program. As shown in Figure 12, cluster teachers and GRTs had high agreement percentages at all school levels on the survey items asking about lessons being related to real-life experiences and teachers encouraging students to apply their learning to real-life situations (86% to 100% for both staff groups at all school levels). On another survey item, 88 percent of cluster teachers and 84 percent of GRTs divisionwide reported lessons were interdisciplinary, with the highest agreement at elementary school for both staff groups. When asked about lessons being based on a big idea that was studied in multiple subject areas, agreement was lower and varied by school level and staff group (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Teachers' Perceptions of Lessons



	Lessons are interdisciplinary: Cluster Teachers	Lessons are interdisciplinary: GRTs	Lessons are based on a big idea studied in multiple subjects: Cluster Teachers	Lessons are based on a big idea studied in multiple subjects: GRTs	Lessons are related to real-life experiences: Cluster Teachers	Lessons are related to real-life experiences: GRTs	Teachers encourage real-life applications: Cluster Teachers	Teachers encourage real-life applications: GRTs
ES	93%	90%	90%	70%	96%	97%	96%	100%
MS	85%	57%	79%	43%	96%	100%	96%	86%
HS	78%	86%	69%	71%	94%	100%	97%	100%
Total	88%	84%	83%	66%	95%	98%	96%	98%

Administrators and GRTs were asked if collaborative partnerships expanded curriculum and instruction for diverse populations of gifted learners. Most administrators and GRTs (at least 92% at each school level) agreed collaborative partnerships expanded curriculum and instruction (see Table 17).

Table 17: Staff Members' Perceptions of Collaborative Partnerships Expanding Curriculum and Instruction

Survey Item	Administrators				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Collaborative partnerships expand curriculum and instruction for diverse populations for gifted learners.	92%	100%	100%	95%	97%	100%	100%	98%

Gifted students, as well as parents, were asked their perceptions of the curriculum content and lessons being interesting and related to real-world experiences. Approximately two thirds of gifted students in the resource-cluster program agreed class lessons were interesting and kept their attention (67%) with higher agreement at elementary school. Overall at the division level, 73 percent of students agreed their school provided them with real-world learning experiences and 76 percent of students agreed they had opportunities to apply what they learned to other experiences outside school. Agreement was highest at elementary school and lower at the secondary level (see Table 18). Mirroring the pattern of results from students, when parents of gifted students in the resource-cluster program were asked their perceptions of teachers encouraging their child to apply what they learn at school to real-life situations, the highest agreement was at elementary school (87%) followed by middle school (86%) and high school (81%) (85% at the division level).

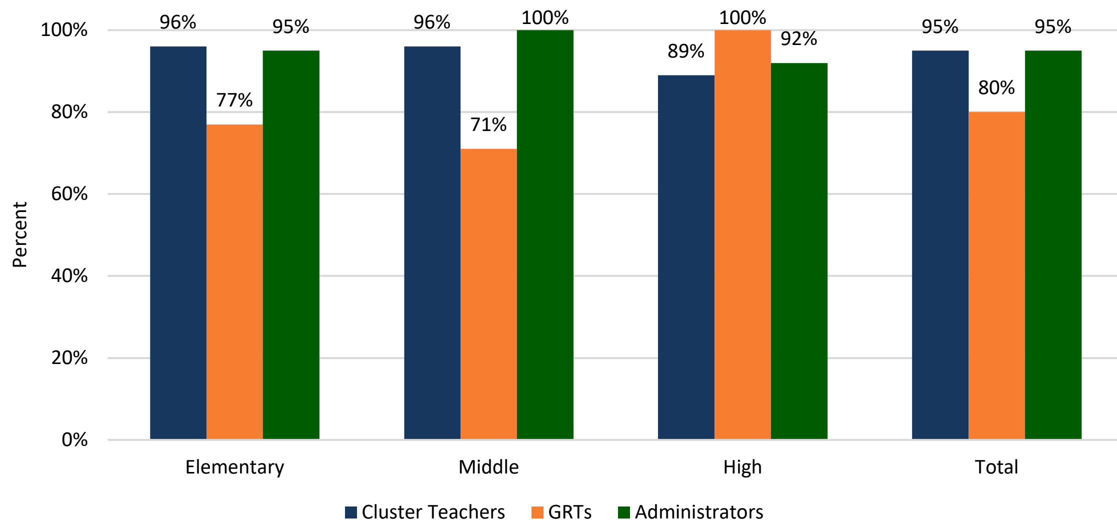
Table 18: Students' Perceptions of Instruction

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
Class lessons are interesting and keep my attention.	74%	64%	68%	67%
My school provides me with real-world learning experiences.	86%	72%	70%	73%
I am provided with opportunities to apply what I learn at school to other experiences outside of school.	86%	75%	75%	76%

Stakeholders' Perceptions of Instructional Differentiation and Pace

Cluster teachers, GRTs, and administrators were asked specifically about differentiated instruction. Overall, 95 percent of cluster teachers, 80 percent of GRTs, and 95 percent of administrators agreed teachers of gifted students differentiated instruction through a variety of strategies. When examining data by school level, middle school and elementary school GRTs had lower agreement percentages (71% and 77%, respectively) compared to high school GRTs (100%) (see Figure 13). However, elementary school and middle school cluster teachers and administrators had somewhat higher agreement percentages compared to high school cluster teachers and administrators.

Figure 13: Staff Members' Perceptions of Differentiating Instruction Through a Variety of Strategies



Gifted staff were asked survey items related to instructional differentiation and pace of instruction. Overall, all GRTs (100%) and most (85%) cluster teachers agreed the instruction as part of the resource-cluster program utilized a variety of methods to match students' learning preferences in the subject matter and maintained their attention and interests in learning. There were some differences in agreement percentages among cluster teachers across school level with high school cluster teachers agreeing at lower levels (78%) compared to both elementary and middle school cluster teachers (83%-93%). Overall, 95 percent of GRTs and 81 percent of cluster teachers agreed instruction as part of the resource-cluster program was differentiated for the social-emotional, cultural, and academic needs of learners. There were some differences in agreement percentages among GRTs and cluster teachers by school level with middle school GRTs and elementary cluster teachers having lower agreement percentages (see Table 19). When asked if participating in the resource-cluster program provided gifted learners with learning opportunities to meet their individual learning needs overall, 98 percent of GRTs and 88 percent of cluster teachers agreed, with somewhat lower cluster teacher agreement at high school.

Table 19: Teachers' Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction Within the Resource-Cluster Program

Survey Items	Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Instruction as part of the gifted program utilizes a variety of methods to match students' learning preferences in learning the subject matter and maintains their attention and interests in learning.	83%	93%	78%	85%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Instruction as part of the gifted program is differentiated for the social-emotional, cultural, and academic needs of learners.	77%	88%	85%	81%	97%	86%	100%	95%
Participating in the gifted program provides gifted learners with a variety of learning opportunities to meet their individual learning needs.	88%	94%	73%	88%	97%	100%	100%	98%

While there is depth and complexity within the curriculum for gifted learners as part of differentiation, staff were also asked about the pace of instruction. As shown in Table 20, 73 percent of GRTs and 77 percent of cluster teachers agreed gifted students were provided opportunities for instruction at a faster pace. Elementary school cluster teachers and GRTs along with high school GRTs had somewhat lower levels of agreement.

Table 20: Teachers' Perceptions of Gifted Students Being Provided Opportunities for Instruction at a Faster Pace

Survey Item	Cluster Teachers				GRTS			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Within grade level, gifted students are provided opportunities for instruction at a faster pace.	73%	82%	81%	77%	70%	86%	71%	73%

Gifted students and parents were asked several survey items related to the practice of differentiation such as instruction meeting their needs and interests, developing their potential, and providing support. Students' perceptions are shown in Table 21, and parents' perceptions are shown in Table 22. Overall, at the division level, 75 percent of gifted students agreed they were learning and doing things in school that matched their needs and interests, and 83 percent agreed they were provided learning opportunities to meet their individual learning needs. Additionally, 85 percent of gifted students agreed teachers helped them develop their potential and their teachers provided support in subject areas when needed. In general, elementary gifted students had higher agreement percentages across all these items than middle or high school students (see Table 21).

Table 21: Students' Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
I am learning and doing things in school that are matched to my needs and interests.	79%	73%	76%	75%
I am provided with a variety of learning opportunities to meet my individual learning needs.	88%	83%	81%	83%
My teachers help me develop my potential.	90%	85%	84%	85%
My teachers provide support in subject areas where I need support.	89%	84%	85%	85%

As shown in Table 22, overall, 77 percent of parents agreed teachers provided their child learning opportunities matched to his or her needs and interests, and 79 percent agreed participating in the program provided opportunities to meet his or her learning needs. Additionally, overall 84 percent of parents agreed teachers helped their child develop his or her potential and teachers provided support in subject areas where their child needed support. Similar to student results, parents of elementary gifted students had higher agreement percentages on most items compared to parents of middle or high school students (see Table 22).

Table 22: Parents' Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
Teachers provide my child with learning opportunities matched to his or her needs and interests.	80%	74%	75%	77%
Participating in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program provides my child with a variety of learning opportunities to meet his/her individual learning needs.	78%	79%	79%	79%
Teachers help my child develop his/her potential.	86%	84%	82%	84%
Teachers provide support in subject areas where my child needs support.	86%	82%	82%	84%

Perceptions of Assessment

The gifted program uses a variety of assessment methods to promote student demonstration of their understanding, knowledge, and individual strengths, and as noted previously, according to the local plan, student learning is evaluated through appropriate and specific criteria using performance-based assessments and rubrics based on local and state standards and gifted curriculum benchmarks and indicators. Stakeholders were surveyed about their perceptions of various methods and forms of assessment as part of the resource-cluster program (staff) or their educational experience (students). GRTs were asked about their perceptions of teachers' practices within the program, and cluster teachers were asked about their own practices. Overall, 95 percent of GRTs and 92 percent of cluster teachers agreed assessments allowed gifted students opportunities to show information they knew and understood. Overall, 77 percent of GRTs and 90 percent of cluster teachers agreed assessments allowed gifted students opportunities to show their individual strengths. Overall, 77 percent of cluster teachers and 77 percent of GRTs agreed they had access to high-quality authentic assessments to use when assessing gifted students' learning. Results by school level are shown in Table 23. Generally, perceptions were positive across school levels but lower percentages of elementary cluster teachers (70%) and middle school GRTs (71%) agreed teachers had access to high-quality authentic assessments to use when assessing gifted students' learning. A lower percentage of elementary school GRTs also agreed the assessments allowed gifted students opportunities to show individual strengths (73%).

Table 23: Teachers' Perceptions of Assessment Methods

Survey Items	Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Assessments allow gifted students opportunities to show what information they know and understand.	89%	93%	100%	92%	93%	100%	100%	95%
Assessments allow gifted students opportunities to show their individual strengths.	88%	93%	95%	90%	73%	86%	86%	77%
Teachers have access to high-quality authentic assessments to use when assessing gifted students' learning.	70%	87%	79%	77%	77%	71%	86%	77%

Gifted staff members were also asked their perceptions about providing feedback as it relates to students' general knowledge, effort, and gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks. GRTs were asked about their perceptions of teachers' practices within the program, and cluster teachers were asked about their own practices. Overall, 95 percent of GRTs and 96 percent of cluster teachers agreed gifted students were provided with specific feedback about their knowledge. Overall, 93 percent of GRTs and 97 percent of cluster teachers agreed gifted students were provided feedback that recognized the effort students put into their work. For both of these items, perceptions were positive at each school level (see Table 24). When asked about whether gifted students were provided with feedback on their performance as it related to the gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks, agreement levels were lower and differed based on the staff group. Overall, 80 percent of cluster teachers and 57 percent of GRTs agreed gifted students were provided feedback on their performance as it related to the gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks. GRTs' agreement levels ranged from 53 percent at elementary school to 71 percent at high school.

Table 24: Teachers' Perceptions of Assessment Feedback

Survey Items	Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Provide gifted students with specific feedback about their knowledge.	95%	94%	100%	96%	97%	100%	86%	95%
Provide gifted students with feedback that recognizes the effort they put into their work.	99%	96%	95%	97%	93%	100%	86%	93%
Provide gifted students with feedback on their performance as it relates to the gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks.	81%	83%	70%	80%	53%	57%	71%	57%

When students were asked about assessments and feedback as part of their educational experience, overall, 87 percent of gifted students agreed assignments and tests in their classes allowed them to show what information they knew and understood, 82 percent agreed they were provided feedback that recognized their effort, and 76 percent agreed they were provided specific feedback about their knowledge, understanding, and skills. As shown in Table 25, lower percentages of middle and high school students agreed they were provided specific feedback (74%-75%).

Table 25: Students' Perceptions of Assessment and Feedback

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
Assignments and tests in my classes allow me to show what information I know and understand.	96%	90%	85%	87%
I am provided specific feedback about my knowledge, understanding, and skills.	85%	74%	75%	76%
I am provided feedback that recognizes the effort that I put into my work.	89%	81%	82%	82%

Perceptions of Developing Students' Skills Within the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program

This section of the report focuses on perceptions of the skills gifted students develop as a result of the curriculum and instruction as part of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program. Cluster teachers' and GRTs' perceptions of these skills are shown in Table 26.

Overall, staff members had high agreement percentages ranging from 95 to 100 percent for GRTs and 85 to 92 percent for cluster teachers as shown in Table 26. Overall, all GRTs (100%) and almost all (92%) cluster teachers agreed the instruction as part of the resource-cluster program required students to think critically, use reasoning skills, and solve problems. Overall, all GRTs (100%) and almost all (90%) cluster teachers agreed the instruction as part of the program provided opportunities for students to strengthen their collaboration skills, and nearly all GRTs (98%) and cluster teachers (91%) agreed instruction as part of the program provided opportunities for students to strengthen their communication skills. High percentages of GRTs (95%) and cluster teachers (85%) also agreed the program helped students understand and strengthen their self-identity. Although all perceptions were relatively high, perceptions for high school cluster teachers were somewhat lower than at elementary or middle school with the exception of the item about helping students understand and strengthen their self-identity which was somewhat lower at elementary school (see Table 26).

In addition, administrators were asked their perceptions on one item related to the skills students develop as part of the gifted curriculum. Overall, 98% of administrators agreed instruction as part of the gifted program requires students to think critically, use reasoning skills, and solve problems. There were no differences among school levels.

Table 26: Teachers' Perceptions of Skills Students Develop as Part of the Resource-Cluster Program

Instruction as part of the gifted program:	Cluster Teachers				GRTs			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Requires students to think critically, use reasoning skills, and solve problems.	92%	96%	85%	92%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Provide opportunities for students to strengthen their communication skills.	92%	93%	85%	91%	97%	100%	100%	98%
Provide opportunities for students to strengthen their collaboration skills.	89%	93%	85%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Helps students understand and strengthen their self-identity.	83%	90%	85%	85%	93%	100%	100%	95%

When students were asked their perceptions of their skills as a result of instruction at their school, at least 80 percent of gifted students at the division level agreed they were able to strengthen their communication skills, collaboration skills, critical thinking skills, and problem solving skills (see Table 27).

Although agreement was highest at elementary school for each item, agreement levels were relatively high ranging from 83 to 96 percent at each school level with the exception of communication skills at the secondary level (79%).

Table 27: Students' Perceptions of Instruction

As a result of the instruction I receive at this school:	ES	MS	HS	Total
I am able to strengthen my communication skills.	85%	79%	79%	80%
I am able to strengthen my collaboration skills.	90%	83%	84%	84%
I am able to think critically by analyzing and evaluating information.	93%	87%	88%	89%
I am able to solve problems by using information to identify solutions.	96%	91%	89%	91%

Parents were also asked about the skills their students developed. As shown in Table 28, 85 percent of parents agreed the instruction as part of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program required their student to think critically and evaluate information. Additionally, overall, 86 percent of parents agreed the instruction required their student to solve problems and use information to identify solutions.

Table 28: Parents' Perceptions of Skills Students Develop as Part of the Resource-Cluster Program

The instruction as part of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program requires my child to:	ES	MS	HS	Total
Think critically by analyzing and evaluating information.	85%	85%	84%	85%
Solve problems by using information to identify solutions.	87%	86%	84%	86%

Family Involvement and Collaboration

The fourth evaluation question focused on families as collaborative partners in gifted education which is aligned with Goal 6 of the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted. Goal 6 in the local plan is focused on parent and community involvement with the goal of developing and strengthening "collaborative partnerships among parents/guardians of gifted learners, school and district staff, and the community to advocate for the unique needs of all gifted students." Within the local plan related to parent and community involvement, several objectives focus on increasing parent and guardian participation and involvement, planning workshops and resource development, and increasing public awareness and partnerships with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The following section discusses current collaborative partnerships taking place as well as family engagement activities.

Community Advisory Committee for Gifted Education (CAC)

According to the Code of Virginia, 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 have two responsibilities: to review annually the local plan for the education of gifted students, including revisions, and to determine the extent to which the plan for the previous year was implemented.[22] The committee in VBCPS includes parents of gifted students and community members as voting members and currently has 11 members. Local school division personnel and gifted students serve as ex-officio non-voting members. Currently, CAC holds monthly meetings, and they are open to the public. The duties of the CAC are comprised of the following roles and responsibilities:[23]

- Review periodically the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted, including revisions.
- Determine the extent to which local the plan for the previous year was implemented.

- Develop annual goals and recommendations.
- Represent the community of gifted learners and all related stakeholders.
- Encourage a collaborative relationship between school division staff and the community.
- Become knowledgeable about current programs, research, and best practices in gifted education and its relationships with general education.
- Focus attention on issues relative to improving the educational services for gifted students.
- Submit written recommendations of the Committee to the Superintendent and the School Board.

The most recent report and recommendations submitted to the school board was dated June 2023. The report detailed actions that have been taken related to the various goal areas of the local plan as well as recommendations. The recommendations in the report focused on the following: prioritizing GRT responsibilities to focus on what is outlined in the resource-cluster model handbooks; tightly clustering students so GRTs can be more effective; provide additional gifted testing opportunities throughout the year for students entering VBCPS; develop opportunities to support gifted learners at the high school level; implement executive function lessons for each school level to be delivered by GRTs; and allocate additional staff to support the unique needs of schools (e.g., Renaissance Academy, Spanish Immersion program schools, and schools with exceptionally large populations of gifted students).

Family Engagement

The Office of Gifted Programs sponsored and hosted multiple parent engagement opportunities throughout the 2022-2023 school year. On August 9, 2022, the Office of Gifted Programs hosted a Gifted Summer Symposium from 8:30-12:30. This event was open to GRTs, school instructional and administrative staff, school counselors, cluster teachers, and parents of gifted students. Staff had the ability to attend 3 different sessions with 12 different topic areas. A sample of these topics included: ELL's are Gifted Too; Lights! Camera! Learning; Anecdotal Notes for GRTs and Cluster Teachers; Resource Toolbox to Meet the Needs of Diverse Gifted Learners; Kaplan's Model of Depth and Complexity: Part I. There were six topics for parents which included: The High School Gifted Experience, Supporting Lifelong Success: An Introduction to Executive Function Skills, Perfectionism-Striving for Excellence or Paralyzing Growth, Asking Deep and Complex Questions to Foster Intellectual Stimulation, Parenting for Gifted Student Self-Advocacy: Creating Ways to Support Social-Emotional Learning at Home, and Gifted 101: Welcome to Gifted Services. According to the Office of Gifted Programs, approximately 300 individuals participated in this event. In addition, from September 2022 to May 2023, the Office of Gifted Programs hosted four parent webinars as shown in Table 29. These webinars were recorded and posted on YouTube and approximately 200-300 people attended the webinars "live" and each has several hundred YouTube views.

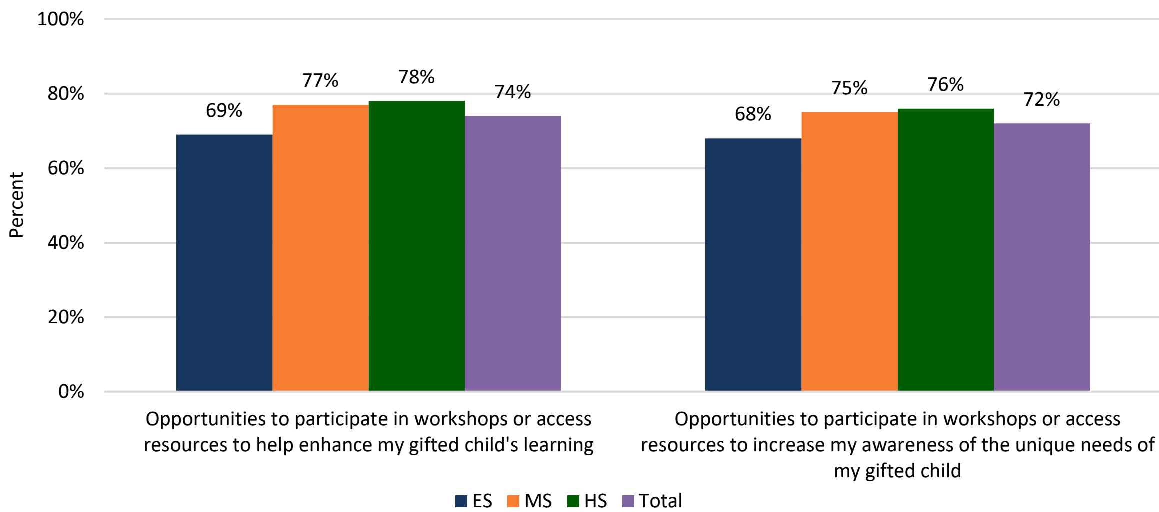
Table 29: Gifted Parent Webinars 2022-2023

Topic	Date
Gifted 101: Welcome to Gifted Services	September 20, 2022
Supporting Lifelong Success: An Introduction to Executive Functioning Skills	November 29, 2022
Perfectionism—Striving for Excellence or Paralyzing Growth?	March 21, 2023
Parent for Gifted Student Self-Advocacy: Creative Ways to Support Social Emotional Learning From Home	May 16, 2023

In addition to divisionwide opportunities, parents may receive communications from individual schools through the GRT or building administrator. The GRTs may use multiple avenues including parent information nights, workshops, and school newsletters to share information with parents of gifted students. As part of GRT monthly meetings, the team discusses information that needs to be communicated with families. In addition, there is a Gifted Hub which the Office of Gifted Programs updates with information for GRTs to communicate with parents. For example, CogAT screening letters are posted in this space. In addition, gifted program information is available on the school division's public website at [vbschools.com/academics/gifted.](vbschools.com/academics/gifted)

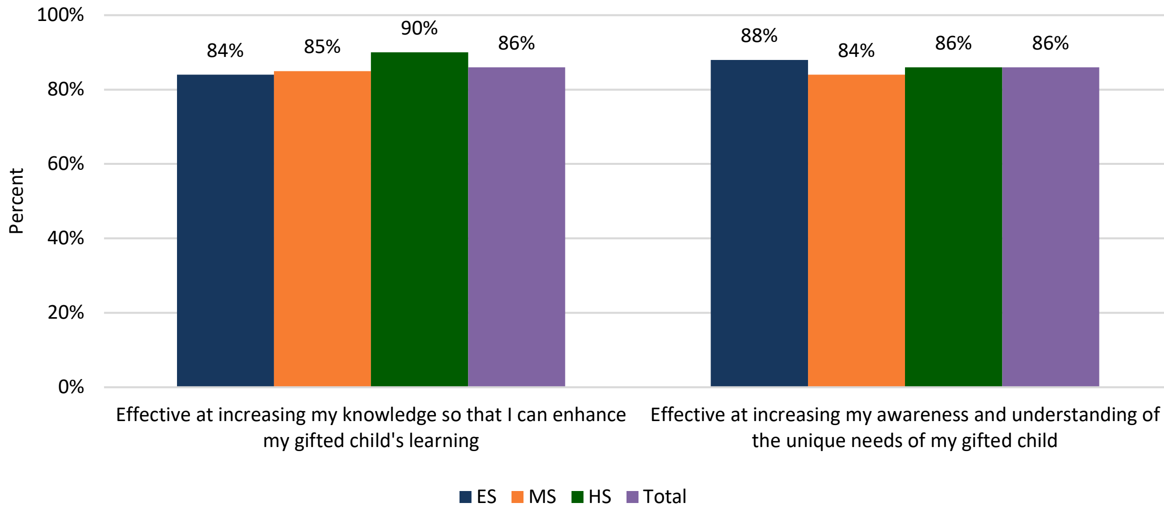
Parents were asked on the survey about the opportunities VBCPS offered related to gifted education for their child. Overall, 74 percent of parents agreed there were opportunities to participate in workshops or access resources to help enhance their gifted child's learning and 72 percent agreed opportunities were available to increase their awareness of the unique needs of their gifted child (see Figure 14). For both survey items, agreement was lower at elementary schools (68%-69%) and higher at high schools (76%-78%).

Figure 14: Parents' Perceptions Regarding Workshops or Resources Offered During 2022-2023 for Parents of Gifted Children



Of the parents who responded to a survey item asking if they attended a VBCPS workshop or accessed resources, a total of 319 parents or 20 percent indicated they either attended a VBCPS workshop or accessed resources that focused on gifted students or the Gifted Education program during the 2022-2023 school year. When parents who participated in these opportunities were asked about their effectiveness, relatively high percentages of parents at each school level agreed (84% to 90%) they were effective at increasing their knowledge so they could enhance their child's learning or understand their child's needs (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Parents' Perceptions of VBCPS Workshops



Perceptions of Communication Efforts Related to Gifted Education

Staff and parents involved with the resource-cluster program were also asked multiple survey items about the communication efforts related to the program and the various opportunities. When asked about communication efforts between the division/school and parents, staff members held positive perceptions. Relatively high percentages of GRTs and administrators at each school level agreed (at least 80%) the communication efforts were effective at providing parents information about the program, efforts were effective at keeping parents informed about their gifted child's education, information was accessible to all families, and parents had opportunities to be involved (see Table 30). Across the division, cluster teachers also had relatively positive perceptions with division agreement percentages ranging from 82 to 87 percent. There was some variation by school level with middle school cluster teachers having the most positive perceptions and high school cluster teachers having lower agreement levels.

Table 30: Staff Members' Perceptions of Communication Efforts Related to the Gifted Program

Survey Items	Cluster Teachers				GRTs				Administrators			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
VBCPS communication efforts are effective at providing parents with relevant information about the gifted program.	79%	92%	71%	82%	80%	100%	86%	84%	95%	100%	100%	97%
Communication efforts between the school and parents are effective at keeping parents informed about their gifted child's education.	79%	95%	77%	84%	93%	100%	100%	95%	92%	90%	100%	93%
Information regarding gifted resources and programs is accessible to all families.	87%	92%	74%	87%	90%	100%	100%	93%	92%	90%	100%	93%
Parents have opportunities to become involved in their gifted child's education.	83%	95%	81%	87%	93%	83%	86%	91%	84%	90%	100%	88%

Parents were also asked their perceptions of the communication efforts, and the results shown in Table 31 were less positive. At the division level, 75 percent of parents of gifted students in the resource-cluster program agreed communication efforts were effective at providing them with relevant information about the program, 60 percent agreed information was easily accessible in a user-friendly manner, and 55 percent agreed they had opportunities to become involved in their gifted child's education. Parents were also asked specific survey items related to being kept informed about their gifted students' growth. Overall, 63 percent of parents agreed they were kept informed about their gifted learners' academic growth, and 50 percent of parents agreed they were kept informed about their gifted learners' social-emotional growth (see Table 31).

Table 31: Parents' Perceptions of Communication Efforts Related to the Gifted Program

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
VBCPS communication efforts are effective at providing me with relevant information about the gifted program.	74%	76%	76%	75%
Information about my gifted child's education is easily accessible in a user-friendly manner.	55%	63%	62%	60%
I have opportunities to become involved in my gifted child's education.	52%	56%	58%	55%
I am kept informed about my gifted learners' academic growth.	65%	63%	61%	63%
I am kept informed about my gifted learners' social-emotional growth.	59%	44%	44%	50%

Progress Toward Meeting Student Outcome Goals and Objectives

The fifth evaluation question focused on progress the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program has made toward meeting student outcome goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were based on previous division gifted program evaluations and concepts in the local plan for gifted education. Although many of the concepts in the goals and objectives apply to education for all students, these goals and objectives are focused on students who have been identified as intellectually gifted for the purposes of the resource-cluster program evaluation. Because the evaluation is focused on the resource-cluster program, gifted students receiving services at Old Donation School were not included in the data analyses. As a reminder, the survey items students responded to were general statements about their educational experience and the analyses were based on intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program. The results are organized by goal area with data presented for each objective.

Goal 1: Challenge and Engagement

Goal 1: Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program are challenged and fully engaged in instruction at levels that commensurate with their abilities.

Objective 1: Students report being cognitively and academically challenged in their current core classes based on student survey responses.

Overall, intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program had positive perceptions about being challenged in their core courses, although a notable percentage of elementary school students reported not feeling challenged in the area of mathematics. In addition, students, cluster teachers, GRTs, and parents had positive perceptions about gifted students challenging themselves to learn more about topics.

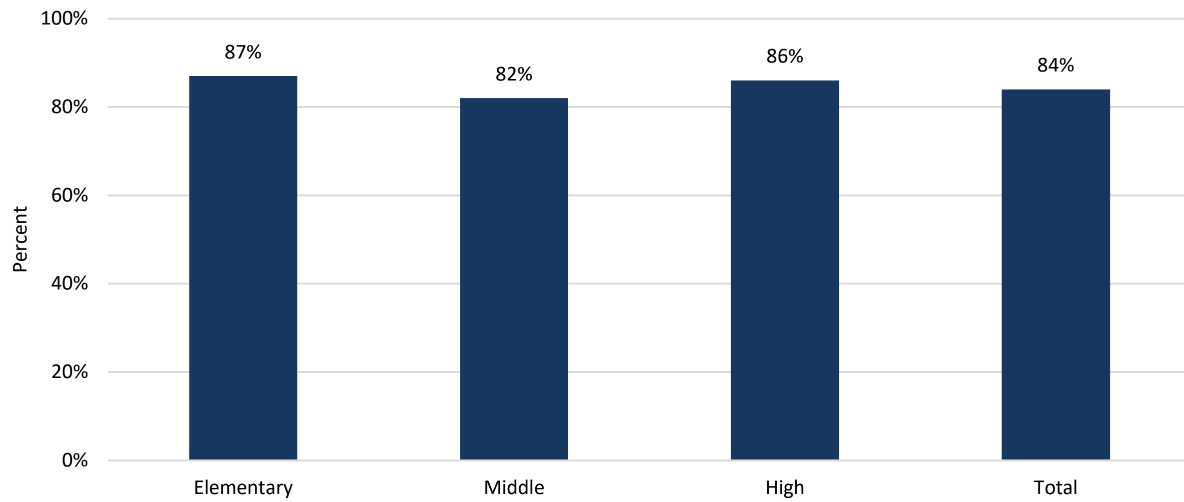
When surveyed about the level of difficulty of their core courses, in all four core course areas, the majority of students overall (from 63% to 71%) indicated the work was challenging for them, but they understood if they tried (see Table 32). Although the majority of students reported feeling challenged, overall, 28 percent of students indicated English/language arts work was too easy, and they were not challenged, while 29 percent of students indicated this was the case for social studies/history. In the area of mathematics, a notably higher percentage of elementary school students indicated the work was too easy, and they were not challenged (42%) than secondary students (11%-15%).

Table 32: Students' Perceptions of Core Course Difficulty

Core Course	The work is too easy, and I was not challenged.				The work is challenging for me, but I understand if I try.				The work is too hard, and I am frustrated when I can't understand.			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
English/Language Arts	32%	28%	27%	28%	64%	66%	67%	66%	4%	6%	6%	5%
Mathematics	42%	15%	11%	17%	53%	70%	68%	67%	5%	15%	20%	16%
Social Studies/History	28%	34%	26%	29%	63%	59%	66%	63%	10%	6%	8%	8%
Science	23%	19%	18%	19%	70%	70%	71%	71%	7%	11%	11%	10%

As shown in Figure 16, regarding challenging themselves, 84 percent of students agreed they challenged themselves to learn more about topics of interest to them by researching the topic, asking questions, and seeking answers. Slightly higher percentages of elementary school (87%) and high school students (86%) agreed they challenged themselves to learn more about topics of interest than middle school students (82%).

Figure 16: Students' Perceptions of Challenging Self



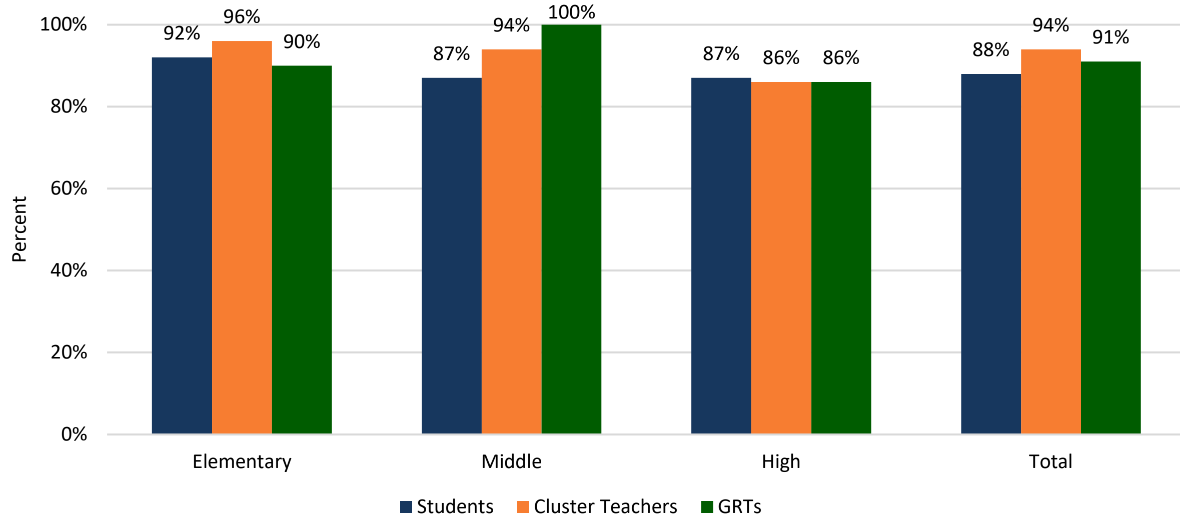
Cluster teachers, GRTs, and parents were also surveyed about students challenging themselves to learn more about topics of interest. Overall, 88 percent of cluster teachers and 93 percent of GRTs agreed gifted students challenged themselves to learn more about topics of interest to them by researching the topic, asking questions, and seeking answers. Results by school level showed at least 86 percent of cluster teachers and GRTs agreed. In addition, 86 percent of parents agreed their child challenged himself/herself to learn more about topics of interest to him/her by researching the topic, asking questions, and seeking answers. Results by school level showed slightly higher percentages of elementary school parents (91%) agreed than secondary parents (81%-84%).

Objective 2: Students are intellectually engaged in the learning process in their current classes based on student, cluster teacher, and GRT survey responses.

Overall, there were positive perceptions from intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program, cluster teachers, and GRTs regarding students being intellectually engaged in the learning process. Overall, as shown in Figure 17, 88 percent of students agreed they were engaged in classroom lessons. Results by school level showed higher percentages of elementary school students agreed (92%) they were engaged than secondary students (87%), although agreement was high at all levels. Additionally, 91 percent of intellectually gifted students agreed they were engaged in their learning by participating and working hard in school (96% at elementary, 91% at middle, and 89% at high schools).

For staff, overall, 94 percent of cluster teachers and 91 percent of GRTs agreed gifted students were intellectually engaged in the learning process (see Figure 17). Higher percentages of elementary school and middle school cluster teachers and GRTs agreed students were engaged, although percentages were relatively high at all levels.

Figure 17: Perceptions of Student Engagement in Learning



Objective 3: Students report that pacing of instruction is appropriate and allows for skill mastery with minimal repetition based on student survey responses.

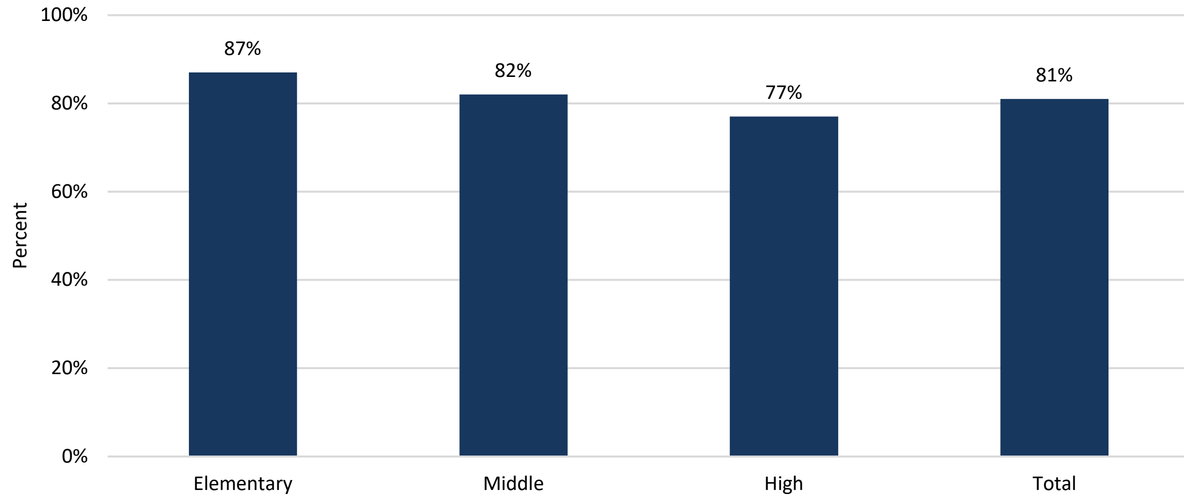
Overall, intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program had positive perceptions about the pacing of instruction they received. Students were specifically asked about the pacing of instruction across the core content areas and whether instruction allowed for skill mastery with minimal repetition. As shown in Table 33, from 74 to 75 percent of students indicated the pace was just about right in English/language arts, social studies/history, and science, while 63 percent of students indicated the pace of instruction was just about right in mathematics. Within mathematics, nearly one quarter of elementary students (24%) indicated the pace was too slow, while 28 to 32 percent of secondary students indicated the pace in mathematics was too fast.

Table 33: Students' Perceptions of Pace of Instruction

Core Course	The pace is too slow.				The pace is just about right.				The pace is too fast.			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
English/Language Arts	17%	17%	15%	16%	75%	74%	74%	74%	8%	8%	11%	9%
Mathematics	24%	10%	5%	10%	65%	62%	63%	63%	11%	28%	32%	28%
Social Studies/History	17%	14%	11%	13%	69%	76%	76%	75%	14%	10%	14%	12%
Science	14%	9%	8%	9%	70%	73%	76%	74%	16%	18%	17%	17%

When students were asked about whether instruction allowed for skill mastery with minimal repetition, 81 percent of students agreed they learned what they needed to learn without a lot of repetition. Higher percentages of elementary school (87%) and middle school students (82%) agreed than high school students (77%) (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Students' Perceptions of Instruction Without a Lot of Repetition



Objective 4: The gifted resource-cluster model for delivering gifted services meets the academic needs of gifted learners, including gifted learners who are twice exceptional or culturally/linguistically/economically diverse based on student, parent, cluster teacher, and GRT survey responses.

Overall, intellectually gifted students in the gifted resource-cluster program, cluster teachers, and GRTs had positive perceptions of instruction and services meeting students' academic needs. There were somewhat lower agreement percentages for parents regarding students' academic needs being met.

Overall, 88 percent of students agreed the instruction received at school met their academic needs, and results were positive at each school level. Intellectually gifted student survey data were examined by individual student group as shown in Table 34. Agreement levels for all student groups were high at 87 percent or higher at the division level.

Table 34: Students' Perceptions of Instruction Received at School Meeting Their Academic Needs by Student Group

Student Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
All Intellectually Gifted Students	90%	89%	88%	88%
Asian	95%	93%	92%	93%
Black	94%	86%	90%	89%
Hispanic	93%	90%	89%	90%
Multiracial	90%	91%	86%	89%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	^	93%	100%	97%
White	88%	87%	87%	87%
English Learner	93%	94%	100%	95%
Non-English Learner	90%	88%	88%	88%
Students with Disabilities	90%	86%	93%	90%
Students without Disabilities	90%	89%	88%	88%

Note: Student survey data by economic status were not available due to student privacy requirements.

When parents were surveyed about the services offered in the gifted resource-cluster program meeting their child's academic needs, 77 percent of parents across the division agreed. Slightly higher percentages of secondary parents (78%-79%) agreed than elementary school parents (75%). In addition, cluster teachers and GRTs had positive perceptions of the program meeting students' academic and/or learning needs at the division level and each school level (80% to 100%) (see Table 35). GRTs at elementary school were somewhat less likely to agree the services offered in the gifted resource-cluster program met students' academic needs, including twice exceptional and culturally/linguistically/economically diverse students.

Table 35: Parents' and Teachers' Perceptions of Services Meeting Students' Academic or Learning Needs

Survey Group and Survey Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Parents - The services offered in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program meet my child's academic needs.	75%	79%	78%	77%
Cluster Teachers - Gifted students are provided learning opportunities that meet their learning needs.	88%	94%	89%	90%
GRTs - The services offered in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program meet students' academic needs, including twice exceptional and culturally/linguistically/economically diverse students.	80%	100%	86%	84%

Goal 2: Scholars and Leaders

Goal 2: Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program become scholars and leaders.

Objective 1: Students show evidence of becoming scholars by demonstrating high levels of understanding and knowledge as measured by the percentage of intellectually gifted students who score in the pass advanced range on the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests.

The students included in the analysis of SOL scores for this objective were those who were identified as intellectually gifted as of the fall of the school year and took one of the SOL tests. When SOL scores were collected and analyzed, the highest score was selected if students had more than one score for a test. It should be noted the grade level of the test is included in the left column of the tables in this section; however, students may or may not have been in that specific grade level when they took the tests. For example, middle school students could have taken the Algebra I course and as a result taken the Algebra I SOL test. Only valid SOL test scores were included, and the results did not include alternate assessments.

Examination of student SOL results during the 2022-2023 school year showed from 31 percent (Grade 5 Reading) to 56 percent (Grade 5 History & Social Science) of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who took an elementary-level SOL tests scored at the pass advanced level (see Table 36). Percentages for all students in the division are included in the table for reference purposes.

Table 36: Percent of Intellectually Gifted Students in Resource-Cluster Program Scoring in the Pass Advanced Range on SOL Tests: Elementary School

Grade Level of Test	Intellectually Gifted Students Percent Pass Advanced		Overall Division Percent Pass Advanced	
	N (Tested)	%	N (Tested)	%
Grade 3				
Reading	572	42%	4,742	15%
Mathematics	573	46%	4,766	14%
Grade 4				
Reading	896	41%	4,638	18%
Mathematics	896	39%	4,653	14%
Grade 5				
Reading	785	31%	4,620	11%
Mathematics	782	46%	4,636	16%
History & Social Science	776	56%	4,454	25%
Science	780	46%	4,614	16%

Results for middle school-level tests are shown in Table 37. From 17 percent (Grade 8 Mathematics) to 53 percent (Grade 8 History & Social Science) of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program scored at the pass advanced level. Percentages for all students in the division are included in the table for reference purposes.

Table 37: Percent of Intellectually Gifted Students in Resource-Cluster Program Scoring in the Pass Advanced Range on SOL Tests: Middle School

Grade Level of Test	Intellectually Gifted Students Percent Pass Advanced		Overall Division Percent Pass Advanced	
	N (Tested)	%	N (Tested)	%
Grade 6				
Reading	840	35%	4,586	16%
Mathematics	432	21%	3,636	6%
Grade 7				
Reading	738	38%	4,654	15%
Grade 8				
Reading	833	40%	4,774	17%
English Writing	827	43%	4,707	20%
Mathematics	791	17%	4,754	6%
History & Social Science	831	53%	4,666	25%
Science	752	21%	4,645	8%

Note: SOL tests were excluded if less than 50 intellectually gifted students took the test.

SOL performance results on end-of-course high school-level tests are shown in Table 38. There was a range from 18 percent (World Geography) to 65 percent (English: Reading) of intellectually gifted students who scored at the pass advanced level. Percentages for all students in the division are included in the table for reference purposes.

Table 38: Percent of Intellectually Gifted Students in Resource-Cluster Program Scoring in the Pass Advanced Range on SOL Tests: End-of-Course

End-of-Course Test	Intellectually Gifted Students Percent Pass Advanced		Overall Division Percent Pass Advanced	
	N (Tested)	%	N (Tested)	%
Algebra I	728	34%	5,231	13%
Algebra II	632	35%	1,189	23%
Biology	1,033	31%	5,683	9%
Earth Science	740	29%	2,302	18%
English: Reading	912	65%	5,292	28%
English: Writing	921	60%	5,711	22%
Geometry	776	22%	2,893	14%
VA & US History	113	28%	972	4%
World Geography	520	18%	2,066	6%
World History I	407	30%	3,304	10%

Note: SOL tests were excluded if less than 50 intellectually gifted students took the test.

Objective 2: Students demonstrate evidence of becoming scholars by enrolling in challenging course work as measured by the percentage of intellectually gifted students who enroll in advanced or honors classes in middle or high school.

Data for this objective focused on advanced/honors courses were based on the list of advanced courses developed and utilized for reporting progress on the strategic plan, *Compass to 2025*. The list of advanced/honors courses is reviewed each year by the Department of Teaching and Learning to determine if additions or deletions are needed. The list included courses that were labeled as advanced or honors courses in any subject area as well as courses that were considered advanced for a particular grade level. Gifted Program Credit courses were not included in this objective. A student was considered to be enrolled in the course if they had been enrolled for a sufficient length of time to receive a final course grade.

As shown in Table 39, 93 percent of intellectually gifted students in the middle school resource-cluster program were enrolled in advanced courses during the 2022-2023 school year along with 85 percent of high school intellectually gifted students. Percentages for all students in the division are included in the table for reference purposes.

Table 39: Percent of Intellectually Gifted Students Who Enrolled in Advanced Classes

School Level	Intellectually Gifted Students			All Students		
	Total Gifted Students	# Enrolled in Adv Classes	% Enrolled in Adv Classes	Total VBCPS Students	# Enrolled in Adv Classes	% Enrolled in Adv Classes
Middle School	2,559	2,370	93%	15,397	9,519	62%
High School	4,249	3,617	85%	23,121	12,812	55%

Objective 3: Students demonstrate success in advanced courses as measured by the percentage of middle and high school intellectually gifted students who earn grades of B (3.0) or higher in those courses.

The data for this objective focused on performance in advanced/honors courses were based on course grade data in the VBCPS data warehouse for students enrolled in advanced or honors courses tracked for the *Compass to 2025* indicators. Course grades were based on final grades. The data tables provide results for selected course subject areas and the overall percentages based on performance in all identified advanced or honors courses.

As shown in Table 40 for middle school, from 84 percent (mathematics) to 93 percent (world languages) of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who were enrolled in advanced courses demonstrated success by earning a B or higher in those courses during 2022-2023. Percentages for all students in the division are included in the table for reference purposes.

Table 40: Percent of Middle School Intellectually Gifted Students Earning Grades of B or Higher in Advanced Courses

Subject Area	Final Grade for Intellectually Gifted Middle School Students B or Higher	Final Grade for All VBCPS Middle School Students B or Higher
Language Arts	91%	86%
Mathematics	84%	72%
Science	90%	83%
World Languages	93%	84%
Overall	89%	80%

As shown in Table 41 for high school, from 85 percent (mathematics) to 95 percent (world languages) of intellectually gifted students who were enrolled in advanced courses in high school demonstrated success by earning a B or higher in those courses during 2022-2023. Percentages for all students in the division are included in the table for reference purposes.

Table 41: Percent of High School Intellectually Gifted Students Earning Grades of B or Higher in Advanced Courses

Subject Area	Final Grade for Intellectually Gifted High School Students B or Higher	Final Grade for All VBCPS High School Students B or Higher
Language Arts	88%	79%
Mathematics	85%	74%
Science	89%	80%
Social Studies	86%	77%
World Languages	95%	87%
Overall	88%	79%

Objective 4: Students in high school demonstrate high levels of understanding and knowledge as measured by the percentage of intellectually gifted students taking Advanced Placement (AP) tests who earn scores of 3 or higher.

The data for this objective focused on AP test results in the VBCPS data warehouse that the school division received from the College Board. The students included in the analysis were intellectually gifted high school students as of the fall of the school year who took an AP test in the spring. Of the 3,750 intellectually gifted high school students in fall 2022, 1,798 took at least one AP exam (48%). For reference, based on all high school students in the division, 20 percent took at least one AP exam during 2022-2023.

Of intellectually gifted high school students who took an AP test during the 2022-2023 school year, from 67 percent (mathematics and computer science) to 93 percent (AP Capstone Diploma Program) scored a 3 or higher on their AP tests (see Table 42). Percentages for all students in the division are included in the table for reference purposes.

Table 42: Percent of Intellectually Gifted Students Scoring 3 or Higher on AP Tests

Subject Area	Intellectually Gifted Students		All VBCPS Students	
	N (Tested)	%	N (Tested)	%
Arts	52	77%	122	73%
English	455	80%	1,026	65%
Mathematics and Computer Science	831	67%	1,390	55%
Science	705	72%	1,340	56%
History and Social Sciences	1,465	73%	3,228	56%
World Languages	167	87%	252	82%
AP Capstone Diploma Program	40	93%	95	89%
All AP Tests	3,715	73%	7,453	59%

Objective 5: Students in high school demonstrate high levels of understanding and knowledge as measured by the percentage of intellectually gifted students who earn scores in the highest quartile on national assessments, including the PSAT, SAT, and ACT.

This objective focused on students demonstrating high levels of understanding, knowledge, and skills based on the percentage who earn scores at or above the 76th national percentile on national assessments such as the PSAT, SAT, and ACT. The PSAT data included results from the PSAT 10 (tenth grade) and the PSAT NMSQT (eleventh grade) assessments. The data were collected from the VBCPS data warehouse based on data the school division receives from the testing companies. The students included in the analysis were intellectually gifted high school students as of the fall of the school year who took the assessments during the given year. Students' results were based on their highest national percentile rank earned in the content area, and results could have been from different test administrations if students took the tests more than once.

Table 43 provides the percentage of intellectually gifted high school students who scored in the top quartile on national assessments during the 2022-2023 school year, along with data for all high school students for reference purposes. On the PSAT, overall 59 percent of intellectually gifted students scored at or above the 76th percentile. On the SAT, overall 74 percent of intellectually gifted students scored at or above the 76th percentile. On the ACT, overall 73 percent of intellectually gifted students scored at or above the 76th percentile. On the PSAT and SAT, higher percentages of students scored in the top quartile on the reading and writing portion of the tests compared to mathematics. On the ACT, which is taken by far fewer students, higher percentages of students scored in the top quartile on the mathematics portion than other portions.

Table 43: Percent of Intellectually Gifted Students Scoring At or Above the 76th Percentile on National Assessments

Assessment	Intellectually Gifted Students		All VBCPS Students	
	N (Tested)	%	N (Tested)	%
PSAT – Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	1,716	67%	8,216	27%
PSAT – Mathematics	1,716	43%	8,216	14%
PSAT – Total	1,716	59%	8,216	20%
SAT – Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	861	79%	2,403	49%
SAT – Mathematics	861	66%	2,403	37%
SAT - Total	861	74%	2,403	43%
ACT – English	88	64%	217	46%
ACT – Reading	88	65%	217	46%
ACT – Math	88	82%	217	47%
ACT – Science	88	73%	217	50%
ACT – Composite	88	73%	217	48%

Note: In 2022-2023, results for the PSAT primarily included students in grades 10 and 11, while SAT and ACT results primarily included students in grades 11 and 12.

Objective 6: Students acquire high levels of understanding and knowledge as measured by the percentage of intellectually gifted students who graduate with advanced diplomas (e.g., advanced studies or IB diplomas).

The data related to graduation for this objective were collected from the SRC end-of-year and summer data files in the VBCPS data warehouse. The students included in the analysis were intellectually gifted seniors who graduated from VBCPS during the academic year, including the summer. The percentages reported are based on intellectually gifted students who graduated with an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma out of all intellectually gifted graduates who earned any type of award.

Of 2022-2023 graduates, 8 percent of intellectually gifted students earned an IB Diploma and 81 percent earned an Advanced Studies Diploma. Therefore, a total of 89 percent of intellectually gifted graduates earned an advanced diploma (see Table 44). Percentages for all VBCPS graduates are included in the table for reference.

Table 44: Percent of Intellectually Gifted Students Who Graduated With an Advanced or IB Diploma

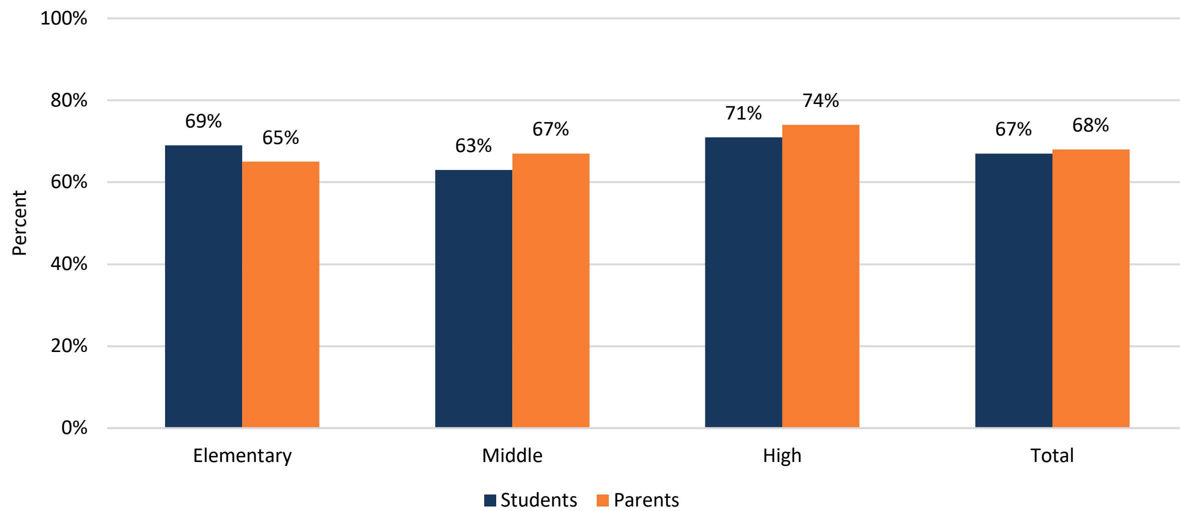
Diploma Type	Intellectually Gifted Graduates		All VBCPS Graduates	
	N	%	N	%
IB Diploma	75	8%	98	2%
Advanced Studies Diploma	721	81%	2,812	55%
Total	796	89%	2,910	57%

Objective 7: Students show evidence of leadership through serving in leadership roles (e.g., team captain, student government) in extracurricular or community activities based on student, parent, cluster teacher, and GRT survey responses.

Cluster teachers and GRTs had positive perceptions of students showing leadership through serving in leadership roles, while somewhat lower percentages of students and parents agreed.

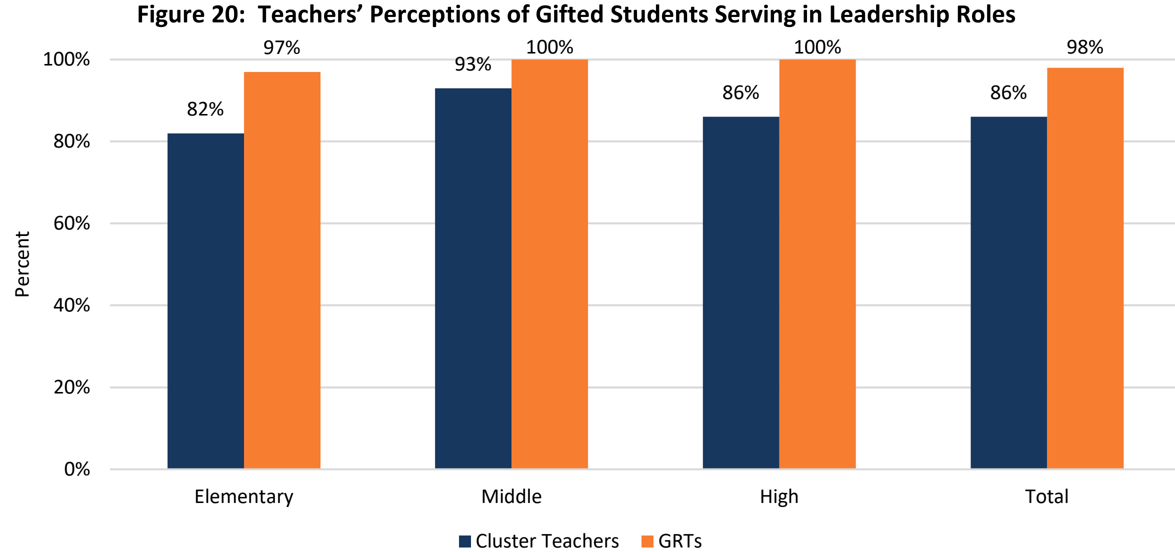
Students and parents were surveyed about students serving in leadership roles. Overall, 67 percent of students and 68 percent of parents agreed intellectually gifted students served in a leadership role such as student government, a community activity, or in an extracurricular activity. Results by level showed somewhat higher percentages of high school students and parents agreed than elementary school and middle school students and parents (see Figure 19).

Figure 19: Students' and Parents' Perceptions of Students Serving in a Leadership Role



When cluster teachers and GRTs were surveyed about students serving in a leadership role, 86 percent of cluster teachers and nearly all GRTs (98%) agreed students served in a leadership role such as student government, a community activity, or in an extracurricular activity. Higher percentages of middle school cluster teachers (93%) agreed than elementary school (82%) and high school (86%) cluster teachers, while there was little variability by level for GRTs (see Figure 20).

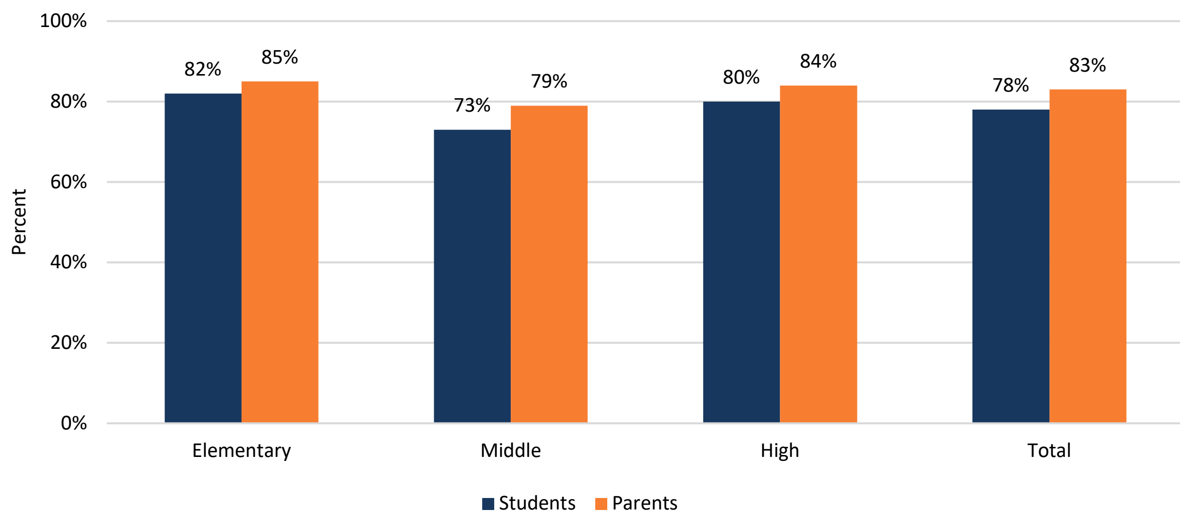
Figure 20: Teachers' Perceptions of Gifted Students Serving in Leadership Roles



Objective 8: Students contribute to their community based on student and parent survey responses.

When surveyed about contributing to the community, overall, 78 percent of students and 83 percent of parents agreed intellectually gifted students participated in activities that contributed to their community. Results by level showed somewhat higher percentages of elementary school and high school students and parents agreed than middle school students and parents (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: Students' and Parents' Perceptions of Students Contributing to the Community



Goal 3: Social Emotional Development

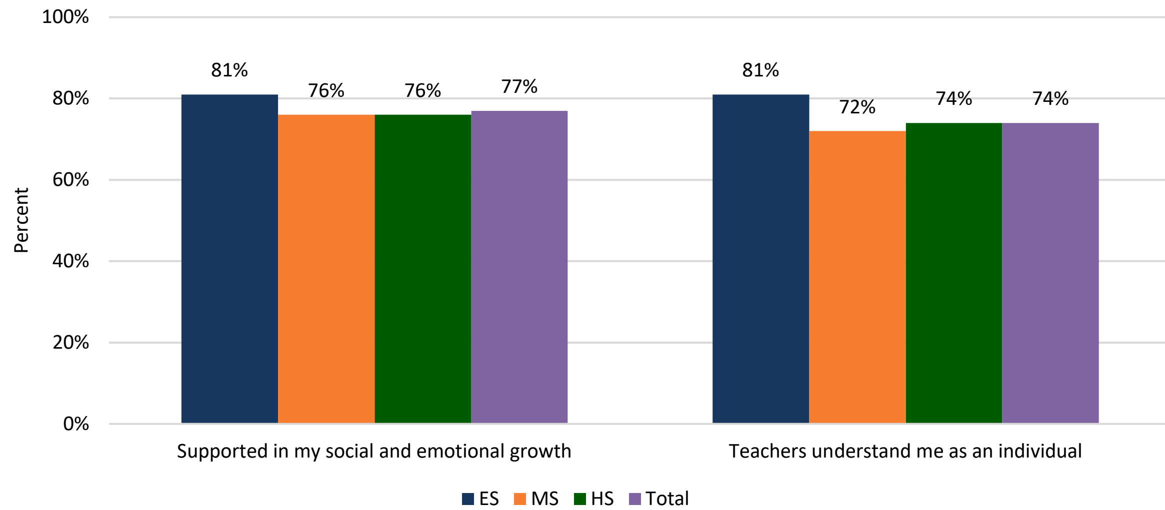
Goal 3: Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program develop and demonstrate social emotional competence and cultural awareness.

Objective 1: Students report being supported socially and emotionally in their current courses based on student survey responses.

Intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program and parents had somewhat positive perceptions about students being supported socially and emotionally in their courses.

When surveyed about being supported socially and emotionally, 77 percent of students agreed they felt supported in their social and emotional growth as a learner and 74 percent agreed their teachers understood them as an individual (see Figure 22). Results by school level showed higher percentages of elementary school students agreed than middle or high school students.

Figure 22: Students' Perceptions of Being Supported Socially and Emotionally



Parents were also surveyed about the services offered in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program meeting their child's social and emotional needs. Overall, 73 percent of parents agreed the program met their child's social and emotional needs. Results by school level showed higher percentages of elementary school parents agreed (78%) followed by middle school (72%) and high school parents (66%). A similar pattern was found for a survey item asking parents if they thought teachers understood their child as an individual, with 86 percent of elementary parents, 78 percent of middle school parents, and 77 percent of high school parents expressing agreement (81% overall).

Objective 2: Students self-advocate for their needs and interests both inside and outside the school environment based on student, parent, cluster teacher, and GRT survey responses.

Intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program, cluster teachers, and GRTs had positive perceptions about students advocating for themselves. Somewhat lower percentages of parents agreed about student self-advocacy.

When surveyed about self-advocacy, overall, 78 percent of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program and 71 percent of parents agreed intellectually gifted students were learning how to advocate for themselves by sharing with others how they learn best. Results by level showed a higher percentage of high school parents (75%) agreed than elementary school (69%) or middle school parents (70%). Overall, higher percentages of cluster teachers (87%) and GRTs (93%) agreed gifted students learned how to advocate for themselves by sharing with others how they learn best. Results for the staff groups varied by school level but did not show a consistent pattern (see Table 45).

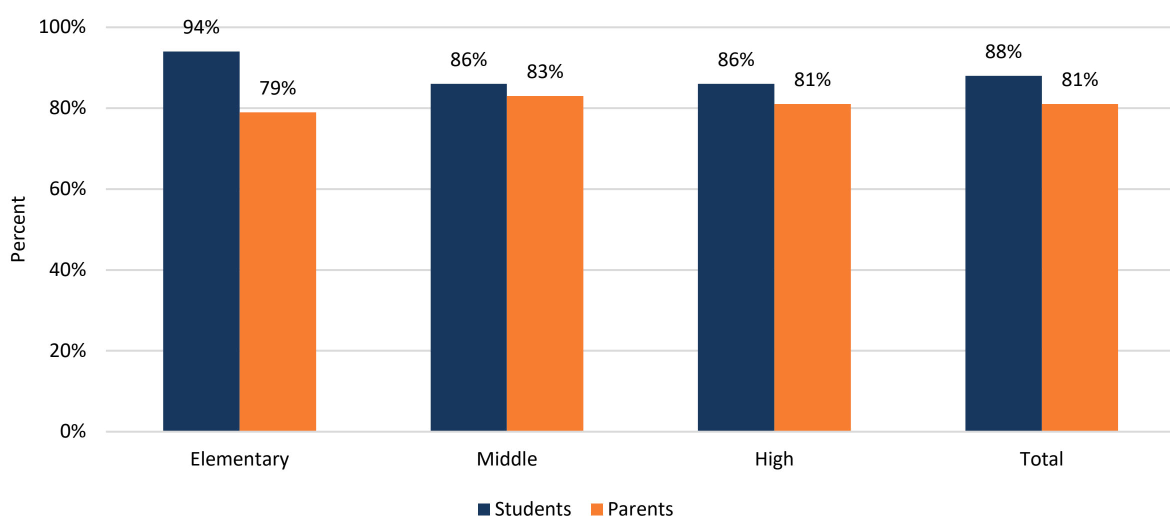
Table 45: Perceptions of Students Learning How to Advocate for Themselves by Sharing With Others How They Learn Best

Survey Items	ES	MS	HS	Total
Students – I am learning how to advocate for myself by sharing with others how I learn best.	80%	77%	78%	78%
Parents – My child is learning how to advocate for himself/herself by sharing with others how he/she learns best.	69%	70%	75%	71%
Cluster Teachers – Gifted students learn how to advocate for themselves by sharing with others how they learn best.	88%	91%	77%	87%
GRTs – Gifted students learn how to advocate for themselves by sharing with others how they learn best.	93%	86%	100%	93%

Objective 3: Students understand the unique characteristics of gifted learners (i.e., perfectionism, fixed mindset, overexcitability) and how they impact learning and relationship development based on parent and student survey responses.

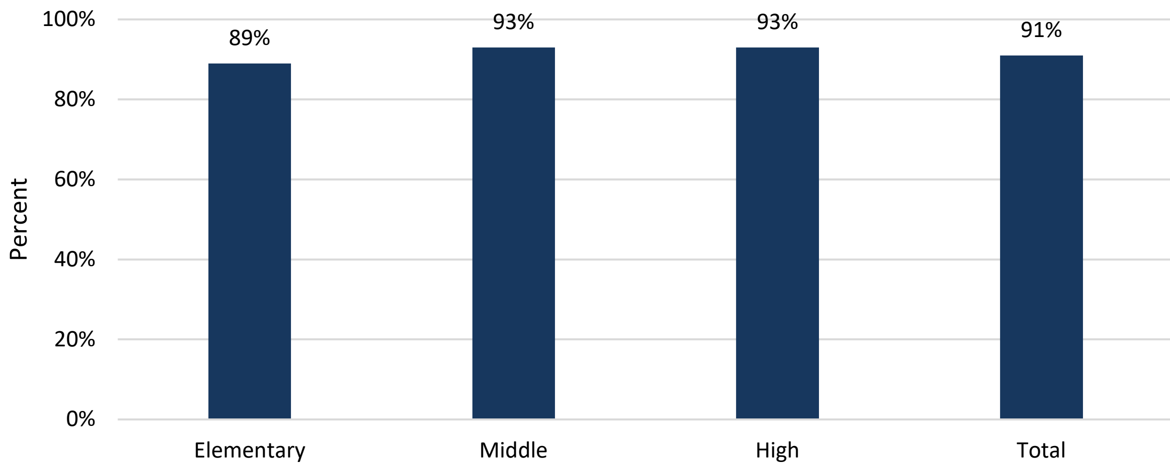
When surveyed about characteristics of gifted learners and the impact on learning, 88 percent of students and 81 percent of parents agreed students were developing skills that involve an awareness of how they learn (see Figure 23). Results by level showed a higher percentage of elementary school students (94%) agreed than secondary students (86%), while somewhat higher percentages of secondary parents (81%-83%) agreed than elementary school parents (79%).

Figure 23: Students' and Parents' Perceptions of Students Developing Skills Involving an Awareness of How They Learn



Parents were also surveyed about their knowledge of the characteristics that make their child unique as a gifted learner. Overall, 91 percent of parents agreed they knew the characteristics that made their child unique as a gifted learner, with high agreement at all school levels (see Figure 24).

Figure 24: Parents' Perceptions of Knowing the Characteristics That Make Their Child Unique as a Gifted Learner

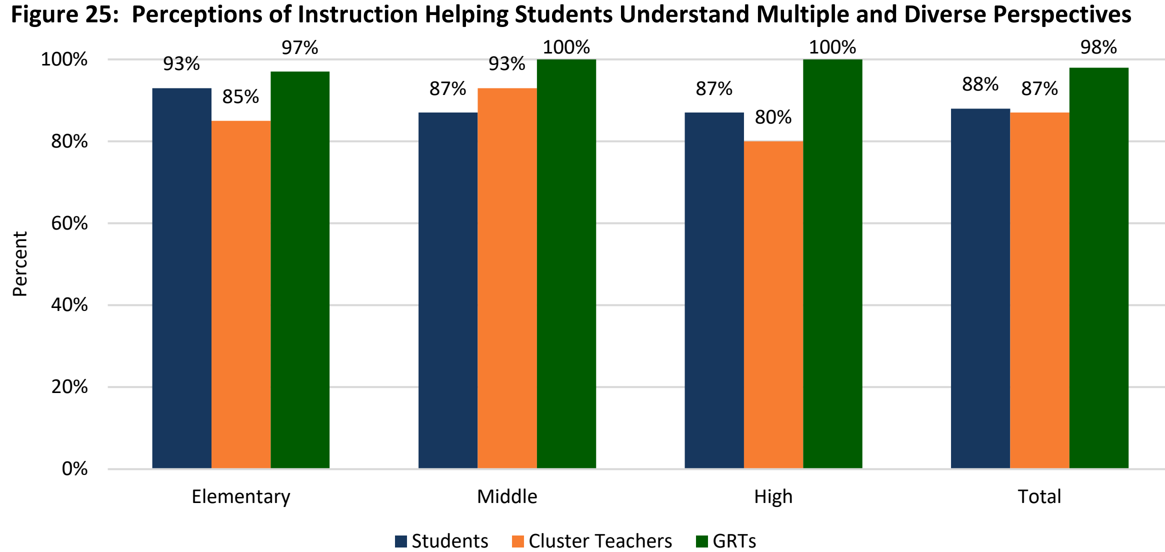


Objective 4: Students develop their empathy skills by engaging in work that reflects multiple perspectives and diverse experiences based on student, cluster teacher, and GRT survey responses.

Intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program, cluster teachers, and GRTs had positive perceptions about students engaging in work that reflected multiple perspectives and diverse experiences.

When students were surveyed about being able to understand different points of view as a result of the instruction they received at their school, 88 percent of students agreed, and perceptions were positive at each school level (see Figure 25). Cluster teachers and GRTs were also surveyed about instruction as part of the gifted resource-cluster program helping students understand multiple and diverse perspectives. While nearly all GRTs (98%) agreed instruction helped students understand multiple and diverse perspectives, 87 percent of cluster teachers agreed. Results by school level showed higher percentages of middle school cluster teachers (93%) agreed than elementary school (85%) and high school cluster teachers (80%).

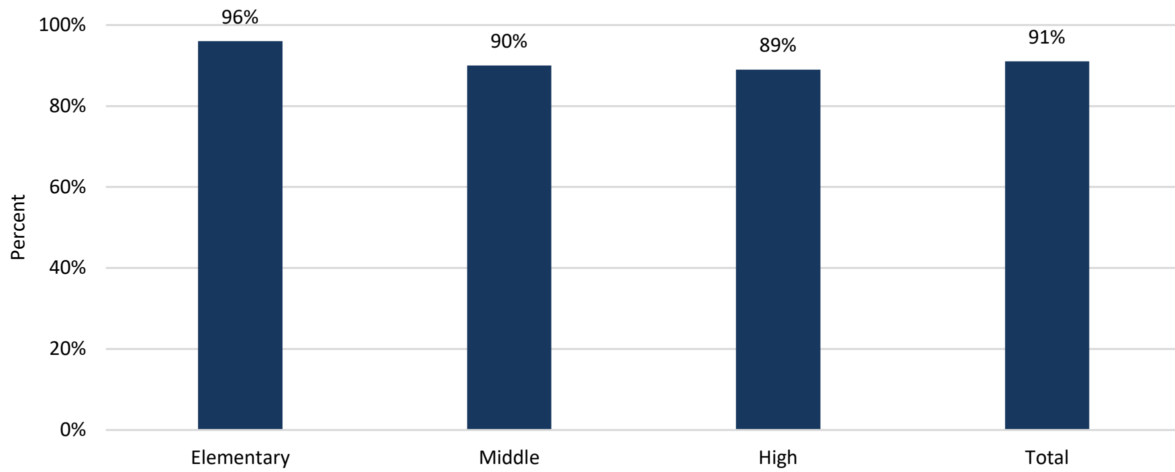
Figure 25: Perceptions of Instruction Helping Students Understand Multiple and Diverse Perspectives



Objective 5: Students have high levels of self-efficacy with the belief their performance is based on skill development and effort based on student survey responses.

When surveyed about self-efficacy, overall, 91 percent of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program agreed how they performed on a task was based on the skills they have developed by working hard. Results by school level showed at least 89 percent of students at all school levels agreed (see Figure 26).

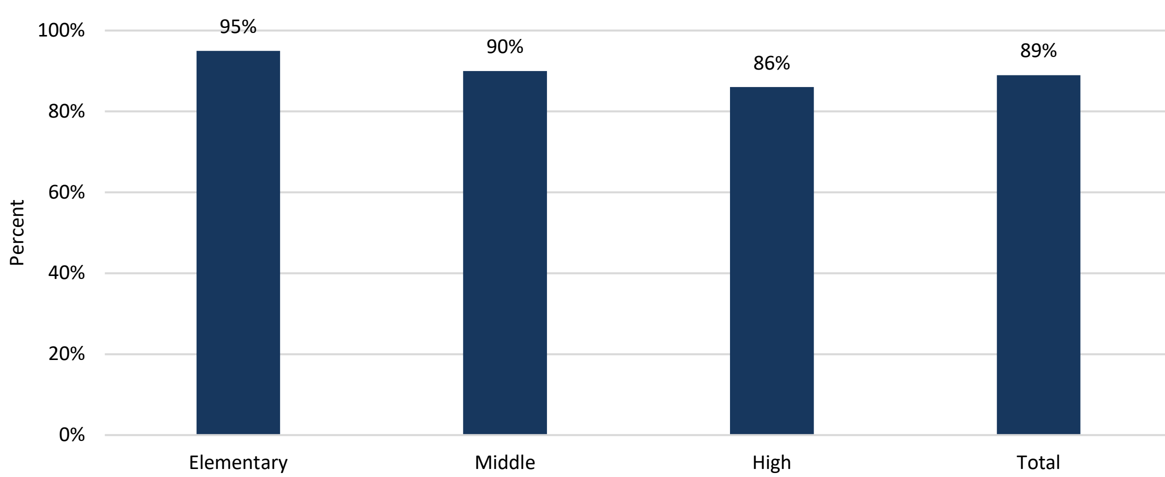
Figure 26: Students' Perceptions of Performance Being Based on Skills They Developed by Working Hard



Objective 6: Students are motivated to perform at levels of excellence based on student survey responses.

When surveyed about motivation to perform at levels of excellence, overall, 89 percent of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program agreed they were committed to doing the best they could on their schoolwork. Results by school level showed at least 86 percent of students at all school levels agreed (see Figure 27).

Figure 27: Students' Perceptions of Being Committed to Doing Their Best on Schoolwork



Goal 4: Future Ready

Goal 4: Students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program are future ready through participating in work-based experiences and having a plan for their future.

Objective 1: Students have opportunities to participate in authentic situations as measured by the percentage of intellectually gifted students who participate in work-based or service learning experiences.

The data for this objective focused on authentic experiences were based on graduates and completers from the Class of 2023 cohort who completed a work-based or service learning experience during high school. The Class of 2023 cohort is tracked by VDOE and contains first-time ninth-graders who entered high school during the 2019-2020 school year. The participation in a work-based or service learning experience are two possible options based on the criteria VDOE uses to measure students' preparation for college and careers while in high school as measured by the College, Career, and Civic Readiness Index (CCCRI). These experiences must be provided to students through the school in conjunction with their coursework and do not include experiences outside of school-sponsored events.

Work-based learning experience is defined by VDOE as students who successfully completed one of the following: cooperative education, registered apprenticeship, internship, clinical experience, supervised agricultural experience, or youth registered apprenticeship. According to VDOE, during a service learning experience, students identify an interest and a community need and then develop and complete a project. Students complete structured activities before, during, and after the experience to reflect and self-assess.[24]

Overall examination of data related to students participating in authentic situations showed somewhat lower percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program participated relative to all students throughout the division. Focusing specifically on participating in work-based learning experiences, of the 2023 cohort of graduates or completers, 16 percent of intellectually gifted students completed a work-based learning experience (see Table 46).

Table 46: Numbers and Percentages of Students Who Completed a Work-Based Learning Experience

Graduates or Completers	Intellectually Gifted Students			All VBCPS Students		
	Total Gifted Students in Cohort	# Completed Work-Based Learning	% Completed Work-Based Learning	Total VBCPS Students in Cohort	# Completed Work-Based Learning	% Completed Work-Based Learning
2023 Cohort	4,293	674	16%	22,626	4,565	20%

Similarly, of the 2023 cohort graduates or completers, 10 percent of intellectually gifted students completed a service learning experience (see Table 47).

Table 47: Numbers and Percentages of Students Who Completed a Service-Learning Experience

Graduates or Completers	Intellectually Gifted Students			All VBCPS Students		
	Total Gifted Students in Cohort	# Completed Service-Learning	% Completed Service-Learning	Total VBCPS Students in Cohort	# Completed Service-Learning	% Completed Service-Learning
2023 Cohort	4,293	430	10%	22,626	3,433	15%

Although not part of the specific objective, another way students can meet the CCCRI requirement is by successfully completing advanced coursework. When examining successful completion of advanced coursework as measured by the CCCRI, of the 2023 cohort graduates or completers, 92 percent of intellectually gifted students successfully completed an AP, IB, or dual enrollment course (see Table 48).

Table 48: Numbers and Percentages of Students Who Successfully Completed Advanced Coursework

Graduates or Completers	Intellectually Gifted Students			All VBCPS Students		
	Total Gifted Students	# Completed Advanced Coursework	% Completed Advanced Coursework	Total VBCPS Students	# Completed Advanced Coursework	% Completed Advanced Coursework
2023 Cohort	4,293	3,946	92%	22,626	14,272	63%

Taken together, the results for this objective and for advanced coursework show intellectually gifted graduates are less likely to participate in authentic learning situations through work-based or service learning experiences than all VBCPS students and instead, are focused on advanced coursework. Encouraging gifted students to participate in these authentic experiences could provide them with opportunities to have a more well-rounded and balanced educational experience in VBCPS.

Objective 2: Students have opportunities to participate in Technical and Career Education as measured by the percentage of intellectually gifted students who complete a credential or finish a course sequence in a CTE program.

The data for this objective were based on graduates and completers from the Class of 2023 cohort who completed a Career and Technical Education course sequence and successfully completed one of the following CTE credential components: an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Workplace Readiness Skills for the Commonwealth (WRS) assessment. This CTE finisher component is one of the criteria that VDOE uses to measure students' completion of the CCCRI requirement. Of the 2023 cohort graduates or completers, 36 percent of intellectually gifted students completed CTE credentials (see Table 49).

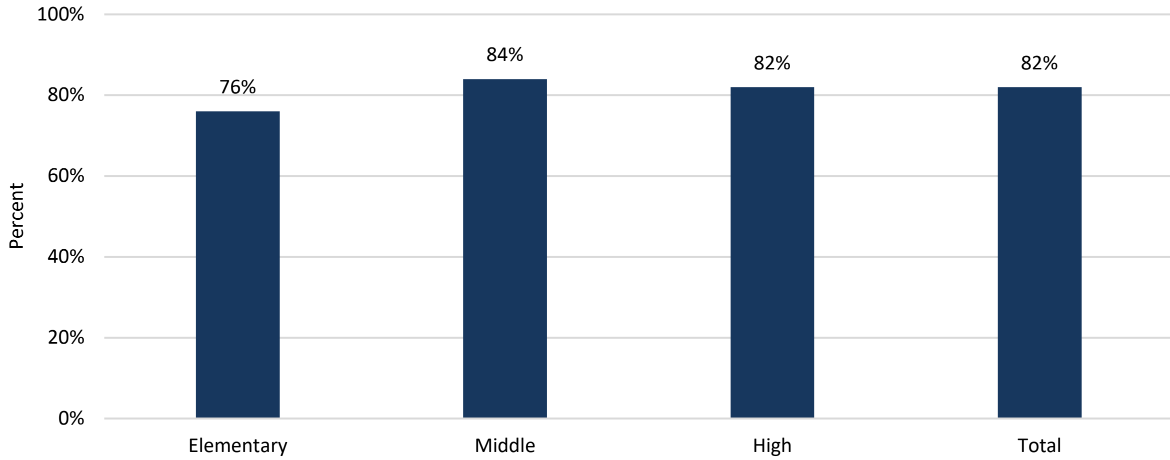
Table 49: Numbers and Percentages of Students Who Completed a CTE Course Sequence and CTE Credential Component

Graduates or Completers	Intellectually Gifted Students			All VBCPS Students		
	Total Gifted Students	# CTE Finisher	% CTE Finisher	Total VBCPS Students	# CTE Finisher	% CTE Finisher
2023 Cohort	4,293	1,535	36%	22,626	8,760	39%

Objective 3: Students demonstrate their growth toward future ready goals through participation in the academic and career planning process to allow them to make informed decisions about their options after graduation based on student survey responses.

As shown in Figure 28, overall, 82 percent of intellectually gifted students in the gifted resource-cluster program agreed they received information about options after high school (elementary) or assistance to make informed decisions (secondary). At the elementary school level, 76 percent of intellectually gifted students agreed their teachers or counselors talked to them about their options after they graduate from high school. Higher percentages of secondary students agreed with a similar item, with 82 to 84 percent of secondary students agreeing they received assistance, resources, and information at their school to help them make informed decisions about their options after they graduate from high school (e.g., college, employment, or military service).

Figure 28: Students' Perceptions of Receiving Assistance About Their Options After They Graduate High School



Objective 4: Students report having a plan for after high school graduation based on student responses to a senior exit survey.

Data for this objective were based on information collected from seniors during the spring of their senior year and are reported to the VDOE as part of the state's student record collection. Students were asked to indicate their plan following high school. Data are based on information for all graduates and completers during the 2022-2023 school year.

Most intellectually gifted graduates or completers (81%) indicated their plan after graduation was to pursue enrollment at a four-year college. This was notably higher than all VBCPS graduates (57%). In addition, nearly all intellectually gifted graduates or completers (94%) indicated their plan included continuing their education, including two-year or four-year college or a business, trade, or technical school (see Table 50). Comparatively, 83 percent of all graduates or completers indicated their plan was to continue their education. Low percentages of intellectually gifted graduates or completers indicated their plan was employment, the military, or that they did not have a plan.

Table 50: Graduates' Reported Plans Following High School

Plan	Intellectually Gifted Graduates		All Graduates	
	N	%	N	%
Two-Year College	104	12%	1,066	21%
Four-Year College	721	81%	2,882	57%
Other (Business, Trade, Technical Schools)	17	2%	295	6%
Total Continuing Education*	842	94%	4,243	83%
Employment	31	3%	550	11%
Military	14	2%	171	3%
No Plans/Unknown	5	1%	123	2%

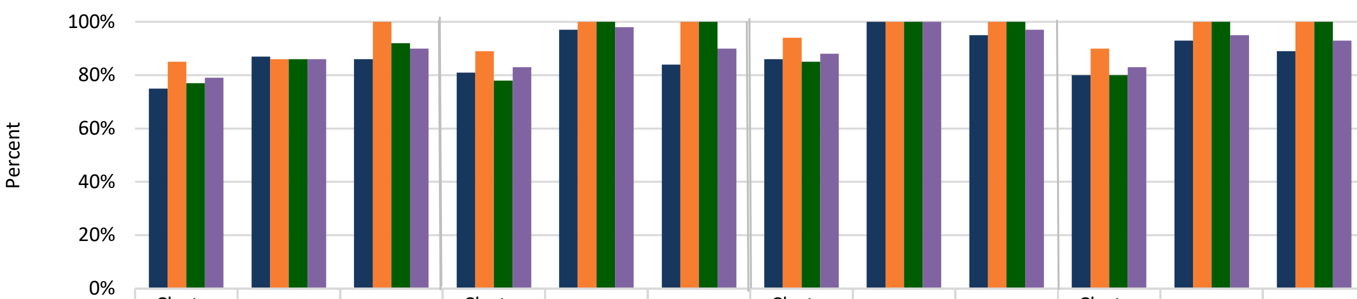
Note: *Two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and other included in Total Continuing Education.

General Perceptions of Gifted Resource-Cluster Program

The final evaluation question focused on stakeholders' overall perceptions of the resource-cluster program, their satisfaction, and areas of strength and improvement based on comments made by parents and staff on the program surveys.

Staff were asked general perception questions about the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program being rigorous, providing students with diverse learning opportunities, and supporting and developing gifted students' academic and social and emotional growth, and results are shown in Figure 29. Overall, high percentages (at least 90%) of administrators agreed with these items at the division level. Administrator survey results by school level showed somewhat lower agreement at elementary schools (84%-86%) regarding the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program being a rigorous program and providing diverse learning opportunities. Nearly all GRTs at the division level (at least 95%) agreed the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program provided diverse learning opportunities and supported and developed students' academic growth and social and emotional growth, while a somewhat lower percentage (86%) agreed the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program was a rigorous program. Overall, at the division level, a high percentage of cluster teachers (88%) agreed the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program supported and developed students' academic growth. Somewhat lower percentages of cluster teachers agreed the program provided diverse learning opportunities (83%) and supported and developed students' social and emotional growth (83%). In addition, similar to the GRT results, a lower percentage of cluster teachers agreed the program was rigorous (79%). Cluster teacher survey results by school level showed higher agreement at the middle schools (85%-94%) than at the elementary (75%-86%) and high schools (77%-85%).

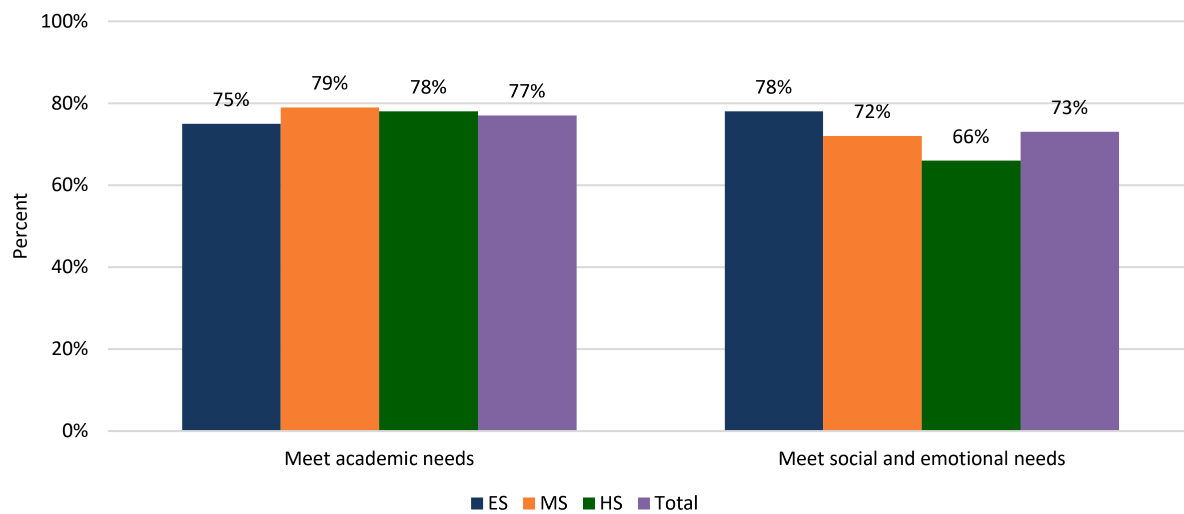
Figure 29: Staff Members' Overall Perceptions of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program



	Rigorous program			Diverse learning opportunities			Supports and develops academic growth			Supports and develops social and emotional growth		
	Cluster Teachers	GRTs	Admin	Cluster Teachers	GRTs	Admin	Cluster Teachers	GRTs	Admin	Cluster Teachers	GRTs	Admin
ES	75%	87%	86%	81%	97%	84%	86%	100%	95%	80%	93%	89%
MS	85%	86%	100%	89%	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%	90%	100%	100%
HS	77%	86%	92%	78%	100%	100%	85%	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%
Total	79%	86%	90%	83%	98%	90%	88%	100%	97%	83%	95%	93%

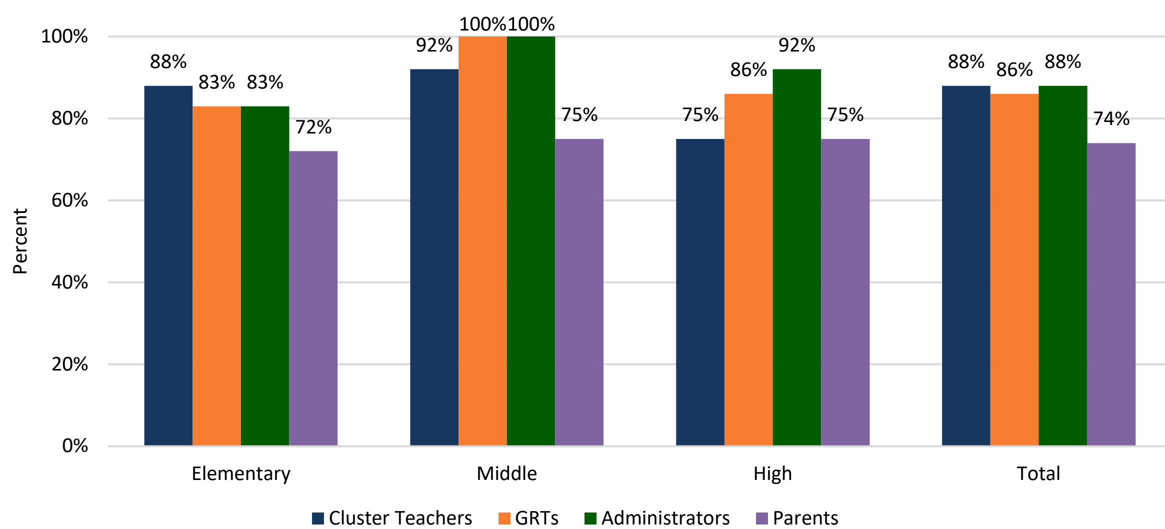
Parents were also surveyed about their overall perceptions of the services offered in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program meeting their child's academic and social and emotional needs. Overall, 77 percent of parents agreed the services in the program met their child's academic needs, while 73 percent agreed the services met their child's social and emotional needs (see Figure 30). While results were relatively similar across school levels regarding academic needs being met, higher percentages of elementary school (78%) and middle school parents (72%) agreed the services in the program met their child's social and emotional needs than high school parents (66%).

Figure 30: Parents' Perceptions That Services in Gifted Resource-Cluster Program Meet Their Child's Needs



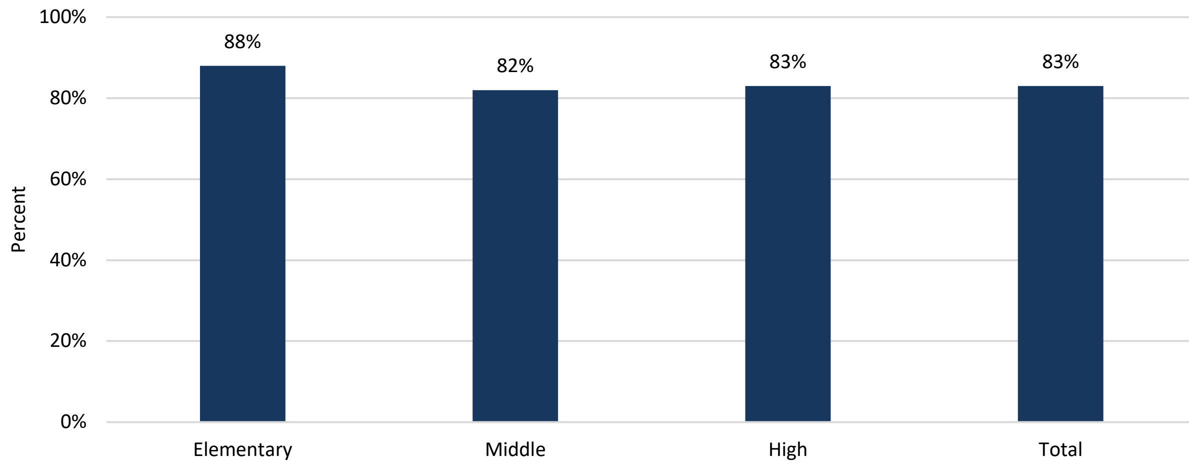
When asked a culminating survey item about their overall satisfaction with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program at their school, 88 percent of cluster teachers, 86 percent of GRTs, and 88 percent of administrators indicated they were satisfied. Higher percentages of cluster teachers, GRTs, and administrators at the middle school level indicated they were satisfied than at the elementary school and high school levels mirroring the pattern of results on other survey items within the evaluation (see Figure 31). In addition, overall, 74 percent of parents indicated they were satisfied with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program. Slightly higher percentages of secondary parents (75%-76%) indicated they were satisfied than elementary school parents (72%).

Figure 31: Staff Members' and Parents' Satisfaction With Gifted Resource-Cluster Program



When intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program were surveyed about satisfaction with their educational experience in general, 83 percent of students indicated they were satisfied (see Figure 32). Results by level showed somewhat higher percentages of elementary school students (88%) were satisfied than middle school (82%) and high school students (83%).

Figure 32: Students' Satisfaction With Educational Experience



Parents were asked two open-ended questions on the survey about the benefits of the gifted services their child received and improvements they would suggest for the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program. Overall, 420 parents provided a comment about benefits which was 24 percent of those parents who responded to the survey. Due to the differences in the structure of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program at the different school levels, results were analyzed by school level. It is worthwhile to mention that while the first open-ended question asked parents to list "benefits" of the gifted program, a large number of responses could not be categorized as "benefits" and aligned more with "areas for improvement." For example, in the benefits comments, parents across all levels, commented that they did not think there was any real difference in students' educational experience between those who participated in the resource-cluster program and those who did not participate in the program. Therefore, this comment and comments like this were included in the analysis of areas for improvements. Of the elementary school parents who answered the open-ended question about the benefits of the gifted program, the most commonly mentioned topics included: students being academically challenged, being grouped with academically and socially similar students, receiving a more individualized or personalized educational experience, becoming a critical thinker and problem solver, and general positive comments about gifted staff, specifically gifted resource teachers. Of the middle school parents who answered the open-ended question about the benefits of the gifted program, the most commonly mentioned topics included: students being challenged in their coursework, being grouped with academically and socially similar students, and being better academically prepared for high school/and or college. Of the high school parents who answered the open-ended question about the benefits of the gifted program, the most commonly mentioned topics included: students being challenged and/or receiving more individualized educational experience through advanced classes including AP, dual enrollment, and gifted courses; being grouped with students who have similar academic and social needs; and developing their child's self-efficacy and/or confidence.

The second open-ended survey question asked parents about areas for improvement for the program. Overall, 601 parents provided a comment about improvements which was 34 percent of those parents who responded to the survey. Of the elementary school parents who answered the open-ended question about improvements they would suggest for the resource-cluster program, the most commonly mentioned topics included: improved communication related to the gifted program and students' progress, more opportunities for students to interact with their school's GRT, a need for the program to be more challenging, more qualified staff, and more opportunities for parent involvement. Of the middle school parents who answered the open-ended question about improvements they would suggest for the resource-cluster program, the most commonly mentioned topics included: improved communication about specific lessons, students' progress, and the structure of the program; more opportunities for students to interact with the school's GRT; increased gifted-related activities including field trips, community service or extra-curricular activities; comments noting a general dissatisfaction with the clustering process at middle school; and a need for the program to be more challenging. Of the high school parents who answered the open-ended question about improvements they would suggest for the resource-cluster program, the most commonly mentioned topics included: improved communication including general information about the program at the high school level, resources, and opportunities for students; comments noting a lack of school level and grade level consistency in how the program is implemented; increased opportunities for parent involvement; more college planning opportunities; and more opportunities for students to interact with the school's GRT.

Gifted resource teachers were asked two open-ended questions on the survey about the elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster program that were working well and the elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that needed improvement. Due to similar themes across school levels, results were reported together by school level. In total, 33 GRTs or 69 percent of GRTs who responded to the survey also commented on the elements that were working well, and the most common element reported was collaboration and/or co-teaching with teachers. All other comments could not be categorized into one common theme but included miscellaneous topics like providing opportunities for critical thinking, matching students with their instructional needs, and having access to resources. In total, 33 GRTs or 69 percent of GRTs who responded to the survey commented about elements that needed improvement. The most common themes reported by GRTs included the need for GRTs to have a clearer role, a better process for clustering students (this was mainly a high school GRT comment), and more training for all staff who interact with gifted students including GRTs, cluster teachers, administrators, etc.

Cluster teachers were also asked two open-ended questions on the survey about the elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that were working well and the elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that needed improvement. In total, 90 cluster teachers or 33 percent of those who responded to the survey provided a comment about what was working well. Open-ended survey comments are reported by school level when there were differences in themes among groups. Of the elementary, middle, and high school cluster teachers who responded to the item about elements that were working well, the most common theme included having an effective GRT at their school who helps plan, collaborate, teach, write grants, and support staff. In addition, elementary cluster teachers commented on the effective referral/identification process and students being challenged.

In total, 82 cluster teachers or 30 percent of those who responded to the survey commented on elements that needed improvement. Of the elementary cluster teachers who responded to the item about elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that needed improvement, the most common theme included wanting more time to collaborate, plan, and team-teach with GRTs. The next most common themes included a dissatisfaction with the clustering process, a need for more training, and a more rigorous curriculum. Of the middle and high school cluster teachers who responded to the item about elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that need improvement, the most common theme included a desire for more collaboration/co-teaching with their school's GRT and more training related to gifted students. Middle school cluster teachers, echoing the middle school GRTs, commented on a general dissatisfaction with the clustering process.

Finally, administrators were asked two open-ended questions on the survey about the elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that were working well and the elements that needed improvement. In total, 35 building administers or 49 percent of administrators who responded to the survey commented about what was working well with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, and 27 building administrators or 38 percent commented about elements that needed to be improved. Due to similar themes across school levels, results were analyzed together. Of the administrators who responded to the item about elements that were working well, the two most common themes included the great staff members who work well and collaborate together. Of the administrators who responded to the item about elements that needed improvement, the most common themes included GRTs providing more support for cluster teachers, better communication with parents, and a general dissatisfaction with the identification and/or referral process including excessive time spent testing students (this concern was mainly voiced by elementary administrators).

Summary

The Gifted Education Program in VBCPS is a kindergarten through grade 12 program consisting of multiple service delivery models for intellectually and artistically gifted students. This program evaluation focused on the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program which is one model within VBCPS for providing gifted services to students identified as intellectually gifted in grades 2 through 12. Within the resource-cluster program, identified intellectually gifted students are clustered in a group and assigned to a classroom with a cluster teacher who collaborates with the GRT to provide differentiated curriculum and instruction. The focus of this comprehensive evaluation is the implementation and operation of the program as well as outcomes for intellectually gifted students served in the resource-cluster program. The Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted served as a framework for the evaluation focus areas. The evaluation addressed student identification, including student characteristics and equitable representation of students; staff selection, staff characteristics, and professional learning; delivery of services and curriculum and instruction; parent and community involvement; progress toward meeting student outcome goals; and stakeholders' general perceptions of the program.

Regarding the student identification process, VBCPS utilizes a universal screening process for both first- and fifth-graders which includes all students taking an assessment in the fall of the school year. In 2021-2022 in preparation for identifying gifted students for services during the 2022-2023 school year, all first- and fifth-grade students were screened with the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test. First- and fifth-grade students who scored at the 90th percentile or higher on the screening test were recommended for additional testing using the Cognitive Abilities Test. Beginning in 2022-2023, all first-grade students were screened using both the NNAT and the CogAT, while fifth-grade students continued to be screened with the NNAT. In addition to universal screening at first and fifth grades, students may be referred for gifted services any time by parents/guardians, students, teachers, other staff who may have knowledge or expertise to make such referrals, and community members. Once a student has been tested or referred for gifted services, data are compiled and forwarded to an identification and placement committee that determines eligibility for gifted services. Students who are identified for gifted services retain their identification from the point of identification until graduation in VBCPS. When surveyed about the referral and identification process, high percentages of administrators, cluster teachers, and GRTs agreed resources about the gifted referral and identification processes were available to them (at least 95%), being identified allowed students to receive educational services that were more appropriate for their needs (at least 87%), and staff understood the process for referring a student for gifted services (at least 94%).

During the 2022-2023 school year, 4,011 students had a record indicating they had been referred for intellectually gifted services which was 6 percent of the total student population in the division. The grade levels with the highest percentages of students being referred were in grades 1 (30%) and 5 (13%) which corresponds to the grade levels with universal screening. Overall, in comparison to the division, students referred for gifted services in 2022-2023 had notably higher percentages of White students and military connected students, and notably lower percentages of Black students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities.

Focusing specifically on the intellectually gifted students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster program (i.e., already identified as gifted in a prior year), there was a total of 9,333 students in 2022-2023. Compared to all enrolled students in the division at all schools, there were higher percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who were White (60%-61% vs. 46%) and lower percentages of students who were Black (9%-10% vs. 22%-24%).

The Gifted Resource-Cluster Program is implemented in the neighborhood schools by the gifted resource teacher at each school and the cluster teachers who teach intellectually gifted students. The GRT serves as a facilitator, coach, designer, trainer, and collaborator at each school site. Each neighborhood school has a GRT assigned to work with cluster teachers and the intellectually gifted students. While few cluster teachers had a gifted endorsement, 65 percent of GRTs across the division had the gifted endorsement, which according to information provided by the Office of Gifted Programs is a requirement by the end of the third year of employment as a GRT. According to the Office of Gifted Programs, any GRT who does not currently have the gifted endorsement is working toward it in the College of William and Mary's gifted endorsement program.

In 2022-2023, the Office of Gifted Programs provided a variety of professional learning opportunities related to the gifted program. In total, 23 professional learning activities were held from August through May. Professional learning opportunities were mainly for GRTs, although the Gifted Summer Symposium held in August 2022 was open to cluster teachers, administrators, gifted parents, and school counselors. When surveyed about participation in professional learning opportunities related to gifted education, overall, relatively high percentages of GRTs (at least 88%) and cluster teachers (at least 73%) reported participating in professional learning on various topics related to the gifted program. Administrators were less likely to report participating in professional learning related to the gifted program with percentages ranging from 53 to 71 percent depending on the topic. Overall, perceptions of the effectiveness of professional learning were relatively high with at least 81 percent of administrators, cluster teachers, and GRTs at all school levels indicating the professional learning in all topic areas was either very or somewhat effective at providing them with information.

Within the professional development goal of the local plan, collaboration between GRTs and cluster teachers is noted. Teachers and GRTs work collaboratively to develop engaging, inspiring, challenging and differentiated learning experiences for intellectually gifted students. At least 90 percent of GRTs at all school levels agreed collaboration between the GRT and classroom teachers assisted with the development of specific curriculum units and lessons and that it equipped teachers of gifted students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to differentiate instruction on their own for their gifted learners. At least 80 percent of GRTs agreed the collaboration resulted in teachers demonstrating high levels of self-efficacy with regards to teaching and continuously striving to improve their practice. Cluster teachers also generally had positive perceptions of the collaboration with GRTs especially at elementary (85% to 90%) and middle schools (88% to 93%). Cluster teachers at high schools had somewhat lower agreement levels regarding collaboration with the GRTs (76% to 79%).

The resource-cluster model involves grouping (clustering) identified gifted students who are assigned to a classroom with a cluster teacher who collaborates with the GRT to provide differentiated curriculum and instruction. Students are assigned to cluster classrooms according to specific program guidelines depending on school level. The program is grounded in general education curriculum and aims to provide differentiated, rigorous learning challenges. At the elementary school and middle school levels, it is suggested that the number of cluster classrooms per grade level be kept to a minimum (one classroom at elementary school and two or three teams at middle school). At the high school level, cluster grouping is expected in grades 9 and 10, but optional in grades 11 and 12. Overall, 86 percent of GRTs and 73 percent of administrators indicated their high school purposefully clustered students. In addition, the program provides educational experiences to students in grades 9 through 12 through direct teaching of seminar courses and collaborative work with teachers. While these courses were offered, enrollment in these courses during 2022-2023 was low. When surveyed about clustering, overall, at least 86 percent of administrators, cluster teachers, and GRTs agreed cluster grouping assisted teachers in the differentiation of curriculum and instruction, and overall, at least 83 percent of cluster teachers and GRTs agreed the clustering of gifted students provided a range of learners in the classroom that was manageable for the teachers.

When GRTs were surveyed about time spent on the various activities that are part of their position, planning collaboratively with classroom teachers and assisting teachers in providing differentiated instruction were ranked as top areas where the largest amount of time was spent. Alternatively, developing and managing program communication, planning and conducting staff development activities, and working collaboratively with parents of gifted students were areas where GRTs reported spending relatively less time across all levels. Regarding GRTs working with gifted students, at least 81 percent of elementary school and middle school students indicated they worked with their school's GRT, while 40 percent of high school students reported working with their school's GRT.

According to the Local Plan for Gifted Education, curriculum and instruction in the resource-cluster program is grounded in general education curriculum but is differentiated, modified, and expanded to provide appropriate learning challenges. In addition, the evaluation of student learning through appropriate and specific criteria occurs regularly through the use of performance-based assessments and rubrics based on local and state standards and gifted curriculum benchmarks and indicators. Gifted curriculum benchmarks are available for grades K-1, 3, 5, 8, and 12.

When surveyed about instruction as part of the resource-cluster program, at least 85 percent of GRTs and cluster teachers agreed instruction included concept-based curriculum units with themes, issues, and real-world problems with the culture of students represented in the classroom as well as topics of understanding, empathy, and respect for those of diverse abilities, beliefs, and cultures. Overall, lower percentages of cluster teachers and GRTs (66%-73%) agreed gifted students were provided access to resources or people in the community to enhance their learning experience, especially at the elementary school level (57%-65%).

Regarding instructional differentiation, overall, at least 80 percent of cluster teachers, GRTs, and administrators agreed teachers of gifted students differentiated instruction through a variety of strategies, although there was lower agreement for middle and elementary school GRTs (71% and 77%, respectively). When staff was asked about the pace of instruction, 73 percent of GRTs and 77 percent of cluster teachers agreed gifted students were provided opportunities for instruction at a faster pace. From the student perspective, overall, at the division level, 75 percent of gifted students agreed they were learning and doing things in school that matched their needs and interests, and 83 percent agreed they were provided learning opportunities to meet their individual learning needs.

Regarding assessments, overall, at least 92 percent of GRTs and cluster teachers agreed assessments allowed gifted students opportunities to show information they knew and understood. While 90 percent of cluster teachers agreed assessments allowed gifted students opportunities to show their individual strengths, 77 percent of GRTs agreed. Overall, 77 percent of cluster teachers and 77 percent of GRTs agreed they had access to high-quality authentic assessments to use when assessing gifted students' learning, with lower agreement for elementary school cluster teachers (70%). In addition, overall, 80 percent of cluster teachers and 57 percent of GRTs agreed gifted students were provided with feedback on their performance as it related to the gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks.

When surveyed about the skills gifted students develop as a result of the curriculum and instruction, high percentages of cluster teachers and GRTs (at least 85%) agreed the instruction required students to think critically, use reasoning skills, and solve problems; provided opportunities for students to strengthen their collaboration skills; provided opportunities to strengthen their communication skills; and helped students understand and strengthen their self-identity. Similarly high percentages of students (at least 80%) agreed with similar items about being able to strengthen their communication skills, collaboration skills, critical thinking skills, and problem solving skills as a result of their instruction.

Within the local plan related to parent and community involvement, several objectives focused on increasing parent and guardian participation and involvement, planning workshops and resource development, and increasing public awareness and partnerships with the Community Advisory Committee for Gifted Education (CAC). The CAC reviews the local plan for the education of gifted students and determines the extent to which the plan is implemented. In addition, the Office of Gifted Programs sponsored and hosted multiple parent engagement opportunities throughout the 2022-2023 school year. Parents may also receive communications from individual schools through the GRT or building administrator, such as through parent information nights, workshops, or school newsletters to share information with parents of gifted students. Overall, 74 percent of parents agreed there were opportunities to participate in workshops or access resources to help enhance their gifted child's learning, and 72 percent agreed opportunities were available to increase their awareness of the unique needs of their gifted child. Additionally, 75 percent of parents of gifted students in the resource-cluster program agreed communication efforts were effective at providing them with relevant information about the program, 60 percent agreed information was easily accessible in a user-friendly manner, and 55 percent agreed they had opportunities to become involved in their gifted child's education. When surveyed about being kept informed about their gifted students' growth, overall, 63 percent of parents agreed they were kept informed about their gifted learners' academic growth, and 50 percent of parents agreed they were kept informed about their gifted learners' social-emotional growth.

The student outcome goals focused on student engagement in instruction, students becoming scholars and leaders, social emotional competence and cultural awareness, and future readiness. These goals and objectives were based on previous division gifted program evaluations and concepts in the local plan for gifted education. Although many of the concepts in the goals and objectives apply to education for all students, these goals and objectives are focused on students who have been identified as intellectually gifted for the purposes of the resource-cluster program evaluation.

Regarding the goal focused on student engagement in instruction, when surveyed about the level of difficulty of their core courses and the pace of instruction in all four core course areas, the majority of students overall (from 63% to 75%) indicated the work was challenging for them, but they understood if they tried and that the pace was just about right. However, a notable percentage of elementary school students reported not feeling challenged in the area of mathematics (42%). In addition, overall, at least 84 percent of students, cluster teachers, GRTs, and parents agreed gifted students challenged themselves to learn more about topics and gifted students were engaged in their learning. When surveyed about instruction meeting their academic needs, 88 percent of students agreed. Examination of agreement levels by student group showed at least 87 percent of students for all student groups agreed with this item.

For the goal focused on students becoming scholars and leaders, student data from various sources were examined, including SOLs; advanced course enrollment and performance; AP exams; PSAT, SAT, and ACT performance; and survey data. SOL data for tests with at least 50 intellectually gifted students tested across all school levels and content areas showed from 17 percent (Grade 8 Mathematics) to 65 percent (English: Reading EOC) of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who took an SOL test scored at the pass advanced level. In nearly all content areas, higher percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program scored at the pass advanced level compared to all students in the division. When examining the percentage of students enrolled in advanced courses, 93 percent of intellectually gifted students in the middle school resource-cluster program and 85 percent of high school intellectually gifted students were enrolled in advanced courses during the 2022-2023 school year. Of those enrolled in these advanced courses, from 84 percent (middle school mathematics) to 95 percent (high school world languages) of intellectually gifted students demonstrated success by earning a B or higher in those courses during 2022-2023. Of intellectually gifted high school students who took an AP test during the 2022-2023 school year, at least 67 percent scored a 3 or higher on their AP tests in each subject area. On the PSAT, 59 percent of intellectually gifted students scored at or above the 76th percentile, while on the ACT and SAT taken by fewer students, 73 and 74 percent of intellectually gifted students scored at or above the 76th percentile, respectively. Additionally, of 2022-2023 graduates, 8 percent of intellectually gifted students earned an IB Diploma and 81 percent earned an Advanced Studies Diploma. Therefore, a total of 89 percent of intellectually gifted graduates earned an advanced diploma (i.e., IB or Advanced Studies Diploma). Lastly, while at least 67 percent of students and parents agreed intellectually gifted students served in a leadership role such as student government, a community activity, or in an extracurricular activity, 86 percent of cluster teachers and nearly all GRTs (98%) agreed. Overall, 78 percent of students and 83 percent of parents agreed intellectually gifted students participated in activities that contributed to their community.

Regarding the goal focused on social emotional development, students were surveyed about being supported socially and emotionally. Overall, at least 74 percent of students agreed they felt supported in their social and emotional growth as a learner and their teachers understood them as an individual. When surveyed about self-advocacy, overall, 78 percent of students and 71 percent of parents agreed intellectually gifted students were learning how to advocate for themselves by sharing with others how they learn best. Overall, at least 87 percent of cluster teachers and GRTs agreed gifted students learned how to advocate for themselves by sharing with others how they learn best. When surveyed about characteristics of gifted learners and the impact on learning, 88 percent of students and 81 percent of parents agreed students were developing skills that involved an awareness of how they learn, and 91 percent of parents agreed they knew the characteristics that made their child unique as a gifted learner. At least 87 percent of students, cluster teachers, and GRTs agreed the program helped students understand multiple and diverse perspectives. Additionally, at least 89 percent of students at all levels agreed how they performed on a task was based on the skills they have developed by working hard and that they were committed to doing the best they could on their schoolwork.

For the goal focused on future readiness, 2023 cohort graduate data were examined related to students participating in authentic situations. Data showed somewhat lower percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program participated relative to all students throughout the division (i.e., work-based learning experiences: 16% vs. 20%; service learning experiences: 10% vs. 15%). Similarly, of the 2023 cohort graduates or completers, 36 percent of intellectually gifted students completed CTE credentials, while 39 percent of division students completed credentials. Overall, 82 percent of intellectually gifted students in the gifted resource-cluster program agreed they received information about options after high school (elementary) or assistance to make informed decisions (secondary). Additionally, most intellectually gifted graduates or completers (81%) indicated their plan after graduation was to pursue enrollment at a four-year college and nearly all intellectually gifted graduates or completers (94%) indicated their plan included continuing their education, such as at a two-year college; four-year college; or a business, trade, or technical school.

Staff were asked additional general perception questions about the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, such as the program being rigorous, providing students with diverse learning opportunities, and supporting and developing gifted students' academic and social and emotional growth. Overall, at least 83 percent of administrators, cluster teachers, and GRTs agreed with items related to the program providing students with diverse learning opportunities and supporting and developing gifted students' academic and social and emotional growth. Although at least 86 percent of GRTs and administrators agreed the program was rigorous, somewhat lower percentages of cluster teachers agreed (79%). In addition, a lower percentage of elementary school cluster teachers (75%) agreed than middle school (85%) and high school cluster teachers (77%).

When parents were surveyed about their overall perceptions of the services offered in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, overall, 77 percent of parents agreed the services in the program met their child's academic needs, while 73 percent agreed the services met their child's social and emotional needs. While results were relatively similar across school levels regarding academic needs being met (75%-79%), higher percentages of elementary school (78%) and middle school parents (72%) agreed the services in the program met their child's social and emotional needs than parents of high school intellectually gifted students (66%).

When asked a culminating survey item about their overall satisfaction with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, 88 percent of cluster teachers, 86 percent of GRTs, and 88 percent of administrators indicated they were satisfied. Overall, 74 percent of parents indicated they were satisfied with the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, while 83 percent of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program were satisfied when asked about their educational experience in general.

When parents were asked to comment about the benefits of the gifted resource-cluster program, parents reported they liked that their gifted child was grouped with similar students in terms of their academic and social needs, having an individualized or personalized educational experience, being academically challenged, and some parents had positive comments regarding the gifted resource teachers at their students' school. When parents were asked about areas for improvement, communication was the most commonly referenced topic. Parents also expressed wanting more from the program in terms of better clustering, more opportunities for students, more consistency across school levels, and increased opportunities for parent involvement.

Gifted resource teachers reported elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that were working well or needed improvement. The most common theme when asked about what was working well was collaborating and/or co-teaching with teachers. Other components that were working well included opportunities for critical thinking, matching students' needs with their instruction, and having access to resources. The most common themes when asked for areas for improvement included the need for GRTs to have a clearer role, a better process for clustering students, and more training for all staff who interact with gifted students.

Cluster teachers reported elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that were working well and areas for improvement. The most common theme when asked about what was working well included having an effective GRT at their school to collaborate with. The most common theme when asked about improvements was a need for more time to work with the GRT at their school. Other elements mentioned included a dissatisfaction with the clustering process, a need for more training, and a more rigorous curriculum.

Administrators also reported elements of the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program that were working well or areas for improvement. The most common theme when asked about what was working well included staff members' ability to work together and collaborate. The most common theme for improvement included GRTs providing more support for cluster teachers, better communication with parents, and a general dissatisfaction with the identification and/or referral process.

Recommendations and Rationales

Recommendation #1: Continue the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program with modifications noted in recommendations 2 through 8. *(Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)*

Rationale: The first recommendation is to continue the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program with modifications noted in the recommendations below. Based on School Board Policy 6-26, following an evaluation, a recommendation must be made to continue the initiative without modifications, continue the initiative with modifications, expand the initiative, or discontinue the initiative.

Recommendation #2: Examine the resource-cluster program to determine where curriculum can provide more challenge for gifted students, including providing access to high-quality authentic assessments that would allow for feedback about the gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks. *(Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)*

Rationale: The second recommendation is to examine the resource-cluster program to determine where curriculum can provide more challenge for gifted students, including providing access to high-quality authentic assessments that would allow for feedback about the gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks. When cluster teachers were asked about the resource-cluster program being a rigorous program, 75 percent of elementary school cluster teachers agreed (85% at middle school and 77% at high school). From the students' perspective, overall, at the division level, 28 percent reported their English/language arts coursework and 29 percent reported their social studies/history work was too easy and they were not challenged. In addition, at elementary school, 42 percent of the gifted students reported their math coursework was too easy and they were not challenged. At the high school level, data showed 85 percent of intellectually gifted students were enrolled in advanced or honors classes leaving 15 percent of intellectually gifted students who were not. As outlined in the local plan, a rigorous curriculum includes one that is differentiated. Students reported their perceptions on learning and doing things that are matched to their needs and interests. Overall, 75 percent of gifted students agreed with this statement (79% at elementary school, 73% at middle school, and 76% at high school.) Related to assessments, elementary school cluster teachers had somewhat lower agreement (70%) that they had access to high-quality authentic assessments to use when assessing gifted students' learning and lower percentages of GRTs (57%) agreed teachers provided gifted students with feedback on their performance as it relates to the gifted curriculum goals and benchmarks. Overall, 77 percent of parents agreed the services offered in the resource-cluster program met their child's academic needs (75% at elementary school, 79% at middle school, and 78% at high school). In response to an open-ended question about improvements, secondary parents indicated the need for the program to be more challenging. In addition, in response to a similar item about improvement areas, cluster teachers at the elementary school level indicated the need for a more rigorous curriculum.

Recommendation #3: Develop a variety of program options to provide high school students the opportunity to work with the GRT to meet students' needs, especially related to their social and emotional growth. *(Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)*

Rationale: The third recommendation is to develop a variety of program options to provide high school students the opportunity to work with the GRT to meet students' needs, especially related to their social and emotional growth. At high school, 40 percent of students who responded indicated they worked with their school's GRT, while the others did not select the GRT as someone they worked with during the school year. This was notably lower than students at the elementary (93%) or middle (81%) school levels who reported working with their GRT. Currently, within the high school resource-cluster program, cluster grouping of intellectually gifted students is expected in grades 9 and 10. All administrators and GRTs who indicated clustering occurred at their school also indicated students in grades 9 and 10 were clustered. High school student survey results were examined in more depth by grade level, and results showed slightly higher percentages of grade 10 (45%) and 11 (44%) students indicated they worked with the GRT than grade 9 (34%) and 12 (39%) students. While there were high school gifted program courses facilitated by GRTs, enrollment in these courses during 2022-2023 was low. Related to students' needs being met, survey results showed compared to other school levels, a lower percentage of high school cluster teachers agreed participating in the program provided gifted learners with a variety of learning opportunities to meet their individual learning needs (73%). When asked about social and emotional learning needs and growth in this area, 66 percent of parents of high school gifted students agreed the program met their child's social and emotional needs, and 76 percent of intellectually gifted high school students agreed they were supported in their social and emotional growth.

Recommendation #4: Encourage gifted students to participate in authentic experiences, such as work-based learning and service learning experiences. *(Responsible Groups: Department of Teaching and Learning, Schools)*

Rationale: The fourth recommendation is to encourage gifted students to participate in authentic experiences, such as work-based learning and service learning experiences. Overall examination of data related to students participating in authentic situations showed somewhat lower percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program participated relative to all students throughout the division. Focusing specifically on participating in work-based learning experiences, of the 2023 cohort of graduates or completers, 16 percent of intellectually gifted students completed a work-based learning experience, which was lower than the percentage overall (20%). Similarly, of the 2023 cohort graduates or completers, 10 percent of intellectually gifted students completed a service learning experience, which was lower than the percentage overall (15%). Alternatively, when examining successful completion of advanced coursework as measured by the CCCRI, of the 2023 cohort graduates or completers, 92 percent of intellectually gifted students successfully completed an AP, IB, or dual enrollment course, which was notably higher than all cohort graduates (63%). Taken together, the results show intellectually gifted graduates were less likely to participate in authentic learning situations through work-based or service learning experiences than all VBCPS students and instead, are focused on advanced coursework. These data were aligned with student perception data showing 70 percent of high school intellectually gifted students agreed their school provided them with real-world learning experiences. Encouraging gifted students to participate in these authentic experiences could provide them with opportunities to have a more well-rounded and balanced educational experience in VBCPS.

Recommendation #5: Encourage building administrators to participate in professional learning related to the Gifted Education Program and specifically, the resource-cluster program in their schools. *(Responsible Groups: Department of Teaching and Learning, Department of School Leadership)*

Rationale: The fifth recommendation is to encourage building administrators to participate in professional learning opportunities related to the education of gifted students. When administrators were surveyed about participation in professional learning topics related to the gifted program, from 53 to 71 percent of administrators indicated they had participated depending on the topic area. In addition, there were notably lower percentages for high school administrators with 33 to 42 percent indicating they had participated. While the percentage of administrators reporting participation in gifted program-related professional learning topics was relatively low, the director of K-12 and gifted programs indicated there were opportunities for them to do so. In addition, in response to an open-ended item about areas for improvement, GRTs identified the need for more professional learning for all staff who interact with gifted students including administrators.

Recommendation #6: Develop and implement a communication plan for families of gifted students to provide parents information about their gifted child's education, including opportunities for involvement in their gifted child's education and information about their gifted child's academic and social-emotional growth as part of the program. *(Responsible Groups: Department of Teaching and Learning, Department of Communications and Community Engagement)*

Rationale: The sixth recommendation is to develop and implement a communication plan for families of gifted students to provide parents information about their gifted child's education, including opportunities for involvement in their gifted child's education and information about their child's academic and social-emotional growth as part of the program. When surveyed about opportunities for involvement, 55 percent of parents agreed they have opportunities to become involved in their gifted child's education. In addition, regarding communication efforts, 75 percent of parents with students in the resource-cluster program agreed VBCPS communication efforts were effective at providing them with relevant information about the gifted program and 60 percent agreed the information about their gifted child's education was easily accessible in a user-friendly manner. The percentage was lower for elementary school parents where 55 percent agreed information was easily accessible in a user-friendly manner. When surveyed more specifically about being kept informed about their gifted learners' growth, 63 percent of parents agreed they were kept informed about their gifted learners' academic growth and 50 percent of parents agreed they were kept informed about their gifted learners' social-emotional growth. Further, at the secondary levels, 44 percent of parents agreed they were informed about their gifted learners' social-emotional growth. In response to an open-ended question about improvements, parents at all levels commented about improved communication (i.e., about the program, lessons, students' progress) and increased opportunities for parent involvement, especially for parents of elementary school and high school students. Administrators also commented about better communication with parents as an area of improvement for the program. In addition, when GRTs ranked how they spent their time, overall, at the division level, areas ranked among the lowest included developing and managing program communication and working collaboratively with parents of gifted students. At the division level, these areas were ranked lower than time spent on other instructional duties not related to the gifted program.

Recommendation #7: Continue implementing strategies related to the referral and identification processes to increase opportunities for students in underrepresented groups to be identified for gifted services in the resource-cluster program. *(Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)*

Rationale: The seventh recommendation is to continue implementing strategies related to the referral and identification processes to increase opportunities for students in underrepresented groups to be identified for gifted services in the resource-cluster program. Representation of the division's student population in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program, as well as all VBCPS gifted programs, has been an area of focus within the local plan as well as the division's Equity Plan, and VBCPS practices are aligned with strategies discussed in the literature such as implementing universal screening, using local norms as part of the identification process, and having gifted services available in each school. The first step to being identified is being referred. Referrals can occur based on scores on screening assessments in grades 1 or 5 along with teacher, parent, student, or other staff or community member referral. During the 2022-2023 school year, 4,011 students had a record indicating they had been referred for gifted services, which was 6 percent of the total grade 1 to 12 student population in the division. In comparison to the overall division student demographics, students referred for gifted services in 2022-2023 had notably higher percentages of White students and military-connected students, and notably lower percentages of Black students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. Student demographic characteristics for intellectually gifted students in the Gifted Resource-Cluster Program during 2022-2023 showed similar differences. At all school levels, there were notably higher percentages of intellectually gifted students in the resource-cluster program who were White and notably lower percentages of students who were Black, economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities in comparison to all enrolled students. There were also notable differences at the high school level for Hispanic students.

Recommendation #8: Conduct an evaluation update during the 2025-2026 school year focused on progress related to the recommendations from the program evaluation. *(Responsible Group: Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability)*

Rationale: The final recommendation is to conduct an evaluation update during the 2025-2026 school year focused on progress related to the recommendations from the program evaluation. The evaluation update will monitor the progress related to the recommendation areas noted above through reviews of program documentation, stakeholder surveys, and relevant educational data.

Appendix

Appendix A

Demographic Characteristics of Students Identified as Intellectually Gifted in Resource-Cluster Program in 2019-2020 and 2022-2023

Student Characteristic	Elementary (Grades 2-5)		Middle (Grades 6-8)		High (Grade 9-12)	
	Intellectually Gifted 2019-2020	Intellectually Gifted 2022-2023	Intellectually Gifted 2019-2020	Intellectually Gifted 2022-2023	Intellectually Gifted 2019-2020	Intellectually Gifted 2022-2023
Total Number of Students	2,908	3,121	2,264	2,462	3,234	3,750
Female	45%	47%	47%	47%	48%	48%
Male	55%	53%	53%	53%	52%	52%
Asian	9%	9%	7%	8%	9%	11%
Black	9%	9%	9%	10%	8%	9%
Hispanic	9%	10%	9%	10%	7%	8%
Multiracial	10%	11%	12%	11%	9%	11%
White	63%	60%	62%	60%	66%	61%
Economically Disadvantaged	22%	23%	22%	24%	18%	18%
English Learner	2%	4%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Military Connected	27%	24%	21%	22%	15%	15%
Students with Disabilities	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%

Endnotes

[1] Office of Gifted Programs, Continuum of Gifted Services.
[2] Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted, 2020-2025.
[3] Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted, 2020-2025.
[4] Memorandum. May 3, 2022.
[5] Scott Peters, Matthew Makel, and James Carter III, "Gifted Education Advances School Integration and Equity" *Kappan* Vol. 105, No. 3, November 2023, pp. 50-54.
[6] David F. Lohman, Katrina A. Korb, and Joni M. Lakin, "Identifying Academically Gifted English-Language Learners Using Nonverbal Tests: A Comparison of the Raven, NNAT, and CogAT," *Gifted Child Quarterly* Vol. 52 No. 4, Fall 2008, pp. 275-296.
[7] Virginia Administrative Code 8VAC20-40-40. *Screening, Referral, Identification, and Service.*
[8] Source: Gifted Education website at https://www.vbschools.com/academics/gifted/faqs
[9] Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted, 2020-2025.
[10] Source: Gifted Education website at https://www.vbschools.com/academics/gifted/appeals
[11] Dr. Joni Lakin and Victoria Driver. Why and How to Use Local Norms. Cognitively Speaking, n.d.
[12] Dr. Joni Lakin and Victoria Driver. Why and How to Use Local Norms. Cognitively Speaking, n.d.
[13] C. Lewis-Wilkerson, personal communication, October 10, 2023.
[14] C. Lewis-Wilkerson and L. Kelly, personal communication, November 30, 2023.
[15] GRT perceptions related to professional learning about the referral process, including perception of effectiveness, are based on data from a 2021-2022 GRT survey due to the question not being on 2022-2023 GRT survey.
[16] C. Lewis-Wilkerson, personal communication, December 6, 2023.
[17] Guidelines for Forming Cluster Groups. High School Gifted Resource Program Handbook. Department of Teaching and Learning.
[18] C. Lewis-Wilkerson, personal communication, December 8, 2023.
[19] Source: Gifted Education website at https://www.vbschools.com/academics/gifted
[20] C. Lewis-Wilkerson, personal communication, December 6, 2023.
[21] C. Lewis-Wilkerson, personal communication, December 8, 2023.
[22] Source: Code of Virginia at https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/2314/637950367189030000
[23] Source: Gifted Family and Community Involvement website at https://www.vbschools.com/academics/gifted/involvement
[24] Source: https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/career-and-technical-education-cte/hqwbl

Donald E. Robertson Jr., Ph.D., Acting Superintendent
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
2512 George Mason Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23456-0038

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For further information, please call (757) 263-1199

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