

Mission/Vision Statement and Funding

Kannapolis City Schools (132) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* LEA Superintendent's Name:

Dr. Sara Newell

* LEA AIG Contact Name:

Fulton, Steve - steve.fulton@kcs.k12.nc.us

This Local AIG Plan has been developed based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2024). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide Public School Units (PSUs) to develop, implement, and monitor thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs. The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs and related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C150.5).

These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what a PSU should have in place, and guide PSUs to improve their programs. In an effort to continue to transform AIG programs and align to the NC AIG Program Standards, each PSU has participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, involving multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process has guided PSUs in their development of this Local AIG Plan for 2025-2028. This Local AIG Plan has been approved by the LEA's local Board of Education or charter school's board of directors and sent to NC DPI for review and comment.

For 2025-2028, the Local AIG Plan is as follows:

* Mission and/or Vision Statement(s)

District Mission Statement and Vision:

The district believes all programs will inspire learners to graduate and become successful citizens who have excellence, integrity, character, accountability, and live with equity. The district strives to be superior in academics, customer service, financial responsibility, and all aspects of serving the community, pledges to adhere to the highest moral and ethical principles, and to model these principles for our students and community. The district promotes fairness, justice, and equal opportunity, commits to being responsible and answerable to all stakeholders, and measures success against the goals outlined in the strategic plan of the district. Through the implementation of these beliefs, the district inspires leaders of tomorrow.

KCS AIG Program Mission Statement and Vision:

The KCS AIG Program in the district adheres to the district vision with specific focus on serving students of all populations through a talent development mindset, cultivating thinking by using a critical thinking framework, preparing students for daily experiences through social-emotional curricula, and supporting students through partnerships and communication between all stakeholders. The district also strives to provide AIG services to students on an all day, every day basis through extensions provided in curriculum documents, professional development and collaborative planning, and implementation of differentiated curricula at all levels. All students deserve to have their needs met on a daily basis, and the AIG department advocates for and supports district staff in meeting needs of high-ability students.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL AIG PROGRAM (as of 2025)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
* \$ 422,362.61	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00	* \$ 0.00

Standard 1: Student Identification

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

* Practice A

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

Screening Processes

To support the identification of gifted students, screening occurs annually for all students in grades 3-8, using both a universal screener and academic screener flags. Screening is also available upon request for students in grades K-2 and 9-12.

Universal Screener

All students in grade 3 participate in the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test (NNAT) in the Spring. This universal screening tool helps identify students who may demonstrate exceptional ability in nonverbal reasoning. Additionally, the NC End-of-Grade (EOG) test, taken by all students, serves as a form of universal screener for identifying students who may exhibit gifted potential.

Academic Flags

In addition to the universal screener, academic flags are raised for students who score above the 82nd percentile on their End-of-Grade (EOG) tests. These students will be given the NNAT the following Fall to further assess their potential for gifted identification. For example, a 4th grader who scores above the 82nd percentile on their EOG in May will be given the NNAT at the start of their 5th-grade year in August.

Newly Enrolled Students

For newly enrolled students in grades 4-8, screening will occur in the Fall for those who score over the 82nd percentile on their EOG or those without previous-year NC EOG scores. After the roster is made, a list of students new to the district who do not qualify for testing will be sent to teachers for review. Teachers will be asked if any students should be added for screening, based on their observations and a list of traits associated with high aptitude. Any students identified by teachers from this list will be added to the testing roster.

Grades K-2

In grades K-2, the identification process is based on teacher referrals, parent requests, and a review of classroom performance data. Students referred for assessment are evaluated using the NNAT, Terra Nova, and Gifted Rating Scale (GRS). The GRS provides standardized observations of student behaviors associated with high ability, which are reviewed alongside other indicators to determine eligibility.

Grades 9-12

In grades 9-12, the identification process is based on teacher referrals and parent requests. Referred students are assessed using previous EOG/EOC scores and the NNAT and/or the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) to gather additional evidence for potential identification.

Referral Processes

Teachers and administrators are encouraged to refer students for testing based on classroom data at any time. Parents may also refer or request testing for their child throughout the year. When a parent requests testing, the NNAT screener is administered immediately, and the student's classroom data and previous

testing are reviewed.

While referrals are accepted year-round, they are intentionally organized at the end of each quarter following benchmark assessments. The AIG Coordinator and/or Specialist meets with teachers after Beginning-of-Year (BOY), Middle-of-Year (MOY), and other quarterly data reviews to determine students who may need to be tested or referred for services.

When a student does not qualify based on NNAT or EOG scores, teachers may complete the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS), a standardized observational tool developed by Pearson. The GRS is scored using state-normed data and can serve as a substitute for traditional test scores in the identification process.

By pairing universal screening with structured referral cycles and flexible evaluation tools like the GRS, our district aims to ensure that all students—regardless of background or testing profile—have equitable access to gifted services.

*** Practice B**

Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels, K-12, that provides multiple opportunities to reveal a student's aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve. The criteria may include both qualitative and quantitative data in order to develop a comprehensive learner profile.

The district has three possible pathways used to identify students for gifted services in grades K-12.

Pathway One: Identification Through Testing (Aptitude and/or Achievement)

In Pathway One, students are given points for their percentile on the NNAT as well as for their percentile on the EOG. Students need to earn a combined 14 points to identify as gifted.

Point spread: [83=1, 84=2, 85=3, 86=4, 87=5, 88=6, 89=7, 90=8, 91=9, 92=10, 93=11, 94=12, 95=13, 96=14]

Students are then identified based on their point combinations:

- AIG (Highly Gifted): Aptitude + Achievement (At least one point is scored for aptitude AND for achievement, and the student earned a total of 14 points in ELA AND 14 points in Math.)
- AG (Academically Gifted): Achievement points total 14 in both ELA AND Math OR Achievement Only is at/above the 96th percentile (14 points) in ELA AND Math. Aptitude scores are the 82nd percentile or below.
- AR (Academically Gifted in Reading): Aptitude + Achievement points total 14 in ELA only OR Achievement Only is at/above the 96th percentile (14 points) in ELA.
- AM (Academically Gifted in Math): Aptitude + Achievement points total 14 in Math only OR Achievement Only is at/above the 96th percentile (14 points) in Math.
- IG: Aptitude testing is at/above the 96th percentile. Achievement scores are at or below the 82nd percentile.

Pathway Two: Teacher Recommendation

Pathway Two is for students who scored at the 90th percentile or above on either an achievement OR aptitude test but did not score high enough overall to earn 14 points and identify through Pathway One requirements.

Teachers do not need to recommend students for them to qualify under this pathway. All students with scores above the 90th percentile who do not qualify under Pathway One are automatically reviewed through Pathway Two.

A Gifted Teacher Rating Scale (GRS) is given to individual teachers (elementary) or teams of teachers (middle) to complete on these students. Using the scale scores from the academic and intellectual sections of the Gifted Rating Scale, students are identified as AIG, IG, AG, AR, and AM based on the combined total of the Teacher Rating Scale and accompanying assessment according to the same scale of identification used in Pathway One.

Students need to earn a combined 14 points to identify as gifted. Students are given points starting at the 83rd percentile (1 point) up to the 96th percentile (14 points - automatic identification).

Point spread: [83=1, 84=2, 85=3, 86=4, 87=5, 88=6, 89=7, 90=8, 91=9, 92=10, 93=11, 94=12, 95=13, 96=14]

Students are then identified based on their point combinations:

- AIG (Highly Gifted): Aptitude + Achievement (At least one point is scored for aptitude AND for achievement, and the student earned a total of 14 points in ELA AND 14 points in Math.)
- AG (Academically Gifted): Achievement points total 14 in both ELA AND Math OR Achievement Only is at/above the 96th percentile (14 points) in ELA AND Math. Aptitude scores are the 82nd percentile or below.
- AR (Academically Gifted in Reading): Aptitude + Achievement points total 14 in ELA only OR Achievement Only is at/above the 96th percentile (14 points) in ELA.
- AM (Academically Gifted in Math): Aptitude + Achievement points total 14 in Math only OR Achievement Only is at/above the 96th percentile (14 points) in Math.
- IG: Aptitude testing is at/above the 96th percentile. Achievement scores are at or below the 82nd percentile.

Pathway 3: Talent Development and Advanced Coursework Opportunities

This pathway supports students who do not meet formal AIG criteria but demonstrate academic or intellectual potential. The goal is to nurture this potential through targeted support and advanced learning experiences, with the possibility of future AIG identification. Services and placement vary by grade level:

Elementary: Talent Development through Clustering, Flexible Grouping, and Enrichment

Students considered for this pathway have any combination of the following:

- Achievement scores at Level 4 or higher
- Achievement scores in the top 20th percentile relative to peers in the grade level at the school site
- Gifted Rating Scale scores (all categories, including intellectual, academic, motivation, creativity, leadership, and artistic talent, are considered) above the 85th percentile

- Personal interest and motivation of the student
- Above grade-level performance in the regular classroom
- Observations of critical thinking by teacher, administration, or specialist

These factors are reviewed collectively to create a learner profile for each recommended student. Placement and support vary by grade band:

- Grades K–3:

Talent development occurs primarily through intentional cluster grouping and embedded differentiation. Schools aim to cluster the top 10–15% of students based on assessment and teacher input, placing them in classrooms supported by teachers with AIG licensure or local endorsement.

Students who are not placed in a designated cluster may still receive talent development support during intervention blocks or through flexible grouping during core instruction. The AIG Coordinator collaborates with academic coaches and classroom teachers to provide enrichment tasks to embed in core instruction aligned to students' strengths, even outside of clustered settings.

- Grades 4–5: Talent development in grades 4–5 continues the cluster-based model and flexible grouping practices outlined in grades K–3, with the addition of direct resource support through push-in or pull-out services. Students placed in cluster classrooms receive sustained differentiation from teachers with AIG licensure or local endorsement, while flexible grouping provides access to enrichment for other high-potential learners based on current performance.

Resource support is delivered through push-in or pull-out models depending on site logistics, and enrichment tasks are designed to extend core instruction through problem-based learning, inquiry, and standards-aligned extensions (e.g., CKLA, Math Olympiad, Advanced Learning Labs). Services are generally scheduled outside of core reading and math blocks to preserve access to foundational and differentiated core instruction, but may overlap as part of a differentiated service delivery model aligned to specific student needs. Students recommended for this pathway may begin on a trial basis, with progress reviewed quarterly to determine continued placement.

Middle School: Honors Placement as Talent Development

Teachers in the middle school differentiate to meet the needs of all learners. Supported by the instructional coach and AIG specialists at each school level, teachers are equipped with strategies to extend learning. Students in middle school may qualify for placement in Honors classes, which serve as a form of Talent Development for students with advanced learning needs who are not yet formally identified. These placements are designed to provide increased rigor, critical thinking, and preparation for future advanced coursework or AIG identification. Honors courses are taught by teachers who hold AIG licensure or local AIG endorsement, ensuring appropriate instructional support. Students qualify for Honors through one of three pathways:

- Honors Pathway 1:
Achievement scores at Level 4 or higher on EOG assessments. While only one measure of student mastery, placement in Honors courses will align with demonstrated mastery of content standards to ensure students' continued success.
- Honors Pathway 2:
Any combination of two of the following:
 - Achievement scores in the top 20th percentile of their school-based peer group
 - Aptitude scores above the 80th percentile
 - District common assessment (CIA, NC Check-In) average of 70% or higher

- Gifted Rating Scale scores at or above the 85th percentile in intellectual, academic, or motivation domains

Students placed in Honors through these pathways are reviewed regularly by AIG and instructional staff to ensure placement continues to meet their academic and intellectual needs. While participation in Honors is not equivalent to formal AIG identification, it is a key component of the district's middle school talent development model.

K-2 Identification

Students in grades K–2 may be considered for AIG identification when referred by a parent, teacher, administrator, or when deemed appropriate by the AIG Coordinator. Identification decisions are based on multiple sources of data, which may include the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test (NNAT), TerraNova achievement assessment, Gifted Rating Scale (GRS), state-released benchmark assessments, and classroom performance data.

AIG Specialists also review student progress using formative assessment data, teacher observations, and classroom-based enrichment tools such as the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum. PETS may be used in small-group or whole-class settings as one of several resources to observe potential in young learners. These data points help determine whether a formal evaluation is appropriate.

Identification decisions in K–2 are made with developmental considerations in mind, and referrals are typically accompanied by team discussions involving the AIG Specialist, classroom teacher(s), and parent(s).

9-12 Identification

Students are tested for identification at the high school level when requested by parents, administration, or teachers, and/or deemed necessary by the AIG licensed high school counselor. Counselors also review student data, course enrollment, and speak with students about their needs to determine if identification testing is required.

NOTE: Once a student is identified, the student remains identified even if the services received are changed based on parent, teacher, administration, and student agreement.



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*** Practice C**

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

District Decisions:

The district serves a wide range of learners and works to ensure that identification processes reflect academic potential across the full student population. The NNAT (Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test) is administered universally in grade 3 due to its nonverbal format, which minimizes the influence of language and cultural background. Multiple identification pathways and a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures are used to build a well-rounded picture of student strengths.

Talent Development Policy:

While no separate testing thresholds are applied to specific populations, the district supports early recognition of academic potential through its talent

development policy. During quarterly benchmark data reviews, AIG Specialists and the AIG Coordinator examine performance data to locate students performing in the top 20% of their school-based peer group. These students, along with others recommended by teachers, are reviewed for possible participation in Honors or Talent Development services. As part of this process, AIG staff consult with EC and Multilingual Learner staff to identify students who may benefit from additional support and long-term monitoring, including those who are twice-exceptional or who demonstrate highly advanced ability.

Other Considerations:

The AIG Coordinator maintains records of students who are served through elementary talent development opportunities, perform in the top 20% of their peer group, or are recommended by staff but do not yet meet formal identification criteria. These students are reviewed regularly to monitor growth and readiness for future placement. In K–3, classroom-based enrichment tools and formative assessment data help AIG Specialists observe emerging strengths and determine the need for evaluation. These data reviews help ensure that identification decisions reflect the academic potential present across the district's student population.

AIG Specialists also support teachers during referral windows by providing guidance on recognizing signs of advanced ability that may not always be reflected in standardized scores alone. This promotes more inclusive identification practices while maintaining consistent expectations across schools.

District Data

Total Student Population (5,276):

Asian: 41 (0.78%)
Black or African American: 1,358 (25.74%)
Hispanic: 2,228 (42.24%)
Hawaiian or Native American: 12 (0.23%)
Two or More Races: 433 (8.21%)
White: 1,204 (22.81%)

Identified AIG Student Population (475):

Asian: 8 (1.68%)
Black or African American: 65 (13.68%)
Hispanic: 163 (34.32%)
Hawaiian or Native American: 0 (0.00%)
Two or More Races: 29 (6.11%)
White: 210 (44.21%)

Talent Development Student Population (1,175):

Asian: 15 (1.28%)
Black or African American: 318 (27.06%)
Hispanic: 428 (36.43%)
Hawaiian or Native American: 3 (0.26%)
Two or More Races: 76 (6.47%)
White: 332 (28.26%)

Overall AIG-Served Student Population (1,650):

Asian: 23 (1.39%)
Black or African American: 383 (23.21%)
Hispanic: 591 (35.82%)
Hawaiian or Native American: 3 (0.18%)
Two or More Races: 105 (6.36%)
White: 542 (32.85%)

The AIG Coordinator shares service data and trends with district leadership and the Board of Education each year. This monitoring supports the district's goal of ensuring that advanced learning services are aligned with student performance, observed potential, and instructional needs across all schools.

Percent Ethnicity Identified as AIG

	Asian %	Black %	Hisp %	Native Amer %	Multi %	Pac Islander %	White %
Female	---	<5%	5.69%	---	6.28%	---	15.37%
Male	---	<5%	8.78%	---	7.52%	---	19.36%
Total	---	<5%	7.27%	---	6.93%	---	17.44%

Percent of Total AIG Students Identified as Dual Exceptionality

* Practice D

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

BOY Meetings: At the start of each school year, the AIG Coordinator meets with each school PLC in the district to review identification, screening, and district services. Staff are given time to ask questions and are provided with a pathway flow chart describing the services previously outlined in Standard One.

PLC Data Meetings: The AIG Coordinator or grade-level specialist attends PLC meetings on a minimum of a quarterly basis. Data on currently identified and potential students is discussed. Policy and identification procedures are reviewed at these meetings. The AIG Coordinator and/or Director of PreK-12 Curriculum also meets with the administration at principal meetings, Curriculum & Instruction meetings, and District Alignment Team meetings. These meetings serve as avenues for monitoring and “auditing” the consistent implementation of screening, referral, and identification across the district.

Testing Consistency: The AIG Coordinator works with the District Testing Coordinator and School Testing Coordinators to ensure information is sent to all students and parents regarding screening and testing results. The AIG Coordinator and Specialists at the sites administer or oversee the screening and identification assessments to ensure consistency of testing procedures. District data is kept in district testing folders and spreadsheets for access as needed.

* Practice E

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

Communication on Screening and Referrals: The district sends home a letter with all students to communicate with parents about screening and referral testing. Parents are given the option to opt out of testing if desired. Once results are collected, parents receive a letter informing them of their child's results and explaining what the results mean. The letter will also communicate to parents situations where a student is not identified gifted but will continue to receive Nurturing or Honors services. Parents in the district are also provided a brochure on AIG services at KCS Transition events and AIG informational meetings. The brochure and pathways information is also included on the district webpage for AIG.

District Information Session: The district will hold a beginning-of-the-year information session for any stakeholder in the district (parent, teacher, board member, community member) to share information about the screening, referral, and identification process in the district. Information about the session will be

shared with parents at open house and through beginning of the year electronic communication, Connect Ed messages and information folders. This session will be open to ALL members of the school community, not only parents of identified students.

* **Practice F**

Documents the evidence gathered and analyzed to support an AIG identification decision. This documentation is reviewed with parents/guardians and maintained in student records.

To ensure transparency and continuity in gifted services, the district maintains comprehensive data files for all students who qualify for any of the three identification or service pathways. Each student's file includes:

- Notification of Testing Results
- Notification of Services Letter (includes a required parent/guardian signature)
- Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)
- Other relevant documentation, as determined by the district (e.g., teacher referrals, classroom performance data, benchmark assessment results used during the referral process)

Review of Documentation and Parent Communication: DEPs are reviewed annually with both parents/guardians and teachers at the start of each school year by the AIG Specialist and/or the district AIG Coordinator. As needed, updated testing results and identification letters are sent to parents—for example, when a student's identification changes (such as moving from AR to AIG) or when new screening results become available.

Parent Review of Identification Results: Each fall, the district hosts a dedicated meeting for parents and guardians of newly identified gifted students. During this session, AIG staff review the assessment data used in the identification process, explain the multiple criteria that contributed to the placement decision, provide an overview of available AIG services, and share information about the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) as well as the rights and needs of gifted learners.

Parents are given the opportunity to ask questions and gain a deeper understanding of how their child's profile aligns with state and district identification criteria. This meeting also serves as the student's initial DEP review. Parents are invited to schedule follow-up meetings with the AIG Coordinator and teacher as needed to discuss services and needs.

This comprehensive documentation process and direct parent engagement ensure clarity in the identification process and foster a strong partnership between families and schools to support each student's academic growth and potential.

* **Practice G**

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

Each identified student has a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) that outlines the services, goals, and instructional strategies aligned to their area(s) of identification. The DEP includes the student's area of identification, service options, relevant academic data, student learning goals, parent input, and

signatures from the student support team. Full documentation of the identification process, including notifications and placement letters, is detailed in Practice F.

The DEP is reviewed at the start of each school year through a meeting, phone call, or electronic communication. Reviews involve the AIG Specialist, classroom teacher, parent or guardian, and, when appropriate, the student. These reviews ensure the DEP remains aligned with the student’s needs and supports continuity of services. If a student does not meet annual goals, the AIG Coordinator follows up with a review meeting to determine appropriate adjustments.

At key transition points—such as entry into 4th, 6th, or 9th grade—the DEP is revisited to ensure alignment with school-level programming. In high school, AIG-identified students work with their counselor or AIG Specialist to connect the DEP with their Career Development Plan and high school course schedule. The DEP helps guide decisions about advanced course enrollment, academic pathways, and postsecondary planning.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**













The district is exploring ways to strengthen early identification practices by developing a more consistent process for documenting classroom-based enrichment observations in grades K–2. This could include standardized tools for recording formative assessment data, teacher observations, and indicators of potential giftedness. A more structured approach would improve consistency across schools and help capture early signs of advanced ability, especially in students who may not immediately qualify through testing.

Additionally, the district would also like to formalize collaborative data reviews between AIG, Multilingual Learner (ML), and Exceptional Children (EC) staff. Establishing scheduled check-ins to review flagged students and share observations could improve identification outcomes for twice-exceptional learners and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* NNAT Screener Letter Fall	
* NNAT Screener Letter Spring	
* NNAT Results Letter K-5	
* NNAT Results Letter 6-8	
* Services Brochure	
* KCS Gifted Pathways Document	

* AIG DEP Services Letter 4-5	
* AIG DEP Services Letter 6-8	
* KCS Differentiated Education Plan Form	
* Talent Development Nurturing Program Letter	
* Pathway 2 Cover Letter	
* Pathway 2 Results Letter	

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	 NNAT Screener Letter Fall  NNAT Screener Letter Spring  NNAT Results Letter K-5  NNAT Results Letter 6-8  Services Brochure  KCS Gifted Pathways Document  AIG DEP Services Letter 4-5  AIG DEP Services Letter 6-8  KCS Differentiated Education Plan Form  Talent Development Nurturing Program Letter  Pathway 2 Cover Letter  Pathway 2 Results Letter

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

*** Practice A**

Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the academic and intellectual needs of AIG students, across all grade levels, K-12, and learning environments, through collaboration with a variety of personnel. Services are aligned to students' advanced learning needs and AIG identification.

At the start of each school year and after fall and spring headcounts, all teachers and administrators are informed of the gifted identification status of the students they serve. This ensures that services are tailored to students' advanced learning needs and aligned with their specific AIG identification areas, including Academically Gifted (AR, AM, or AG), Intellectually Gifted (IG), and Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI). Teachers are encouraged to request additional resources, tasks, or extensions from the AIG Coordinator or AIG Specialist as needed.

The district delivers a continuum of services designed to meet the diverse academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners across all grade levels (K-12) and learning environments. These services evolve as students progress through school and are matched to their identification area to ensure appropriate support. :

1. Consultation in Regular Classroom: When a student is identified as gifted but parents and teachers determine grade-level needs must be met prior to additional services being provided, the student remains in the regular classroom on a consultative status and the AIG Coordinator checks in quarterly for reassessment purposes and/or needs of the student.

2. Cluster Grouping with AIG Experienced Teacher: High-ability students (whether formally identified or not) are flexibly grouped at all levels (K-12). When placing clusters of students in classes for the school year, the administration considers local and state gifted certification and professional learning experiences and makes every effort to place high-ability students with teachers trained in gifted education. A list of AIG-experienced teachers is provided to all staff and administration at the beginning and end of each school year to help with this process. When clustering with an experienced gifted specialist is not possible, the AIG Coordinator or Specialist ensures PLC time is used to work with the teacher(s) of the AIG cluster. All teachers in the district are encouraged to participate in the local AIG module to gain experience in gifted education.

3. Resource Support with AIG Specialist: Resource support with an AIG Specialist varies for grades K-3, 4-5, 6-12.

- **Kindergarten:** Elementary Instructional Coaches and the AIG Coordinator work together to support emerging talent in Kindergarten through intentional classroom enrichment and differentiated instruction. Since formal data is limited at the start of the year, flexible grouping is used to respond to students' demonstrated strengths as they emerge. Students showing advanced learning potential—identified through classroom observations, mCLASS data, and other formative assessments—may receive small-group or individualized support during enrichment or intervention blocks. Instructional Coaches, supported by the district AIG Coordinator, collaborate with Kindergarten teachers to co-plan lessons, model critical thinking strategies, and provide resources for differentiation within the regular classroom setting.
- **1st-3rd:** Teachers with state AIG certification or local endorsement support early talent development in grades 1–3 by working directly with academic coaches who support classroom teachers to embed critical thinking, enrichment, and differentiated instruction into daily instruction. Support is based on students' demonstrated strengths, as identified through classroom observations and district assessment data (e.g., mCLASS, FastBridge). Teachers

with state AIG certification or local endorsement provide co-planning, instructional resources, and modeling of strategies that promote depth, complexity, and engagement. Resources such as the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum may be used—alongside other tools—to enhance instruction for high-ability learners. This collaborative model supports services delivered through both intentional cluster grouping and flexible grouping practices, ensuring that enrichment is purposeful, inclusive, and integrated throughout the school day.

- **4th–5th:** The AIG Coordinator collaborates with academic coaches and classroom teachers to provide resource support in grades 4–5 through a flexible service model that includes push-in, pull-out, and flexible grouping based on school needs and student data. Identified AIG students (AI, IG, AR, AM, AG) and those meeting district talent development criteria (top 20%) are grouped for enrichment aligned to their demonstrated strengths, using data such as CIAs, Check-Ins, and classroom performance. Services are generally scheduled outside of core reading and math blocks to preserve access to foundational instruction, but may overlap as part of a differentiated service delivery model aligned to specific student needs. Enrichment tasks may include problem-based learning, tiered Math Olympiad problems, and SEL-based lessons designed to promote critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Instruction is differentiated within enrichment groups to reflect each student’s area of strength. AR students may focus on research, reading comprehension, and written or verbal presentation. AM students engage in mathematical modeling and advanced problem-solving. AG and AI students may lead interdisciplinary tasks and apply skills across subjects. IG students explore logic-based challenges, independent studies, or creative extensions. This collaborative model ensures that services are responsive, rigorous, and aligned with both student strengths and instructional priorities.
- **6th–7th:** In grades 6-7, teachers are supported to provide differentiated instruction to serve all students, including gifted students, in all core subject areas. Daily services in advanced ELA and Math are provided to high-achieving and/or identified students through placement in Honors courses. Students identified as Academically Gifted in both areas (AG) or as Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) are served in both Honors ELA and Math. Those identified in reading (AR) are served in Honors ELA, and those identified in math (AM) are served in Honors Math. Honors courses also include students who qualify through the local placement process, regardless of AIG identification. These courses are taught by a combination of state-certified AIG Specialists and locally endorsed AIG teachers, with all instructors delivering a compacted, enriched, and differentiated curriculum aligned to the needs of advanced learners.
- **8th Grade:** Identified and high-achieving students may take English I and/or Math I in place of standard 8th grade courses based on performance on the 7th grade EOG assessments in ELA and mathematics. Students identified as Academically Gifted in both areas (AG) or as Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI) are typically served in both English I and Math I. Students identified in math (AM) are served in Math I, while students identified in reading (AR) are served in English I. These high school credit-bearing courses are taught by state-licensed or locally endorsed AIG teachers. Instruction in these courses is aligned with advanced learning needs and supported through collaboration among classroom teachers, AIG Specialists, and academic coaches to ensure appropriate challenge and differentiation.
- AIG Specialists at each middle school teach select sections of Honors courses and provide ongoing consultative support to all teachers who serve AIG students. This includes co-planning, resource sharing, data review, and supporting differentiation aligned to student identification areas. Honors and high school credit-bearing course teachers meet regularly with the Academic Coach and AIG Specialist to ensure consistent planning, alignment of rigor, and instructional support across all sections..
- **Intellectually Gifted (IG) Students, Grades 6–8:** For students identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG), placement decisions are made individually at each grade level. These decisions are based on assessment data, classroom observations, and input from teachers and families. When it is determined that a standard course placement better meets the student’s needs, the AIG Specialist supports the teacher team in providing appropriate modifications. These may include independent research, interdisciplinary enrichment, logic-based challenges, or other differentiated assignments aligned to the student’s intellectual strengths.
- **9-12:** At the high school level, one counselor oversees the Advanced Placement (AP) program and serves as the primary contact for AIG services. This counselor collaborates with grade-level counselors, teachers, and the district AIG Coordinator to ensure that the academic and social-emotional needs of AIG students are met. Daily services are provided through Honors and AP coursework, which are available to high-achieving and/or identified students based on their areas of identification and interests. Students have access to a wide range of advanced learning opportunities, including numerous career and technical path programs offered in Honors format. Teachers of Honors and AP courses are highly encouraged to complete the local AIG module on gifted education to better address the needs of AIG students. The counselor in charge of AIG facilitates communication and coordination across teams to ensure appropriate course placement, enrichment, and acceleration opportunities for students identified as Academically

Gifted in Reading (AR), Math (AM), or both areas (AG), as well as Intellectually Gifted (IG). This collaborative structure ensures that all AIG students receive tailored academic guidance and support throughout their high school experience, aligned with their advanced learning needs.

4. Advanced Content/Coursework: Beginning in middle school, students have access to advanced content and coursework designed to extend and accelerate learning beyond grade-level standards. These opportunities include compacted, enriched instruction aligned with student readiness and academic performance.

- **6th Grade:** Honors ELA and Math courses extend learning beyond the depth of 6th grade standards and compact selected 7th grade standards into the curriculum.
- **7th Grade:** Honors ELA and Math courses build on the compacted model by extending instruction beyond 7th grade standards and incorporating select 8th grade standards.
- **8th Grade:** Students may enroll in English I and/or Math I for high school credit in place of standard 8th grade ELA and Math. Additionally, students may access online courses through NCVPS to meet advanced learning needs when in-person options are not available.
- **9th–12th Grade:** Students have access to a full range of Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses aligned to their strengths and interests. Honors courses extend instruction beyond the depth of standard content, and AP courses follow College Board curriculum frameworks. Students may also enroll in NCVPS courses to access additional advanced or specialized coursework beyond what is offered on campus.

In addition, students may participate in Career & College Promise (CCP), North Carolina's dual enrollment program, to earn college credit through Rowan-Cabarrus Community College while still in high school. CCP offers pathways in college transfer, career and technical education (CTE), and health sciences. These options provide rigorous, real-world learning experiences aligned with students' academic goals and career interests.

5. Separate School with Advanced Programming: While there is no separate school in the district dedicated to advanced programming, the high school offers a school-within-a-school experience through the AP Distinction Program. This program provides a structured academic pathway for students seeking a rigorous and challenging curriculum designed to prepare them for success in college and beyond.

The AP Distinction Program is open to all students who are AIG and/or motivated to engage in advanced coursework. Unlike traditional academies with selective admission, students may join at any time during their high school career, allowing them to customize their academic experience based on their strengths and goals. Participants are encouraged to take multiple AP courses, with those who wish to earn AP Distinction completing a minimum of seven AP courses with a final grade of B or higher and earning a score of 3 or higher on at least five AP exams.

6. Subject Acceleration: There are several pathways to subject acceleration in KCS. The first is the Content by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) process, which allows students to accelerate in a specific subject by demonstrating deep understanding and readiness. The CDM process includes two required phases: a standardized assessment and a performance task. Students must earn a score of 90% or higher on both phases to qualify for acceleration to the next course level. Students are strongly encouraged to complete Phase 1 prior to beginning Phase 2.

The second pathway applies to students in grades 5–7 who earn a Level 5 on their End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments in Math or English Language Arts. These students are automatically placed in the honors-level course for that subject in the following school year, ensuring access to a more rigorous and accelerated curriculum.

Individual subject acceleration may be considered for elementary or middle school students when there is a parent, student, or teacher request. When multiple data points indicate readiness, a meeting is held between the AIG Coordinator, Director of preK-12 Curriculum, classroom teacher, principal, student, and family to review the request. A formal plan is developed when appropriate, but the final decision rests with the school principal based on instructional considerations and overall student readiness.

When students in middle school accelerate beyond the advanced courses offered at their school, North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) may be used to provide access to high school-level content. These placements are typically reserved for students who have exhausted the available curriculum and

demonstrate continued readiness for acceleration.

NOTE: Students do not need to be formally identified to qualify for subject acceleration.

7. Whole Grade Acceleration: Whole grade acceleration is considered on an individual needs basis to ensure it is the most appropriate educational option for the student. When a parent, teacher, or administrator recommends whole grade acceleration, a stakeholder team is convened. The team typically includes the regular education teacher, parent(s), AIG Specialist, AIG Coordinator, school administration, and the student.

To guide the decision-making process, the district uses the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS), a research-based tool designed to evaluate whether a student is a strong candidate for acceleration. As part of the IAS evaluation, students will take the COGAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) to provide data on cognitive ability, which is a key component of the IAS. State achievement data, such as EOG/EOC scores, will be used as the primary measure of academic achievement. If state achievement data is not available, the Terra-Nova Assessment will be administered to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of academic readiness.

The IAS ensures that the team considers a wide range of factors, including the student's academic ability, social-emotional development, motivation, and support from family and school.

Based on the results of the IAS and accompanying assessments, the team makes a recommendation about whether whole grade acceleration is appropriate for the student. The final decision lies with the school principal.

- **High School:** Students at the high school level are scheduled into courses based on their academic needs rather than grade level. Grade acceleration can be achieved through the Content by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) process, as described in continuum #6.
- **Early Entrance to Kindergarten:** Students have the ability to apply for early entrance to kindergarten when they meet readiness criteria through placement tests.

8. Individualized Plan: When necessary, individual learning plans are developed for students. A stakeholder team of regular education teacher, parent(s), AIG Specialist, AIG Coordinator, school administration, and student is arranged and together the team determines what element of education needs to be individualized for the student (i.e. academic, interest-based extensions, social-emotional).

9. Other Program Services: As needed, students are encouraged to take courses through the local colleges, participate in internships, and be placed in elective subjects based on their talents and interests.

The range of services is provided to students throughout the district because the district believes in the philosophy of AIG all day, everyday; services and extended courses are made available to identified and highly-able students and teachers are consistently encouraged to adjust instructional practices, products, and expectations to meet the needs of their gifted learners.

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* Practice B

Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the social and emotional needs of AIG students, across all grade levels, K-12, and learning environments, through collaboration with a variety of personnel based on student needs.

The district is committed to supporting the social and emotional development of gifted learners through intentional programming, staff collaboration, and aligned curriculum across grade spans. AIG Specialists and the AIG Coordinator partner with school counselors to provide both proactive instruction and responsive interventions tailored to gifted learners' needs, including anxiety, perfectionism, peer relationships, academic pressure, and emotional regulation.

A district-developed Social Emotional Curriculum, created using research-based and state-recommended resources, is implemented K–8 and adjusted for developmental appropriateness at each level:

- **Elementary Level:** All AIG students receive social-emotional instruction through the Second Step curriculum embedded in core instruction. Additional support from the district's AIG SEL curriculum is provided as needed within advanced clusters, during intervention blocks, and in 4th–5th grade push-in/pull-out sessions. Lessons focus on topics such as resilience, peer relationships, self-advocacy, and emotional regulation, and are delivered through collaboration between AIG Specialists, classroom teachers, and school counselors.
- **Middle School Level:** AIG students participate in weekly SEL lessons through the Second Step curriculum, which is embedded into core instruction schoolwide. In addition, AIG Specialists supplement this instruction with targeted lessons from the district's AIG SEL curriculum, addressing topics such as self-advocacy, emotional regulation, resilience, and interpersonal skills. AIG Specialists collaborate across grade levels to ensure continuity of support. As students transition between grades, specialists communicate about students' SEL strengths and needs so that receiving teachers and support staff are well-informed and prepared to continue meaningful support.
- **High School Level:** AIG and nurturing students receive SEL instruction through advisory sessions using the DESSA framework. AIG social-emotional support is provided by an AIG Specialist who also serves as a counselor. This specialist holds small group or individual sessions as needed and collaborates with other school counselors to ensure identified students receive consistent, responsive, and developmentally appropriate SEL support.

In cases where students exhibit more significant social-emotional concerns, AIG Specialists and counselors collaborate with school-level MTSS teams to discuss patterns in behavior and academic performance, develop targeted interventions, and ensure appropriate alignment with tiered support structures. Social-emotional needs and strategies are also addressed during Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) meetings and may be included in the DEP to support a holistic view of the student's development and ensure communication among support staff.

Professional development for staff is embedded throughout the year. The district's yearlong local AIG professional learning module includes a dedicated month focused on the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Additional training is provided at beginning-of-year professional development sessions, and curated SEL resources, including NC DPI Booster Shots, are made available through the district's professional learning website. The AIG Coordinator also collaborates with district-level departments, including Student Services and Curriculum & Instruction, to align efforts and share resources that support the SEL needs of AIG learners across schools.

Parent education is also a priority. The district has developed a flipbook that outlines common social-emotional characteristics of gifted students, strategies for support, and recommended resources. This flipbook is shared at the beginning-of-year parent meeting, during DEP reviews, and is available on the district website. Additionally, the district offers parent education opportunities that focus on the social and emotional needs of gifted learners to help families better understand and support their children's development both at school and at home.



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* Practice C

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

The Understanding by Design (UbD) curriculum framework utilized by the district helps to align instructional programming and resources consistently throughout all sites. Within each UbD document, there is a Stage 3 Learning Plan. In the learning plan, curriculum designers note resources that are available

for each unit. There is also a section for extension activities in each UbD Stage 3 Learning Plan. Many resources are digitally linked to the learning plan.

- Resources and activities that are unable to be digitally linked are available for all schools, even if they are not housed at each individual site.
- Resources specific to the AIG curriculum (PETS, Social Emotional Curriculum, PBLs) are available at each school site.
- Resources suggested as extensions by the AIG Department are inventoried by the AIG Specialists and transported to school sites as needed.

UbD documents are also used by AIG Specialists when planning the PBLs for pull-out/push-in services to ensure alignment between interest-based critical thinking and state standards and assessments. Rubrics for PBLs are built using district quarterly rubrics as a guide.

Consistent communication (i.e. data meetings, PLCs, early release day collaborative PD sessions) between AIG Specialists and teachers allows for access and sharing of resources as well as integration of gifted curriculum and extension of total instructional program to occur.

AIG instructional strategies are also included in the district Curriculum Resources website designed to assist teachers in planning well-designed lessons using best practices.

The AIG Coordinator is a member of the District Instructional Leadership Team. Participation in this team ensures AIG services align with yearly district-wide programming initiatives and the district's strategic plan. The AIG Coordinator monitors the AIG department's role in all strategies and goals of the strategic plan, but with specific attention to strategies 2 (Core Instruction) and 3 (Support and Interventions). This involvement allows the AIG Coordinator to share and support use of resources from district initiatives with the AIG team, as well as advocate to ensure that the needs of gifted learners are considered in programming.

The AIG Coordinator and/or the Director of PreK-12 Curriculum also attends Instructional Coach meetings (regularly), administration meetings (as needed), Board Meetings (as needed), and the AIG Coordinator meets biweekly with the Director of PreK-12 to stay abreast of district needs and programs and to ensure dialogue about AIG programming and services occurs at all levels, stakeholders are aware of the policies in place, and gifted programming is an integral part of the whole district plan.

*** Practice D**

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

The district implements both cluster grouping and flexible grouping as part of a dynamic approach to support advanced learners across all schools. Cluster grouping is defined as the intentional placement of a small group of students with advanced learning needs (typically 4–10 students) into a mixed-ability classroom taught by a teacher with AIG licensure or local endorsement. This structure ensures consistent access to academic peers and ongoing differentiation aligned with student strengths. Principals receive professional development on effective cluster grouping strategies, and placement decisions are reviewed annually during scheduling meetings. Research-based articles highlighting the benefits of cluster grouping have been shared with administrators and instructional staff to support implementation.

In addition to cluster grouping, teachers use flexible grouping within the classroom to respond to current instructional goals and student performance data. These groups are adjusted regularly—often at the unit and standard level. Through this process, students who are not placed in a formal cluster may join cluster-level groups for enrichment or advanced instruction when data indicates a need, ensuring that services are both inclusive and responsive to emerging strengths. Flexible grouping enables all students to access instruction that matches their readiness and supports both remediation and enrichment within the core instructional block.

To ensure both practices are implemented with fidelity, the AIG Coordinator and/or Director of PreK–12 attends district-level data meetings where benchmark data is reviewed. AIG Specialists meet quarterly with each PLC to discuss student growth, placement, and grouping decisions for identified and high-ability

learners. District data (e.g., EVAAS, classroom observations, benchmark diagnostics) is also used to identify teachers who are most effectively differentiating for advanced learners and to guide ongoing professional development and support.

*** Practice E**

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

The district has an AIG services brochure available to all staff, administration, and parents. The brochure outlines the possible identification of students and services that are provided to differentiate for these students.

Staff and administration are also provided with an outline of district pathways, explaining the flowchart of identification, Article 9B, and the continuum of services students could qualify to receive.

These documents are reviewed by the AIG Coordinator at the beginning of the school year meetings (either full staff or in PLC settings). The highlights of the plan and AIG programming for the upcoming school year are also reviewed during these meetings.

The AIG Coordinator will notify teachers and administration when new (or current) students are identified gifted.

Students' DEP files are maintained by the AIG Coordinator and are reviewed at the beginning of the year with teachers and parents of those students.

The AIG Coordinator specifically communicates about enrollment accountability with site counselors at the start of each school year, and all enrollment of identified students is verified with the AIG Coordinator prior to placement in the district AIG programming.

*** Practice F**

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

At the close of each school year, AIG specialists and teachers of identified students complete a confidential student information form where they are encouraged to share specific student needs, academic concerns or extensions, and strategies that have been successful for the student. This information is reviewed by the AIG Coordinator and pertinent information is shared by the AIG Coordinator with the students "next year" teacher and counselors at the start of the school year. During this meeting, teachers are also informed of the student's identification and how their instruction will need to be tailored to meet this identification.

AIG specialists maintain communication through monthly meetings, allowing discussion of services and students to remain current. Transition meetings are held between the AIG Coordinator and middle school specialists between 5th and 6th grade and between the AIG Coordinator and high school specialist/counselor between 8th and 9th grade.

When students transfer schools within the district, AIG specialists communicate about the specific needs of the student who is transitioning.

KCS hosts a transition and informational event for all students that is targeted towards students in transition years—new elementary students, rising 6th graders, rising 7th graders, and rising 9th graders. These events highlight the possibilities within Kannapolis City Schools. AIG and advanced learners receive targeted information on opportunities and services tailored to their needs, ensuring they are aware of advanced learning courses, programs, and support available.

*** Practice G**

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

Acceleration of students in the district is determined through state standardized benchmarks assessments (Check-ins, EOG/EOCs, MCLASS) and classroom data (report cards, quarterly assessments). Students who achieve above the 80th percentile on any of these assessments, or fall into the top 20% of their peer group at the school, have their data intentionally reviewed for one of the many accelerated options in the district. Hard cut-scores are not used for leveling of acceleration, but rather a comprehensive learner profile is considered and all stakeholders in the student's academic realm are consulted on accelerated placement decisions. Students may fall into more than one acceleration category within a school calendar year, and/or over their academic career.

The following acceleration levels exist in the district:

Level 1: Differentiation within the Regular Classroom

* Teachers utilize extensions from curriculum documents and discussion in PLC meetings to differentiate for high-ability students in the regular classroom.

Level 2: Compacted Curriculum

A compacted Honors curriculum is used in Math and English-Language Arts to compact 6th and 7th grade standards in 6th grade and 7th and 8th grade standards in 7th grade. Students must have scored a minimum of a Level 4 on their previous year EOG or demonstrated their need through Honors Pathway 2.

Level 3: Subject Acceleration

Placement in “grade level up” classroom for specific subject areas is used at the elementary level to challenge students who are far above grade level in comparison to their current peer group (i.e. a first grader who is far above grade level would attend second-grade reading groups to have their needs met).

Students who achieved a level 5 will automatically be placed in advanced coursework, students scoring at a level 4 on their 7th grade Math and/or Reading EOG have the ability to take Math 1 and/or English 1 in middle school. Interest letters are sent to parents and teacher recommendations are requested for these students. Parent and student agreement forms are signed for students receiving high school subject acceleration in middle school. NCVPS courses are utilized for Middle school students who subject accelerate beyond the classes provided by the school.

Students at the high school level are able to take coursework based on readiness not grade. All scheduling decisions involve students, parents, and counselors.

Level 4: Grade acceleration

*Students whose academic needs are not met through previous acceleration levels may be recommended for whole grade acceleration. A stakeholder team—including the regular education teacher, parent(s), AIG Specialist, AIG Coordinator, school administration, and the student—reviews student data to determine readiness.

The district uses the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) as the primary evaluation tool, along with the CogAT for cognitive ability and state achievement data (EOG/EOC scores) to assess academic performance. If state data is unavailable, the Terra-Nova Assessment is used. Additional assessments, such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Assessment and released EOGs, may supplement the review.

To qualify for acceleration, students must score at or above the 90th percentile on the IAS and demonstrate at least 75th percentile proficiency in the next grade level's Math and Reading assessments.

Early entrance to kindergarten is possible when students successfully complete beginning of the year placement testing for Kindergarten at a proficient level (75th percentile or higher).

High school students can take dual enrollment courses through local colleges via distance learning. Families are invited to informational events to learn more about CCP and the process for students. To apply, students must complete the process with the local community college, RCCC, with guidance from high school counselors and the Career Development Coordinator.

Grade acceleration decisions are made by a team of regular education teachers, AIG specialists, parents, AIG Coordinator, and administration. Final decisions for grade acceleration rests with the site administration. Disputes for decisions are sent to the AIG Coordinator and District Superintendent for further review if necessary.

Level 5: Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

- High school students can choose Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) to exempt a required course. Interested students or families should meet with a counselor to complete the application and schedule the assessment. If they achieve the qualifying score, they move to the artifact phase. To complete CDM, students must score 90% or higher on the state test and perform at an accomplished level on the subject area task.

** Differentiated Education Plans are developed for AIG students at Levels 1-3 of the acceleration plan. Individualized Differentiated Education Plans are developed for students at at Level 4 and Level 5 of the acceleration plan, as well as Middle School students who subject accelerate beyond the typical pathway.

*** Practice H**

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

The district cultivates and develops the potential of young (K–3) students through early intervention and talent development embedded within the general education setting. High-potential students are identified using district assessment data, including mCLASS and FastBridge, and are intentionally placed into cluster groups within each grade level—beginning with flexible clusters in Kindergarten as data becomes available—with teachers who hold AIG licensure or local endorsement. In addition to daily embedded differentiation, schools utilize a designated intervention/enrichment block to provide targeted experiences for students demonstrating advanced readiness, curiosity, or creative thinking.

Flexible grouping is used to ensure that students not formally clustered may access enrichment based on demonstrated need. During this time, students may engage in enrichment activities, problem-based learning, critical thinking challenges, or small-group instruction designed to extend core content. Resources such as the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum may be used to promote analytical, creative, and evaluative thinking in early learners.

The AIG Coordinator collaborates with instructional coaches and classroom teachers to support the planning and delivery of early talent development services. This includes sharing resources, co-planning enrichment opportunities, and supporting the alignment of instruction to best practices in gifted education.

The district is working to build teacher capacity in early talent development by expanding access to professional development on identifying gifted behaviors, implementing differentiated strategies, and recognizing early indicators of advanced potential. As this model grows, general education teachers will receive increasing support to ensure that K–3 students have access to learning experiences that promote challenge, creativity, and critical thinking.

*** Practice I**

Develops mindsets, policies, and practices to promote equity and excellence by broadening access to advanced learning opportunities through a variety of talent

development efforts, including frontloading, in grades 4-12.

Kannapolis City Schools is committed to expanding access to advanced learning opportunities and identifying and supporting students with high potential across all populations. Efforts are made to ensure students from all backgrounds, including those who may not traditionally access gifted services, are considered for advanced learning opportunities.

Identification and Monitoring

The district uses the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), a research-based assessment effective in identifying academic potential across diverse student populations. In addition, multiple identification pathways are employed to recognize a wide range of student strengths through both qualitative and quantitative data.

As part of its Talent Development approach, the district identifies students performing in the top 20% of their school-based peer group as promising learners who may not yet meet formal AIG criteria. These students are included on “on the radar” lists, intentionally placed in cluster groups, and monitored for growth through enriched instruction and regular academic review.

Frontloading and Early Enrichment

To prepare students for advanced learning, the district uses structured enrichment beginning in the early grades. High-potential students are supported through cluster grouping and differentiated instruction embedded in the regular classroom. AIG Specialists collaborate with teachers to provide enrichment and critical thinking opportunities during core instruction and intervention/enrichment blocks. Resources such as the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum may be used—alongside other tools—to support foundational thinking and talent development.

In grades 4–5, pull-out services incorporate problem-based learning, interdisciplinary projects, inquiry tasks, and advanced math problem-solving to foster readiness for future rigorous coursework.

Flexible grouping and curriculum compacting are used in the regular classroom to ensure that students who have mastered grade-level content are appropriately challenged. These practices help students develop critical thinking, academic confidence, and the habits of mind needed for long-term success in advanced learning.

Professional Learning and Instructional Practices

The district supports a culture of academic excellence through ongoing professional development. A locally developed AIG professional learning module includes training on recognizing academic potential in a wide range of learners and strategies for expanding access to advanced learning opportunities.

Teachers also participate in professional learning communities (PLCs) where they share instructional strategies and analyze data to better support students with advanced learning needs. AIG Specialists collaborate with academic coaches to support early grade teachers in implementing differentiation strategies that nurture emerging talent. Advanced course instructors, including AP teachers, receive training focused on encouraging participation and success among a broad range of learners.

Policies and Systems of Support

District policies support the use of multiple identification pathways, collaboration among AIG Specialists and school staff, and clear, accessible communication with families. These policies guide implementation of talent development strategies and help ensure alignment between identification processes, instructional supports, and student services.

Using Data to Guide Planning and Support

The district monitors participation and progress in advanced learning programs and uses data to inform decision-making. Student progress and participation data are reviewed regularly to evaluate growth and readiness. This information is shared with teachers and school leaders to guide instructional planning and ensure advanced learning opportunities remain accessible to all qualified students.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

AIG Specialists meet with teachers, administrators, and school teams to share instructional tools and collaborate on student support strategies. Regular collaboration occurs through PLCs, DEP meetings, and school-level MTSS teams. The AIG Coordinator also works with departments such as Student Services, Curriculum & Instruction, and Multilingual Learner Services to align enrichment efforts with broader district goals. Family engagement is supported

through accessible communication, translated materials, and opportunities for families to learn about talent development and advanced learning pathways. Feedback is gathered annually through surveys and used to guide future planning and improve communication and access.

Through these efforts, Kannapolis City Schools ensures that all students have the opportunity to access advanced learning experiences and receive the support they need to grow, achieve, and reach their full potential.

*** Practice J**

Enhances and further develops the talents and interests of AIG students through extra-curricular programming during and outside of the school day.

The following clubs are available for students and are designed to address student needs, provide engaging experiences, and develop well-rounded students through hands-on learning, service opportunities, and positive competition.

Elementary School Level:

- Project Scientist: Afterschool club for STEM Projects that serves girls.
- Student Council: Students have the opportunity to be elected to various positions and develop leadership skills by giving input on school-based decisions.
- Safety Patrol: Students apply for leadership positions to monitor safety in the hallways.

Middle School Level:

- Battle of the Books: Students compete annually in March.
- Robotics/STEM: Students compete in a Robotics competition at the end of the semester.
- National Junior Honors Society (NJHS): Students complete monthly service hours in the community and are required to maintain high academic and behavioral standards.
- Art Club: Students develop products shared at local events and around the school and district.
- Anime Club: Students develop products shared at local events and around the school and district.
- Yearbook: Students collaborate to document school events and assist in organizing the school yearbook.
- Dance Club: Students develop routines to perform at local events and around the school.
- Pep Band: Band class is offered year-long, but students can participate after the school day Pep Band.

High School Level:

- National Honor Society (NHS): Students complete monthly service hours in the community and are required to maintain high academic and behavioral standards.
- Beta Club: Students complete monthly service hours in the community and are required to maintain high academic and behavioral standards.

- Junioresettes: A high school club focused on community service, leadership development, and teamwork.
- Robotics: Students compete multiple times throughout the year.
- Math Team: Students compete annually at Lenoir-Rhyne University.
- Science Club: Students meet to conduct in-depth labs on scientific subjects of interest, meet with professionals in the field, and engage in service and leadership opportunities.

District Service Learning:

- AIG Holiday Event: Families of identified and talent development students come together to donate and wrap gifts for families in need. NHS students from the high school volunteer to help sort and organize gifts, which are distributed to individual students at the various elementary schools. Middle school AIG students deliver the presents and complete holiday activities with the elementary students receiving the gifts.
- Special Olympics: Middle school students in the Junior National Honor Society partner with Special Olympics athletes, mentoring them for several weeks in the classroom, participating in collaborative activities, and supporting them at the games.

Other Opportunities:

- Rube Goldberg: The AIG Department holds an annual Rube Goldberg event where participants use random materials to create a machine. A showcase of machines is held at the end of the event.
- Writing and Art Contest: Students in the AIG program are encouraged to participate in the district writing and art contest held each spring. Contest winners at each grade level have their work published in a district book.
- Research Gala: Students in the AIG program complete End-of-Year research projects and present them in May. These projects mirror senior project expectations.
- Scientist for the Day: High-ability students are invited to participate in Scientist for the Day events at the local research campus. Students shadow scientists and participate in hands-on experiments. These events are offered multiple times throughout the school year.







Communication about these opportunities is shared through AIG newsletters, social media, and email communication.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

To strengthen services across the K–12 continuum, Kannapolis City Schools is exploring ways to build teacher capacity in early grades by expanding professional development focused on identifying advanced potential and implementing differentiated strategies for young learners. The district is also considering how to refine progress monitoring for talent development students to ensure their growth is consistently tracked and used to inform potential identification decisions.

In addition, the district is reviewing current transition supports to enhance vertical alignment and ensure consistent academic and social-emotional support at key points between elementary, middle, and high school. As part of our commitment to expanded opportunities, we are also exploring the feasibility of subject acceleration in content areas beyond math and English, including science and social studies, for students who demonstrate exceptional readiness.

Planned Sources of Evidence	
* Grouping Presentation for Principals	
* 8th Grade Math 1/English 1 Letter	
* AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey	
* AIG/Talent Development Student Survey-Elementary	
* AIG/Talent Development Student Survey-Middle	
* High School CDM Guidelines	

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	 Grouping Presentation for Principals  8th grade Math 1/English 1 Letter  AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey.  AIG/Talent Development Student Survey-Elementary.  AIG/Talent Development Student Survey-Middle  High School CDM Guidelines

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

*** Practice A**

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

The district utilizes the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework for curriculum planning alongside the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Units are developed by certified district staff and made available to all teachers through the district website. Each unit includes an extension section offering resources, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) tasks, and further learning activities designed to differentiate and extend student learning based on readiness and performance.

The district encourages flexible instructional practices, including mastery-based advancement through rubrics, checklists, pre-assessments, and strategies such as Most Difficult First. Teachers are supported in differentiating pace, content, and product through small group instruction, independent study projects, and curriculum compacting. AIG Specialists collaborate regularly with PLC teams to assist teachers in planning extensions, developing performance tasks, and adjusting instruction to meet a range of advanced student needs.

At the high school level, teachers of Honors courses receive professional development aligned to the state's updated Honors course criteria, with emphasis on independent investigation, inquiry-based learning, intentional differentiation, and increased rigor. Course syllabi were revised to reflect these expectations. Access to acceleration pathways, including Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and Career and College Promise (CCP) courses, supports the academic needs of students requiring faster or deeper progression through curriculum standards.

In addition to differentiation within core classrooms at all grade levels, students identified through the AIG/Nurturing program are intentionally supported through curriculum extensions, PBLs, and critical thinking challenges throughout their academic careers:

- **Elementary K–3:** Students identified for talent development are supported through cluster and flexible grouping and differentiated instruction. Critical thinking skills are nurtured through resources such as the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum, used as an enrichment tool in small-group or whole-class settings based on student needs.
- **Elementary 4–5:** Students are supported through differentiated instruction and enrichment experiences provided via push-in and pull-out models. A range of resources—such as district-developed Problem-Based Learning units, Math Olympiad challenges, and reading extensions—are used flexibly to deepen understanding and extend grade-level standards. Instruction is tailored to students' areas of strength, readiness, and AIG identification. Independent study opportunities, inquiry-based tasks, and critical thinking challenges are incorporated throughout the year based on student need and instructional goals.
- **Middle School:** Instructional Coaches and AIG Specialists provide support for all teachers to differentiate to meet the needs of advanced learners in all core content areas. Additionally, students receive advanced curriculum options in Math and ELA based on demonstrated readiness. Instruction emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, curriculum compacting, and content extensions to increase the depth and complexity of the NC Standard Course of Study. The district provides professional development to middle school teachers of honors courses to support differentiation within advanced coursework, ensuring that students' academic needs are met beyond access alone.

- **High School:** Students pursue advanced coursework through Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and Career and College Promise (CCP) pathways. Instruction is differentiated through compacting, content extensions, accelerated pacing, and independent research aligned to students' strengths and interests. Talent development is further supported through mentoring, peer counseling, and internships.

Through these intentional strategies, the district ensures that students with advanced learning needs receive curriculum and instruction that both challenge and nurture their academic growth across all grade levels.

* **Practice B**

Uses students' identified abilities, readiness, and interests to address a range of learning needs K-12.

Building on the district's curriculum extension framework, staff—including AIG Specialists—use individual student data such as ability and achievement test scores, classroom performance, interest inventories, and observations to personalize instruction. This information is used to plan instructional approaches that reflect students' readiness levels, strengths, and interests, ensuring that all learners encounter appropriately challenging learning experiences. Grade-level teams and professional learning communities (PLCs) collaborate regularly to analyze student profiles and adapt instructional delivery, pacing, product expectations, and learning pathways.

To support differentiated instruction, the AIG Coordinator leads professional development such as "Meeting the Needs of Advanced Learners – In Any Content Area," emphasizing strategies for adjusting pace, complexity, product, and grouping based on student needs. This training also forms the basis for a local AIG professional learning module. In addition to formal sessions, the AIG Coordinator collaborates with instructional coaches to embed differentiation strategies into PLC planning and core classroom instruction, reinforcing consistent support for advanced learners across grade levels.

Teachers access a range of evidence-based resources through the district's Curriculum Resources Website to support ongoing differentiation. Strategies include extension menus, choice boards, tiered learning matrices, NCDPI Learning LABS, RAFT writing tasks, and discussion frameworks like Conver-stations and Socratic seminars. Staff are encouraged to pre-assess student mastery, implement flexible grouping based on readiness and interest, and continuously monitor progress to adjust instruction throughout the year.

Flexible practices also allow students to explore areas of personal passion while building mastery of grade-level and advanced standards. AIG Specialists work alongside classroom teachers to align enrichment activities with students' strengths and areas of identification, ensuring that differentiation is meaningful and connected to both readiness and interest.

- **Elementary K–5:** Students engage in flexible grouping, tiered assignments, project-based learning, independent study, and critical thinking challenges designed to extend learning based on individual ability levels and interests.
- **Middle School:** Students experience curriculum compacting, tiered tasks, inquiry-based learning, and extension opportunities in advanced and standard courses, with differentiation strategies tailored to students' readiness and learning profiles.
- **High School:** Students access advanced curriculum through Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and Career and College Promise (CCP) courses, with instruction differentiated through compacting, complexity, and independent research. High school students work with counselors to develop and review Career Development Plans, ensuring course selections and enrichment experiences align with their academic strengths, career aspirations, and personal interests. Additional opportunities, such as ACT/SAT preparation through Canvas, ACT Boot Camps, and Support Block sessions, reinforce readiness for postsecondary success.

Through these strategies, the district ensures that instructional practices consistently reflect students' identified abilities, readiness levels, and interests across all grade spans, providing appropriately challenging, personalized learning experiences.

*** Practice C**

Incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources that address the range of academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs of AIG students.

The district incorporates a variety of evidence-based resources to address the range of academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of AIG students. This approach is designed to enhance student learning while also supporting their overall well-being.

Academic and Intellectual Needs:

The district provides research-based instructional resources tailored for high-ability learners. These include:

- Reading: William and Mary Curriculum, Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs and Reading Groups by Harvey Daniels, AP Literature resources
- Math: Open Up, NC2ML, Investigations, Singapore Math, Beast Academy, Challenge Math, William and Mary Math Curriculum for Gifted Students, AP Math resources
- Other Areas: Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) resources (used as part of broader enrichment strategies), Problem-Based Learning, Independent Study, Tiered Assignments, NCDPI Learning Labs

To further support academic growth, an AIG library houses advanced novel sets for each grade level. AIG Specialists manage these resources and facilitate sign-outs for teachers as needed. Teacher input is gathered annually to identify and purchase new instructional materials. All recommended resources are reviewed by the district curriculum team, the AIG Coordinator, and the Director of PreK–12.

Social and Emotional Needs:

The district recognizes the importance of supporting the social-emotional development of AIG students across all grade levels. SEL services for all students are embedded within the district's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to ensure proactive, data-driven, and responsive support. Students participate in universal SEL screening using the DESSA (Devereux Student Strengths Assessment) to identify strengths and needs.

To meet the unique social-emotional needs of gifted learners, the district integrates a dedicated AIG social-emotional curriculum as a supplemental resource. Developed from research-based gifted education materials, this curriculum strengthens skills such as self-awareness, emotional intensity management, peer relationships, and perseverance. Core units include:

- What It Means to Be Gifted
- No One is Perfect
- WOW...Life Can Be Intense
- How to Be a Good Friend
- Being a Successful Human

AIG Specialists and classroom teachers incorporate lessons and strategies from this curriculum as needed, based on observations, DESSA data, and student needs, to extend SEL development beyond core programming.

Implementation of SEL supports is structured intentionally at each level:

- **K–5:** SEL support is embedded into enrichment activities, intervention blocks, and small group sessions through the MTSS process. Teachers deliver Second Step as the core curriculum, while AIG Specialists and Cluster Teachers integrate the AIG SEL curriculum as needed to address gifted learners' emotional growth and interpersonal skills. Project-based learning and enrichment activities also reinforce durable skills.
- **6–8:** Core SEL instruction is delivered through Second Step, with additional supports provided as needed using the AIG SEL curriculum in Honors coursework. Targeted small group sessions are utilized by through MTSS based on student data and SEL profiles.
- **9–12:** SEL instruction and interventions are driven by DESSA screening results and embedded within Flex Block and homeroom sessions under the MTSS framework. AIG Specialists and counselors collaborate to provide individualized supports focusing on resilience, self-advocacy, emotional regulation, and preparation for postsecondary success.

District counselors collaborate with the AIG Coordinator and work with AIG Specialists and Locally Endorsed teachers to deliver proactive and responsive SEL supports for advanced learners, ensuring that gifted students' affective needs are consistently addressed and nurtured across the K–12 continuum.

Resources for Implementation:

Instructional and professional resources are provided to support both students and educators, including:

Student Resources:

- 101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids by Christine Fonseca
- I'm Not Just Gifted: Social-Emotional Curriculum for Gifted Kids by Christine Fonseca
- Learning to be a Durable Person by Mary Hennefert
- The Grit Guide for Teens by Caren Baruch-Feldman
- The Gifted Teen Survival Guide by Judy Galbraith
- The Survival Guide for Gifted Kids by Judy Galbraith
- The Social and Emotional Gifted Teen Series by Ester Leutenberg

Professional Resources:

- Teaching Gifted Kids in Today's Classroom by Dina Brulles
- The Power of Self-Advocacy for Gifted Learners by Deb Douglas
- A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children by James Webb

These resources are made available through the AIG library and are accessible for checkout by staff. Links and references to key materials are included in curriculum documents and are discussed during PLC meetings to support instructional planning.

By combining evidence-based academic, intellectual, and social-emotional resources, the district ensures a comprehensive approach to supporting the diverse needs of AIG students, fostering both their academic excellence and personal growth.

* Practice D

Fosters the development of durable skills and mindsets which support post-secondary success. These skills include adaptability, collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, empathy, learner's mindset, and personal responsibility.

The district curriculum leaders intentionally foster the development of durable skills in students by embedding engaging lessons and real-world performance tasks and assessments into curriculum documents. Specifically, AIG Specialists regularly integrate Problem-Based Learning (PBL) experiences, Socratic Seminars, Math Olympiad problems, logic puzzles, and collaborative projects into their instruction to build critical and creative thinking, collaboration, and communication skills.

The district also offers a range of courses that promote creativity, communication, collaboration, curiosity, and critical thinking aligned to the durable skills outlined in the NC Portrait of a Graduate framework:

- STEM (K–12)
- Computer Science Discoveries/Robotics (6–8)
- Exploring Health Sciences (6–8)
- Life Skills: Exploring Interpersonal Relationships and Childcare (7th grade)
- Carpentry (9–12)
- Exploring Electrical Trades (8th grade)
- Project Lead the Way Engineering (9–12)
- Job Shadowing/Internships with community businesses (11–12)
- Peer Internship with Independent Learning Center (9–12)

The district promotes future-ready skills and leadership through community service projects, integrating civic responsibility and real-world problem-solving into advanced learner experiences:

- **Community Service Opportunities for Advanced Learners:** Participation is available through organizations such as National Junior Honor Society (middle school), National Honor Society, Junioresettes, Beta Club, National Technical Honor Society, and Tri-M Honor Society (high school). Students engage in meaningful service projects that benefit the community and develop leadership skills aligned to future academic and career success.
- **AIG Holiday Event (K–12):** Families of talent development and/or identified students donate presents for local students. Families collaborate to wrap gifts and create greeting cards, which are delivered by student volunteers to community centers and nursing homes prior to the December break.

The district also hosts two annual AIG family events designed to foster real-world skills in creativity, collaboration, and communication:

- **Rube Goldberg Event:** Families work together to use random materials to build machines that complete simple tasks, culminating in a mock competition.
- **Presentation Gala:** Students in grades 3–8 develop projects that mirror the expectations of the former NC Graduation Project, and present their work at an end-of-year Gala open to K–12 students, families, and community members.

Students are also encouraged to reflect on their growth in durable skills through project-based experiences and service opportunities, fostering greater self-awareness, adaptability, and a learner's mindset as they prepare for future academic and career pathways.

*** Practice E**

Uses ongoing assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction.

All grade levels meet weekly in PLCs to analyze data from district common interim assessments, NC Check-Ins, common formative assessments, pre-assessments, and classroom performance tasks. These assessments, intentionally selected or designed by PLCs, provide consistent measures of student understanding and readiness to guide differentiated instruction.

District teams use multiple assessment sources—including mCLASS, FastBridge, NC Check-Ins, PETS observations, and local classroom data—to tailor instructional decisions. Assessment results help determine scaffolding, extensions, compacting opportunities, pacing adjustments, and enrichment activities, ensuring instruction remains responsive to individual student needs.

To support differentiated instruction based on assessment data, the AIG Coordinator collaborates closely with instructional coaches at the elementary and middle school levels. Coaches meet weekly with PLCs to support data analysis and instructional planning. The AIG Coordinator meets quarterly with fourth- and fifth-grade teams to review student progress and adjust services, while supporting lower elementary teams as needed. Middle school AIG Specialists work with instructional coaches, who provide ongoing support to PLCs and coordinate professional development aligned to student needs.

Pre-assessments play a critical role in identifying students' prior knowledge and readiness before new units of study. Many PLCs adjust instructional groups based on pre-assessment and formative data, using flexible regrouping and cross-teaming as needed to maximize learning opportunities for advanced learners.

Through this ongoing, data-driven approach, the district ensures that curriculum and instruction are dynamically adjusted to meet the evolving academic and intellectual needs of gifted and advanced learners.

*** Practice F**

Collaborates with a variety of personnel, based on student needs, to implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.

It is a district priority to ensure that all students have access to high-quality, rigorous, aligned core instruction, differentiated to meet the needs of advanced learners. Differentiation is a non-negotiable expectation embedded in daily teaching practices across all grade levels. To ensure differentiation remains a consistent focus, AIG Specialists and Instructional Coaches collaborate regularly with instructional personnel at multiple levels to implement effective strategies and support gifted students.

The AIG Coordinator and/or Director of PreK–12 actively participate in district-wide planning by attending District Instructional Coach meetings and monthly leadership meetings. Through these engagements, they advocate for differentiation and ensure the district curriculum aligns with the academic and intellectual needs of gifted learners. The district's "KCS Instructional Leadership Team," which includes representatives from all departments and schools, regularly discusses and integrates strategies to support the advanced learning needs of AIG students across all grade levels.

At the school level, AIG Specialists and/or Instructional Coaches collaborate regularly with teachers and PLC teams to review student performance data, discuss flexible grouping, and plan advanced curriculum adjustments. During these meetings, staff help identify opportunities for acceleration, enrichment, and the incorporation of students' strengths and interests. Between scheduled meetings, AIG Specialists provide ongoing, individualized support to classroom teachers, sharing rigorous questioning strategies, advanced content resources, and differentiation tools designed to challenge all gifted learners, including

multilingual and twice-exceptional students. This collaboration ensures that differentiation is not only planned but also effectively implemented in daily classroom instruction.

The collaborative efforts between the AIG Coordinator, Director of PreK–12, AIG Specialists, Instructional Coaches, and classroom teachers ensure:

- Consistent districtwide discussions about differentiating curriculum and instruction for gifted learners.
- Advocacy for gifted students' academic needs, including opportunities for acceleration, interest-based learning, and advanced challenge.
- Development of effective differentiation strategies through professional learning and shared resources.
- Ongoing monitoring and refinement of instructional practices based on data analysis and student growth.

These collaborative relationships help shift the district mindset toward recognizing that gifted learners should not only meet proficiency standards but also experience ongoing growth and opportunities for talent development in their everyday learning experiences.

* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

To strengthen this standard, the district is exploring opportunities to more deeply embed differentiation strategies across all content areas and grade levels by expanding professional development and coaching cycles. We are considering enhanced tracking of differentiation practices through instructional walkthroughs and PLC reflections to monitor fidelity and impact. In alignment with the Portrait of a Graduate framework, we are exploring new ways to measure and reflect on students' development of durable skills through project-based tasks, peer feedback, and self-reflection tools.

Additionally, the district is working to more intentionally integrate AIG services within the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework. This includes defining enrichment and talent development as Tier 1 supports, flexible grouping and pull-out/push-in services as Tier 2, and advanced interventions such as cluster grouping, subject or grade acceleration, and individualized pathways as Tier 3 supports for students whose needs exceed the scope of core and supplemental instruction.

Planned Sources of Evidence





* 4th Grade PBL Curriculum

* 5th Grade PBL Curriculum

* MOEMS Problems Sequence

* AIG Social Emotional Curriculum

* Meeting the Needs of Advanced Learners - In Any Content Area PD

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>4th Grade PBL Curriculum</u>  <u>5th Grade PBL Curriculum</u>  <u>AIG Social Emotional Curriculum</u>  <u>Meeting the Needs of Advanced Learners - In Any Content Area PD</u>

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

*** Practice A**

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

Kannapolis City Schools employs an AIG-licensed educator as the lead coordinator of the district's AIG program. The Coordinator plays an essential role in guiding the planning, development, implementation, revision, and monitoring of services for gifted learners across the K–12 continuum. Responsibilities include:

- Supporting the development and monitoring of cluster groups, flexible grouping practices, and differentiated instruction at the elementary level through collaboration with instructional coaches and school administrators.
- Facilitating PLCs with AIG Specialists across the district.
- Developing and delivering the local gifted professional learning module.
- Providing professional learning opportunities for district staff.
- Collaboration with instructional coaches and content specialists for the purpose of developing and implementing enrichment resources for use in differentiated clusters and flexible pull-out or push-in services.
- Integrating the district's AIG Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum into services across the K–12 continuum.
- Developing and updating PBL, enrichment, and SEL curriculum materials for the district AIG program.
- Collaborating with instructional coaches at the elementary and middle school levels to support PLCs in planning for differentiation, enrichment, extensions, and flexible grouping practices for high-ability students, with a focus on upper elementary and additional grades as needed.
- Overseeing district-wide screening, referral, and identification processes for AIG services.
- Communicating with school testing coordinators and monitoring the AIG testing process.
- Maintaining documentation on identified and talent development students, including DEPs and testing results letters.
- Creating, updating, and monitoring the review cycle for all district DEPs.
- Attending regional and state conferences to stay current on best practices in gifted education.
- Serving on the District Alignment Team, advocating for gifted learners and ensuring appropriate instructional supports.

- Developing and revising the district AIG strategic plan, and reviewing it regularly with the Director of PreK–12 and Assistant Superintendent.
- Organizing and maintaining the district AIG Advisory Board to gather stakeholder feedback and guide program improvements.
- Coordinating and hosting annual family events for the AIG community.
- Publishing AIG newsletters for families at least once each semester.
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of AIG services across schools.
- Collaborating with counselors regarding course placement and scheduling for identified students.
- Monitoring and managing the AIG budget to support resources, professional learning, and program needs.
- Working with the technology department to maintain and update the district AIG website and providing assistance to other district web platforms as needed.
- Reviewing and revising district AIG forms annually to ensure clarity and consistency.
- Developing and administering teacher and parent surveys, analyzing data, and disseminating results to inform program planning.
- Facilitating implementation of talent development practices and maintaining documentation on subgroup service and progress data.
- Meeting regularly with the district Curriculum and Instruction team, administrators, and instructional coaches to align gifted programming with broader instructional initiatives.
- Writing, implementing, monitoring, and revising the district AIG Plan based on feedback and ongoing program review.
- Reporting regularly to the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of PreK–12, and the Kannapolis City Schools Board of Education regarding the status of gifted services and program outcomes.

*** Practice B**

Engages AIG-licensed specialists in tasks that explicitly address the academic, intellectual, and social and emotional needs of K-12 AIG students and supports the implementation of the local AIG program and plan.

Kannapolis City Schools employs three AIG-licensed specialists (two at the middle school level, one at the high school level) whose responsibilities are designed to address the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of AIG students while supporting the consistent implementation of the district's AIG program and plan. The AIG Coordinator directly supports K–5 services by working with instructional coaches, administrators, and cluster teachers to develop and monitor enrichment and differentiation opportunities.

Middle School Gifted Specialist – Grade 6

- Serve as a dedicated gifted specialist for 6th grade, providing direct instruction in either advanced Math or ELA to identified AIG and high-ability students.
- Collaborate with teachers across content areas to differentiate instruction for advanced learners.
- Develop and implement Honors-level curriculum aligned with district expectations and Portrait of a Graduate durable skills.

- Support underperforming high-ability students to promote growth and ensure readiness for advanced high school coursework..
- Communicate with parents regarding student progress, academic needs, and learning plans.
- Collaborate with the AIG Coordinator to lead and deliver school-based professional development focused on best practices in gifted education.
- Meet regularly with the AIG Coordinator and/or Academic Coach to support program alignment and service implementation.
- Support school site needs as requested by administration.

Middle School Gifted Specialist – Grades 7–8

- Serve as a dedicated gifted specialist for 7th and 8th grades, providing direct instruction in either advanced Math or ELA to identified AIG and high-ability students.
- Collaborate with classroom teachers across subject areas to differentiate instruction for advanced learners.
- Develop and implement advanced curriculum extensions aligned with district expectations and Portrait of a Graduate durable skills.
- Support underperforming high-ability students as needed to promote academic growth and readiness for high school coursework.
- Communicate with parents regarding student progress, academic needs, and enrichment opportunities.
- Collaborate with the AIG Coordinator to lead and deliver school-based professional development focused on meeting the needs of advanced learners.
- Meet regularly with the AIG Coordinator and/or Academic Coach to monitor program implementation and instructional strategies.
- Support school site needs as requested by administration.

High School AIG Specialist

- Serve as part of the school counseling team to support the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional development of AIG and high-ability students.
- Assist students with course selection, Honors/AP/CCP enrollment, and Career Development Plans, in collaboration with grade-level counselors.
- Coordinate the AP Distinction Program, including supporting AP course scheduling, monitoring curriculum alignment, and collaborating with AP teachers.
- Assist students with scholarship applications, Governor's School applications, and other advanced academic opportunities.
- Address the social-emotional needs of advanced learners, including academic stress, perfectionism, and underachievement.
- Maintain DEP documentation and collaborate on referrals, scheduling, and service adjustments.
- Meet quarterly with the AIG Coordinator to review program implementation and student outcomes.
- Support school site needs as requested by administration and ensure AIG students have equitable access to advanced learning pathways.

Department Collaboration, SEL Integration, and Professional Growth

All AIG Specialists, along with the AIG Coordinator, meet six times annually as a district AIG PLC to review service implementation, share professional learning, and monitor program progress. Specialists are expected to collaborate with teachers and administrators as needed to strengthen differentiation practices, enhance AIG service delivery, and refine programming. Participation in regional, state, and national professional development opportunities is highly encouraged to maintain and extend professional expertise. AIG Specialists also support the integration of the district's AIG Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum through small-group instruction, check-ins with students, and collaboration with counselors to address the social and emotional needs of advanced learners.

*** Practice C**

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

Professional development is a critical component of ensuring that all stakeholders understand and effectively support the needs of AIG students. The district provides ongoing training for classroom teachers, instructional specialists, student services personnel, and school administrators to build capacity in gifted education and differentiation practices.

At the beginning of each school year, all district staff participate in expectation review meetings held through staff meetings and PLC or curriculum meetings. These sessions serve as an introduction or refresher on AIG identification, referral, and screening procedures, as well as the curriculum and service model used to meet the needs of gifted learners. The roles of AIG Specialists are also reviewed, and the AIG Coordinator provides an overview of differentiation and flexible grouping expectations within the district. To ensure continuous support, teachers are encouraged to request assistance from AIG Specialists at any time.

High school teachers assigned to teach Advanced Placement (AP) courses are required to complete professional development through the North Carolina AP Partnership to ensure they are equipped to meet the rigorous expectations of AP coursework. Teachers instructing Honors courses must also attend two professional learning sessions focused on designing courses that meet the state's criteria for Honors-level instruction and effectively serve advanced learners.

Beyond these requirements, the district offers all staff the opportunity to participate in a local gifted education professional learning module, which is a 10-month hybrid course consisting of online and face-to-face components. This course provides in-depth training on essential topics related to gifted education, including:

1. Gifted 101: Introduction to Gifted Policies and Practice
2. Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Children
3. Addressing Different Learning Styles Through Choice
4. Increasing Rigor in the Classroom
5. Growth Mindset
6. Tailoring Instruction Through Differentiation
7. Parenting a Gifted Child
8. Problem-Based Learning and Technology
9. Being an Advocate for Gifted Children

10. Taking the Gifted Education Praxis

In addition, elementary teachers assigned to cluster groups of advanced learners, as well as middle school teachers assigned to Honors sections, are strongly encouraged to complete the district's local gifted education professional learning module to build capacity in differentiation, enrichment planning, and flexible grouping for advanced learners.

In addition to classroom teachers and administrators, instructional specialists and student services personnel receive targeted professional development to ensure they can effectively support AIG students in their respective roles. Instructional specialists, including interventionists and instructional coaches, participate in professional learning focused on differentiation strategies, flexible grouping, and curriculum compacting. These skills allow them to collaborate with classroom teachers in implementing effective gifted strategies within core instruction.

Student services personnel, including school counselors, social workers, and psychologists, receive annual professional development that specifically addresses the social-emotional needs of AIG students. These sessions focus on issues such as perfectionism, anxiety, underachievement, and motivation, as well as the needs of twice-exceptional (2e) students. By equipping student services personnel with this knowledge, the district ensures that AIG students receive appropriate academic and emotional support.

Administrators also play a vital role in the success of AIG programs, and as such, they receive professional development on AIG identification, differentiation best practices, and program monitoring. This training helps ensure that gifted services are effectively implemented across schools and that administrators can advocate for and support differentiation within classrooms.

The district remains committed to integrating gifted education training into professional development for all staff. In alignment with the 2025 district strategic plan, the AIG Coordinator collaborates with the Assistant Superintendent, Director of PreK-12, and MTSS Coordinator to embed training on AIG students into broader professional learning initiatives. The district also leverages NCDPI Advanced Learning and Gifted Education resources and ensures that professional development includes training on supporting gifted multilingual learners and twice-exceptional students.

To further strengthen professional learning, AIG Specialists provide direct training, modeling, and coaching on differentiation strategies for teachers. The district also gathers feedback from staff through annual surveys, which guide the selection of future professional development topics. Participation in professional learning is monitored through PD logs, administrator observations, and educator feedback, ensuring that training remains relevant and effective in meeting the needs of AIG students.

* Practice D

Provides general education services by personnel who have earned an AIG add-on license or have met the LEA requirements for that position.

To ensure that gifted and high-ability learners receive appropriate and consistent instructional support, administrators are strongly encouraged and supported in the following practices:

- Create a master schedule that provides a structure for strategic flexible grouping based on students' instructional needs.
- Place gifted clusters of students with teachers who have either their state AIG certification or have completed the local professional learning module.
- Strongly encourage teachers with advanced clusters of students to complete the local gifted education professional learning module to enhance their ability to meet the needs of advanced learners.

If clusters of gifted students are placed with teachers who do not yet hold an AIG add-on license or have not yet completed the local endorsement, the AIG Coordinator supports instructional coaches in providing intentional, ongoing professional development throughout the year within PLCs and collaborative

planning sessions. This training focuses on differentiation, best instructional practices for gifted students, effective grouping, and choice product development, ensuring that all teachers working with gifted students understand how to adjust instruction to meet the needs of advanced learners.

At both the beginning and end of each school year, administrators are provided with a list of state-certified and locally trained staff to guide student placement decisions. This same list is shared with the school board at the end of each school year, where teachers who have completed the local professional learning module are recognized during the closing board meeting.

Furthermore, staff members with expertise in gifted education are also encouraged to lead and model gifted instructional best practices within their PLCs and collaborative planning sessions, ensuring that differentiation and enrichment strategies for gifted learners remain a priority across all schools.

*** Practice E**

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

At the start of each school year, the AIG Coordinator recruits teachers, including those of diverse backgrounds, by notifying all teachers, support staff, and administrators about the opportunity to participate in the district's local AIG endorsement course. This information is shared through email communication and during opening staff meetings. Teachers are informed that the course is provided at no cost, offers CEU credit, and is directly applicable to their classroom instruction.

To promote enrollment, teachers are shown the current list of locally endorsed staff and encouraged to speak with colleagues who have previously completed the course. Teachers who completed the course in prior years are invited to share their reflections, and anonymous feedback from previous participants is also shared to highlight the course's impact and value. Teachers who complete the course are encouraged to take the Gifted Education Praxis exam, with the final session of the course offering guidance on registration and preparation strategies.

The AIG Coordinator meets with principals each year to discuss the recruitment of teachers from diverse backgrounds into the local endorsement program, in order to promote broader representation among staff supporting gifted learners.

Additionally, the AIG Coordinator shares information annually with all staff about the Online Graduate Certificate in Academically or Intellectually Gifted Education available through a local university, providing a pathway for teachers interested in pursuing a formal AIG add-on licensure.

To support retention, AIG-licensed teachers—both those with state certification and those with local endorsement—are offered opportunities to serve as leaders in gifted education professional development. They are also notified of any new AIG positions within the district and encouraged to apply, ensuring that experienced, knowledgeable educators continue to advance the district's gifted education initiatives.

*** Practice F**

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

Ensuring that the total school community is aware of and supportive of the district's evolving model—where gifted education is embedded into daily instruction and not limited only to separate services—is a priority for Knapolls City Schools. The district has taken intentional steps to increase access and opportunity for advanced learners, ensuring that students' demographic or other factors do not limit their participation in advanced programming or their ability to reach their full potential. AIG professional learning opportunities focus on recognizing student strengths across diverse backgrounds and promoting equitable access to services.

The district provides multiple avenues of professional learning to support this work:

- **Professional Learning for All Staff:**

During opening staff meetings and ongoing district professional development days, the AIG Coordinator provides training on the multiple pathways for identification, the rationale for using the NNAT and Gifted Rating Scale to equitably identify potential across populations, and the district's comprehensive talent development model. Staff are informed of the district's policy to intentionally consider the top 20% of grade level peer groups using local norms and how flexible grouping and reassessment throughout the year allow services to adjust based on student growth and demonstrated need. These sessions emphasize a mindset shift in which every classroom is seen as a place where gifted learners can be challenged through differentiated, enriched instruction embedded in the core curriculum. Additional sessions on gifted education practices are provided upon administrative request throughout the year.

- **PLC Meetings:**

The AIG Coordinator and instructional coaches collaborate with PLCs to bring gifted education expertise into instructional planning. Focus areas include aligning curriculum with advanced learner needs, developing performance tasks that extend thinking, analyzing student data to guide flexible grouping, and implementing appropriate interventions. PLC support reinforces the district's commitment to changing day-to-day instructional practices to promote both equity and excellence, and redefining gifted education as a shared instructional responsibility, not a standalone program.

- **AIG Local Endorsement Course:**

The district's year-long hybrid gifted education course builds deep capacity among staff, preparing participants to understand the district's procedures, talent development pathways, and service models. Participants learn to address both the academic and social-emotional needs of advanced learners and design research-based extensions and differentiation strategies for use in daily instruction.

- **Parent Education and Involvement:**

The district engages families through AIG parent meetings and events, where the AIG Coordinator provides information about identification pathways, service models, and talent development strategies. Feedback from families is gathered and used to refine programming. Additional parent sessions focus on understanding the academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs of gifted learners, fostering a shared partnership in student success.

These professional learning efforts are further enhanced through the use of resources such as the DPI Equity and Excellence Call to Action Guidebook, research and strategies gathered from regional and state conferences, collaboration with neighboring districts, and ongoing communication with the Advanced Learning and Gifted Education division at NCDPI. Through these strategies, Kannapolis City Schools continues to build a strong, sustainable culture of equity and excellence in gifted education.

* **Practice G**

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

The district's AIG professional development opportunities align with AIG program goals, best practices in gifted education, and broader district instructional initiatives to ensure all educators are equipped to effectively support advanced learners. These opportunities build capacity in differentiation, curriculum development, social-emotional support, and the integration of gifted strategies into daily instruction.

1. Alignment with AIG Program Goals: The AIG program centers on three primary goals: expanding access to gifted education for students of all backgrounds, cultivating critical thinking using a research-based framework, and providing a strong system of social-emotional and instructional support for advanced learners.

Professional development is embedded within district structures to support these goals. Foundational training is delivered at the start of each year during PLCs and staff development sessions, covering identification procedures, differentiation strategies, and social-emotional needs of gifted students. The district's local gifted education professional learning module offers deeper exploration of these topics to ensure educators have access to sustained, in-depth training.

2. Integration of Best Practices in Gifted Education: The district's AIG program integrates research-based strategies such as progress monitoring for high-ability students, flexible grouping, differentiated instruction, and problem-based learning.

Teachers participate in ongoing PLCs and data meetings where AIG Specialists and Instructional Coaches facilitate discussions focused on student progress, curriculum adjustments, and differentiation. Site-based instructional coaches, in collaboration with the AIG Coordinator and Director of PreK–12, ensure consistent implementation of gifted strategies across schools.

The AIG local endorsement course deepens participants' understanding of gifted education best practices, enabling them to refine their instructional approaches and share strategies within their schools.

To further support curriculum development, the AIG Coordinator collaborates with the Director of PreK-12 to schedule curriculum review and writing sessions for Honors and AP teachers. These sessions provide an opportunity to refine instructional practices, develop performance tasks, and ensure alignment with both state standards and rigorous academic expectations. The AIG Coordinator also leads discussions on the characteristics of gifted learners and strategies for addressing their needs in the regular classroom.

Additionally, the district has established a Team Drive where teachers can store and share assignments, extension activities, and instructional resources. The AIG Coordinator regularly reviews these materials, integrates them into district curriculum documents, and highlights effective strategies during PLC meetings to encourage widespread adoption of best practices.

3. Connection to District Initiatives: The district's AIG professional development opportunities are fully aligned with the district's overarching instructional initiatives, particularly in the areas of Engaging, Aligned Core Instruction, Differentiated Core Instruction, and Data-Driven Instruction.

- **Engaging, Aligned Core Instruction:** The AIG program supports high-quality, engaging instruction that aligns with district curriculum expectations. Through professional development on problem-based learning, inquiry-driven instruction, and curriculum compacting, teachers are equipped to provide meaningful, challenging, and engaging learning experiences that maintain alignment with district standards and expectations. The AIG Coordinator collaborates with curriculum leaders to ensure that advanced learning strategies are seamlessly integrated into core instruction.
- **Differentiated Core Instruction:** Differentiation is a key component of AIG services, and the district provides multiple opportunities for educators to refine their skills in this area. The AIG Coordinator and AIG Specialists facilitate workshops on tiered instruction, curriculum compacting, and flexible grouping, ensuring that teachers can effectively adapt their instruction to meet the needs of AIG students. Professional learning also includes targeted training on supporting twice-exceptional (2e) students and multilingual gifted learners.
- **Data-Driven Instruction:** The district is committed to using data to drive instructional decisions for all students, including AIG learners. Quarterly data meetings provide opportunities for PLCs to analyze student performance, identify academic trends, and develop differentiated learning plans. The AIG Coordinator collaborates with instructional leaders to ensure that high-ability students receive appropriate challenges and interventions based on their assessment data.

Beyond internal professional development, the district supports ongoing learning opportunities through state and national conferences, as well as regional collaboration with neighboring districts. AIG Specialists leverage the NCDPI Booster Shots, research-based strategies from conferences, and advanced learning initiatives to refine their practices and share new insights with district staff.

At the conclusion of each school year, teachers are surveyed to assess the effectiveness of their gifted education training and identify areas for improvement. This feedback is used to refine professional learning offerings and ensure that professional development remains responsive to the needs of educators and students.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

To strengthen personnel and professional development, the district is considering options for extending gifted-specific training beyond the local AIG endorsement course. This could include advanced sessions on differentiation, curriculum compacting, and supporting twice-exceptional or multilingual learners. Aligning future offerings with existing coaching and PD structures is also being explored.

Additionally, the district is reflecting on ways to more fully utilize locally certified AIG teachers in leadership roles—such as mentoring, PLC support, or instructional modeling. As MTSS integration continues, there may be opportunities to further clarify how gifted services connect to Tiered supports, including strategies like flexible grouping and acceleration.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG Local Certification Brochure	
* District list of AIG Certified and Locally Endorsed Staff	
* KCS Advanced Learning Parent Meeting	

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>AIG Local Certification Brochure</u>
		 <u>KCS Advanced Learning Parent Meeting</u>

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

*** Practice A**

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

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

The district develops intentional, two-way partnerships with parents and families to support the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of AIG students. These partnerships are designed to actively involve parents in shaping the AIG program while keeping them informed and supported.

Two-Way Partnership Framework

The district has established a Parent Advisory Board to facilitate collaboration with families. This group meets regularly to discuss the needs of AIG students, plan events, and contribute to program development. Feedback from parents is collected through surveys, informal conversations at events, and other opportunities to ensure diverse perspectives are included. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and share their expertise, which helps create a more inclusive and enriched program for all students. For example:

- **Feedback Collection:** Surveys distributed at the end of each school year ask parents about their children's academic and social-emotional needs, as well as their ideas for future events and services. Informal feedback is also gathered during events, allowing parents to share concerns and suggestions in real-time.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** Parents are invited to share their areas of expertise and interests via surveys. This information is used to identify potential guest speakers, workshop facilitators, and volunteers for student activities and events. Parents can also volunteer to assist with programming.
- **Collaborative Event Planning:** The Parent Advisory Board collaborates with the district to plan events based on the feedback collected. These events are designed to address both academic/intellectual and social/emotional needs, ensuring that they meet the holistic needs of AIG students.

Addressing Academic and Intellectual Needs

The district hosts events throughout the year that support the academic and intellectual development of AIG students while providing opportunities for family involvement. These events include:

1. **Research Gala:** During the spring, AIG students in grades 3-8 present interest-based research projects they developed with AIG specialists. Projects range from creative endeavors (e.g., backyard getaways, ecosystem models) to professional-style presentations (e.g., new inventions, TED Talks).

Parents and families are invited to celebrate their students' accomplishments and engage with their work. Awards are presented to recognize student effort and achievement.

2. Quarterly Newsletters: High school students and families receive quarterly newsletters featuring important academic dates (e.g., SAT/ACT schedules), scholarship opportunities, and resources for college and career readiness. Tips and articles addressing the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted students are included to provide parents with tools for supporting their children at home.
3. Alumni Event: High school AIG students and parents are invited to an annual alumni networking event. Alumni share career and life experiences, providing inspiration and guidance to current students. Parents gain insights into post-secondary opportunities and pathways for gifted learners.

Addressing Social-Emotional Needs

The district recognizes the importance of social-emotional development for AIG students and provides events designed to foster community and peer connections, including:

1. AIG Holiday Event: Families and students come together in the winter to donate, wrap, and deliver presents for K-5 students in need. The event includes breakfast, holiday music, and opportunities for families to connect with one another. Older students deliver the presents and engage younger students in activities such as reading, card-making, and games, promoting empathy and social bonding.
2. Rube Goldberg Creation Night: In the spring, families collaborate to build Rube Goldberg machines. The district provides materials, and families contribute their own supplies, fostering teamwork and creativity.
3. Parent Support: Based on survey feedback, the district will offer parent workshops and/or discussion groups focusing on topics such as growing gifted learners at home, addressing perfectionism, and managing stress. Translators will be available at all events to ensure inclusivity and support for families of multilingual learners.

Ensuring Inclusivity and Accessibility

To overcome potential barriers to participation, the district takes the following measures:

- Translators are available at informational events to support families of multilingual learners.
- Surveys and newsletters are available in multiple languages to ensure all families can provide feedback and stay informed.

Continuous Improvement and Program Development

The district values parent input and uses it to continuously improve AIG programming. Feedback collected through surveys and events is analyzed to identify trends and areas for improvement. The Parent Advisory Board plays a critical role in implementing changes and developing new initiatives based on this feedback.

By fostering two-way partnerships with families, the district ensures that the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of AIG students are met in a holistic and inclusive manner. These partnerships create a strong foundation for collaboration, benefiting students, families, and the broader school community.

*** Practice B**

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

Kannapolis City Schools (KCS) partners with local businesses, institutions of higher education, and community organizations to enhance AIG programs and services. Guided by the District Career Development Continuum, these partnerships provide AIG students with enrichment, extension, and acceleration opportunities while fostering professional growth for staff. Through these efforts, KCS ensures equitable access to experiences that prepare students for academic and career success.

Enrichment and Real-World Application

KCS provides AIG students with career-connected learning that bridges academic content with real-world experience. These partnerships allow students to explore career paths, develop professional skills, and gain early exposure to post-secondary opportunities:

- College and Career Exploration: Students visit Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC), including the Advanced Technology Center, for hands-on learning in high-demand fields. The high school also hosts a college fair for juniors and seniors to connect with higher education institutions.
- Scientist for a Day (Grades 4–12): In collaboration with the NC Research Campus, students conduct STEM experiments and engage with professional researchers in a Tier 1 academic setting.
- Career Awareness and Exploration (Grades 5–8): Activities include guest speakers, job shadowing, and partnerships with companies like Wayne Brothers and Ketchie, giving students meaningful exposure to a range of professions.
- Internships and Job Shadowing (Grades 9–12): AIG students complete real-world internships with local businesses, including veterinary offices, law firms, hospitals, and more, earning academic credit while gaining professional experience.
- College Coaches: Employed by a local community college, college coaches lead tours, organize job shadowing, and help students with personalized post-secondary planning.
- "Looks Like Me" Initiative: Led by the Special Populations Coordinator, this program connects AIG students with mentors who reflect their backgrounds, helping to expand aspirations and break down barriers to access.
- College and Career Signing Day: An annual celebration organized by the High School AIG Specialist and CTE Coordinator to recognize seniors' post-secondary plans with participation from families and community partners.

Acceleration Opportunities

KCS also ensures that academically advanced students have access to accelerated learning pathways. Through a partnership with North Carolina Virtual Public Schools (NCVPS), middle and high school students can take advanced online courses beyond those offered locally. High school students may also participate in dual enrollment with RCCC or apply to the Early College High School program, allowing them to earn college credits during high school. The AIG Coordinator, middle school guidance counselors, and high school AIG Specialist provide information and support for students entering these programs.

Community Collaboration

KCS builds meaningful relationships with community organizations to increase outreach, engagement, and support for AIG students and families. The AIG Coordinator schedules regular meetings with the district's Director of Community Partnerships to strengthen connections with local groups, expand communication efforts with multilingual families, and promote awareness of AIG events and opportunities. Community involvement enhances program quality by providing mentorship, authentic experiences, and expanded perspectives for gifted learners.

* Practice C

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

The district has an established advisory board representative of the demographics in the district as well as representative of all levels of services (elementary, middle, and high) in the district. The Advisory Board includes: Parents of AIG and Talent Development students, the AIG Coordinator, other instructional district support, and community members. Other AIG Specialists, while not members of the Advisory Board, meet with the AIG Coordinator prior to all Advisory Board meetings to share their concerns or information parents should know, as well as receive updates from previous Advisory board meetings.

The Advisory Board is tasked with reviewing the AIG plan during plan renewal years (looking at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth, and threats to ideas for each standard, as well as reviewing the plan draft for clarity and grammar), revising the services brochure and other information sent home with students (i.e. parent flipbook, DEP form, surveys), and giving insight into necessary changes in district programming, policy, and communication. The Advisory Board also helps with the facilitation of the annual community AIG information session (held for all parents in the district whether their child is identified or not) and are tasked with being the voice in the community for the AIG program.

The Advisory Board members are invited to participate based on administration and AIG Specialist recommendations and are asked to give one year of guaranteed participation when they accept. Communication about the advisory board and letters of invitation are translated to the parent's native language, and translators will attend the meeting if the request is made by the parent on the letter.

Advisory Board members receive an invitation letter outlining their role EACH year they are invited to be an Advisory Board member. Once accepting an invitation to the Advisory Board, members are invited to remain on the Advisory Board for the length of their child's academic career in the district unless a conflict of interest develops and district administration meets with the Advisory Board member about no longer being a member.

* Practice D

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

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

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

The district utilizes numerous avenues to share information about the local AIG program, the local AIG plan, program services, district policies and opportunities regarding gifted education in the district.

1. Services Communication and Consent: All families of newly identified AIG students receive a detailed letter outlining their child's gifted identification and the district's available services. The letter includes a request for consent to participate in the AIG program and an invitation to collaborate on developing the

child's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). Families are also invited to attend an orientation meeting hosted by the AIG Coordinator, where they can learn more about AIG services, ask questions, and receive guidance on supporting their child's learning needs. Families of elementary students served through the district's talent development pathway, including those placed in cluster groups or supported through flexible grouping, also receive a letter explaining the purpose and scope of the service, along with a consent form. Similarly, families of middle school students placed in honors coursework but not formally identified as AIG are provided with a letter detailing the honors placement, the honors pathway, and a request for consent. These communications ensure transparency and foster collaboration between the district and families.

2. District Advanced Learning Informational Meeting: At the beginning of each school year, the district hosts a District Advanced Learning Informational Meeting for families interested in learning about AIG policies, procedures, and access to advanced learning opportunities. This event is promoted to all families in the district. This comprehensive session outlines the K-12 scope of services, including AIG identification processes and pathways and the talent development philosophy. The meeting concludes with a Q&A segment, allowing families to raise individual concerns and seek further clarification. To ensure inclusivity, additional resources are made available for families unable to attend in person. Communication about this meeting is sent through email and the district's social media to all families. Translators are available at the event so all families can access the information.

3. District Services Brochure: This brochure shares information on identification in the district, includes a glossary of identification codes, explains the services provided at each level of education in the district (elementary, middle, and high), and lists other opportunities available for students with high-ability. This brochure is shared at parent meetings, available at the Central Office, posted on the website, and available at all schools for new enrollment purposes. There are English and Spanish versions of the brochure available.

4. AIG District Webpage: The district webpage welcomes all families in the district to learn more about district AIG programming and policy. The webpage provides contact information for all district specialists, gives stakeholders access to the district AIG plan, provides resources for parents, shares the district grievance policy, and provides access to all parent forms used in the district. Curriculum links, when available, are also shared through this website.

5. AIG Facebook Group/Class Dojo/Connect Ed/Email: All of these methods of communication are used to share information with parents about upcoming district events, opportunities being provided for students, surveys, and to give a heads-up about paperwork that is being sent home (i.e. report cards, event information, forms).

6. Newsletters: The AIG Coordinator sends a newsletter on a quarterly basis to share highlights from the quarter, updates on the AIG program (survey results, data collected, changes to programming), information on upcoming units, links to surveys, and relevant upcoming events. Newsletters are developed using an online tool and are sent through email and shared on social media, in addition to being linked on the district website.

Using the avenues previously explained, the district keeps parents/guardians informed on an ongoing basis. Documentation and communication is translated into students' native language through collaboration with district translators and translation capacities of technology used (the district website, Gmail, Class Dojo and the newsletter all have language translation features).






To ensure that all parents are informed of district programming and policies, the AIG Coordinator maintains a list of contact information for all students receiving AIG services in the district. This list is continuously updated and verified with AIG Specialists each time the AIG Coordinator runs district headcount. These avenues of information sharing are reviewed at quarterly parent events to ensure as many parents as possible are aware of district programming and policies.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

Kannapolis City Schools is exploring ways to strengthen partnerships with both families and the community by offering more frequent parent education opportunities, particularly around topics such as supporting gifted learners at home, navigating services, and addressing social-emotional needs. The district is also considering ways to expand community engagement by cultivating new partnerships with local businesses and organizations that can provide authentic enrichment and mentorship experiences for students.

Planned Sources of Evidence

*	Ways to Stay Informed Parent Letter	
*	Research Gala Flyer	
*	AIG Holiday Family Event	
*	AIG Advisory Letter	
*	3rd Quarter KCS Advanced Learning Newsletter	

Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>Ways to Stay Informed Parent Letter</u>  <u>Research Gala Flyer</u>  <u>AIG Holiday Family Event</u>  <u>Rube Goldberg Event</u>  <u>3rd Quarter KCS Advanced Learning Newsletter</u>

Kannapolis City Schools (132) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Standard 6: Program Accountability

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

*** Practice A**

Develops a written AIG plan to describe the local AIG program, in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy (N.C.G.S. §115C-150.5-.8 {Article 9B}), based on a comprehensive program evaluation. This Local AIG Plan has been approved by the local board of education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

In alignment with state legislation and SBE policy (N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-.8 [Article 9B]), the district develops and revises an AIG plan every three years, informed by a comprehensive program evaluation. This plan outlines the district's AIG programming, policies, and strategies for implementation.

In a plan rewrite year, two teams of reviewers, the KCS AIG Plan Steering Committee and the Parent Advisory Board, work collaboratively to review and update the district plan. The KCS AIG Plan Steering Committee, which consists of the AIG Coordinator, AIG Specialists, and the Director of PreK-12, completes a self-assessment of the program using the state self-reflection document and develops a list of implementation examples for each state standard. These findings, along with feedback from parent and teacher surveys, are shared with the Parent Advisory Board. The Parent Advisory Board, which consists of parents and the AIG Coordinator, analyzes these inputs, conducts a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for each standard, and develops recommendations to improve the program.

Using feedback from both teams, the AIG Coordinator drafts the district plan following the DPI framework. The draft is reviewed by district leadership, including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Director PreK-12, as well as the KCS AIG Plan Steering Committee and Advisory Board. Feedback is incorporated into the draft to ensure clarity, alignment with district and state policies, and feasibility of implementation.

Once finalized, the AIG Coordinator prepares an executive summary and presents the plan to the local school board. The school board will have one month to review the plan and provide feedback. The AIG Coordinator then provides a final presentation of the plan to the school board for approval. Changes are made accordingly and a plan re-write is shared if necessary. After approval, the district submits the plan to the state for review and comment. State-requested adjustments are addressed by the AIG Coordinator and shared with relevant stakeholders as needed.

The AIG plan serves as a foundation for continuous program evaluation during its implementation. The KCS AIG Plan Steering Committee and Advisory Board monitor program effectiveness by reviewing trends in survey data, analyzing the alignment of AIG practices with district goals and state policies, and considering current research and updates from state coordinator meetings. Adjustments to the plan are proposed when necessary to the District Alignment team, ensuring its relevance and alignment with district priorities.

When alignment between district and AIG program practices does not exist and/or other feedback or data show revisions to the plan are necessary, the AIG Coordinator meets with the Steering Committee as well as the Advisory Board to discuss and create a proposal for the necessary changes. Proposed changes are presented to the District Alignment Team for review, then the AIG Coordinator shares the recommended changes with the local school board. The changes do not take effect until the local school board approves the changes. If the changes are still effective when the next district plan is written, the approved changes will be incorporated into the plan revision cycle. This process ensures the plan evolves in alignment with district goals, state policies, and research-based best practices.

*** Practice B**

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

The AIG Coordinator, with the support of the Director of PreK-12, is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the local AIG plan and ensuring the fidelity of implementation is upheld. Multiple methods are utilized to monitor plan implementation, including:

- **Surveys:**

At the close of each school year, the AIG department will send a "Plan Survey" to teachers, students, and parents to evaluate the implementation of the plan. The same survey will be used at the close of the 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27 school years to evaluate the 2025-2028 district AIG plan. Survey results will be compared each year and used to make changes to the current and/or future plans.

- **PLC Meetings:**

- AIG Specialists will consult with professional learning communities (PLCs) across the district at least quarterly and as needed, focusing on intentional discussions about supporting AIG students and implementing AIG programming. They will provide strategies for differentiation, review student data, and address specific needs for gifted learners within the PLCs.
- Feedback collected from PLCs by the AIG Specialists will be shared with the AIG Coordinator, who will analyze the data to identify trends and develop recommendations for programming. These recommendations will then be shared with school leadership and district teams during District Alignment Team meetings.

- **Curriculum and Administrative Meetings:**

- The AIG Coordinator will provide monthly updates to the District Alignment Team, sharing information about AIG program implementation, evaluation, and strategies for improvement.
 - The AIG Coordinator will attend Cabinet, Curriculum, or Director's meetings upon request. However, the AIG Coordinator will actively participate in meetings where the core instructional team shares results to monitor the collective process and ensure AIG-specific considerations are addressed. This includes providing insights into AIG student performance, advocating for differentiated strategies, and supporting alignment with district goals.
- The AIG Coordinator meets with the Director of PreK-12 every two weeks to provide updates on the implementation of the AIG plan. Data from these meetings is also shared with the Advisory Board and, if necessary, presented to the local school board during an annual end-of-year meeting.

*** Practice C**

Develops and monitors a budget using allotted state funds, and local funds if applicable, to address the needs of the Local AIG Plan in accordance with state policy.

At the start of each school year, the AIG Coordinator and financial secretary develop a budget spreadsheet for the academic school year. The spreadsheet reflects items purchased, who the items were purchased for, and the cost of the items. The spreadsheet is updated as purchases are made to ensure the AIG budget is being used for AIG materials, personnel, and professional development. Additionally, budget requests are sent to the AIG Coordinator and Director of PreK-12 for verification before purchases are final. This verification step allows the AIG Coordinator and Director of PreK-12 to discuss the use of the requested purchase and how it aligns with the district AIG goals. Specifically, the district looks for resources that reflect gifted best practice, training for teachers in gifted education, and training or resources that will meet the needs of CLED populations and ensure equity and access in the gifted program. A final budget spreadsheet is saved at the close of the school year to maintain records of budget use from year to year.

*** Practice D**

Maintains and analyzes multiple sources of student achievement and growth data, as well as annual dropout data for AIG students. Data is disaggregated to

recognize patterns and trends over time and inform mindsets, policies, and practices for equity and excellence.

Data collection is a non-negotiable of the district. In general, school leadership and district administrators access student data independently and work collaboratively to analyze it with the support of the District Testing Coordinator. The Testing Coordinator assists school and district leadership in identifying patterns, trends, and areas of need to inform instruction and programming decisions.

Data analysis results are shared at site-level PLCs, where instructional teams discuss implications and strategies for supporting student growth. Data shared in these meetings may include, but are not limited to, state and local benchmarks/Check-ins, state-required progress monitoring, EVAAS, EOG, EOC, SAT, and AP results.

The AIG Coordinator works with the District Testing Coordinator and Director of PreK-12 to disaggregate data, focusing on AIG and high-achieving populations to locate patterns and trends over time. This process identifies pockets of success, areas of concern, and students who may need specific attention (either due to high or low achievement in comparison to others in their subgroup). The AIG Coordinator uses this information to support decision-making at the district level, providing insights to district leaders through participation in the District Alignment Team. These discussions focus on strategies to promote the growth of AIG students and inform core and team supports.

The AIG Coordinator also receives drop-out data for AIG students from the Testing Coordinator. When identified students are on track to drop out or have dropped out of high school, the AIG Coordinator works with the High School AIG Specialist to understand the reasons behind these situations and consults parents when possible. Options such as Second Chance, Credit Recovery, and online courses are offered to help prevent drop-out and support student success.

The High School AIG Specialist provides the AIG Coordinator with additional data, including:

- The number of students involved in internships.
- College acceptance information.
- Scholarship acceptance information.
- SAT/ACT results.
- AP testing data per course, teacher, and student.

This data is used to determine student needs and to provide instructional and social-emotional support as needed. The AIG Coordinator or High School AIG Specialist reviews the AP data with all AP teachers prior to the start of the school year to reflect on necessary curriculum changes for the upcoming year.

When necessary, these data are shared with district administration in accordance with FERPA and other confidentiality laws.

*** Practice E**

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

District Response: A strategic goal of the district is to ensure equitable access to advanced learning opportunities for students who demonstrate high potential, regardless of background or circumstance. To support this, the AIG department utilizes research-based frameworks, including talent development practices and proportional representation monitoring, to examine trends in access and participation. The AIG Coordinator collects and analyzes multiple data sources

quarterly to identify patterns related to student referral, identification, services, and retention, with an emphasis on ensuring that students' learning needs are met regardless of background, language, or exceptionality.

Data collected include mCLASS and FastBridge assessments, state-required progress monitoring, CIAs, NC Check-ins, PBL tasks, classroom and teacher observations, EVAAS growth data, and EOG scores for both identified AIG students and students served through the district's talent development pathway. These data are used to identify students for referral, monitor the progress of identified students, and ensure retention aligns with equity goals. Students who perform near the top 20% of their peer group but have not being served are placed on an "on the radar" list, which the AIG Coordinator monitors quarterly to ensure students demonstrating readiness are not overlooked for additional services.

The AIG Coordinator also works with the District Testing Coordinator and Data Manager to disaggregate data by subgroup and monitor the performance of all populations served. Reports generated assist in identifying trends and informing decisions at quarterly PLC data meetings. These meetings provide a platform for discussing referral, identification, and instructional strategies to support high-ability students. In particular, they focus on addressing racial, ethnic, economic, and other demographic factors that may reduce access to gifted education.

Retention of students in the AIG program is also monitored by subgroup. When necessary, disaggregated data and analysis results are shared with district staff in compliance with FERPA and confidentiality laws, ensuring transparency and informed decision-making.

*** Practice F**

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

At the start of each school year, the AIG Coordinator contacts Human Resources for a list of district staff who are state-certified in gifted education according to their state license. The AIG Coordinator also develops an updated list of staff who completed the local gifted education professional learning module and shares the compiled list of state-certified and locally trained staff with district administration and other district staff.

The AIG Coordinator serves as a facilitator for a PRAXIS review course offered in May of each year to help prepare staff for the state exam. Additionally, the AIG Coordinator assists staff in adding AIG certification to their state license.

When openings for AIG-certified positions become available, these staff lists are utilized to help fill the position(s) with knowledgeable staff. Staff applying for positions are asked to list their state certification on their application to be considered. The AIG Coordinator is consulted when AIG-certified positions need to be filled.

The AIG Coordinator also shares with principals the list of state-certified and locally endorsed AIG teachers and encourages them to use, when possible, these staff to teach advanced courses and classes where gifted students are clustered.

*** Practice G**

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

The district actively and intentionally elicits regular feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including students, parents/guardians, families, teachers, and other community members, to ensure the ongoing implementation and effectiveness of the local AIG program. Feedback is solicited and analyzed systematically to support continuous program improvement through the following methods:

1. Surveys:

1. End-of-Year Surveys: Distributed to parents, teachers, and AIG specialists to gather input on program strengths, areas for growth, and overall satisfaction. These surveys mirror the self-assessment tool provided by the state and are used to guide updates and revisions to the AIG plan during rewrite years.
 2. Student Surveys: AIG and students served through Advanced Learning complete surveys at the end of the year to evaluate their experiences with services and/or advanced courses and the program's personal impact on their academic growth and engagement.
 3. Exit Surveys: Sent to families of students exiting the program (e.g., through graduation or relocation) to assess the program's long-term impact.
2. Parent Advisory Meetings:
1. Parent Advisory Meetings are held annually to allow for in-depth discussion and targeted feedback on specific aspects of the AIG program. These sessions are facilitated by the AIG Coordinator and include opportunities for stakeholders to propose actionable recommendations.
3. Departmental and Grade-Level Reflection:
1. Regular reflection and discussion occur during AIG Department PLC meetings, where the AIG Coordinator collaborates with specialists to analyze data and prioritize feedback themes for program adjustments.
 2. Site-based and district-wide grade-level PLC meetings include AIG specialists and regular education teachers to align AIG services with instructional practices and respond to student needs.
4. Community and Family Events:
1. Quarterly AIG family events include opportunities for parents/guardians to provide informal feedback during Q&A sessions with AIG specialists and the AIG Coordinator. Feedback collected at these events is documented for review and follow-up.
5. Advisory and Administrative Collaboration:
1. Feedback is intentionally collected during Advisory Board meetings, principal meetings, Curriculum and Instruction meetings, and Instructional Coach meetings. This ensures that key leaders are informed of stakeholder concerns and program effectiveness.
 2. The Director of PreK-12 meets with district leadership to discuss feedback trends, even in cases where the AIG Coordinator is not present, ensuring transparency.
6. Informal Feedback Opportunities:
1. The district maintains open lines of communication throughout the year by welcoming informal feedback from stakeholders via email, phone calls, and in-person discussions. This ensures flexibility for stakeholders who may not participate in formal feedback processes.
7. Actionable Use of Feedback:
1. All collected feedback is compiled and analyzed to identify trends, recurring concerns, and areas for potential improvement.
 2. Specific examples of program improvement based on feedback include adjusting service models, revising communication tools, updating parent resources, and implementing targeted professional development for teachers.
 3. Feedback results are shared publicly during annual stakeholder meetings to foster transparency and accountability.

By actively seeking stakeholder input through diverse, regular channels and using it to inform programmatic decisions, the district demonstrates its commitment to a continuous cycle of improvement for the AIG program.

*** Practice H**

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

Kannapolis City Schools is committed to clear and transparent communication with all stakeholders regarding the evaluation of the local AIG program. Program evaluation data—including implementation updates, identification trends, survey results, and curriculum developments—is shared regularly with school and district personnel, students, parents, families, and the broader community.

To support this communication, the district hosts an AIG Information Night at the beginning of each school year. All families and interested community members are invited to attend to learn about AIG services, identification processes, district-wide data, and program goals. Attendees are also guided through the district AIG website, where they can access additional resources, forms, and the full AIG plan.

Throughout the year, quarterly AIG Family Events provide updates to families and students on testing, identification, curriculum, and service models. Quarterly newsletters are distributed to families, students, district staff, and administrators, highlighting elements of the AIG plan, sharing anonymized survey results, and informing stakeholders of upcoming events or changes to district programming or policy.

To integrate evaluation data into district decision-making, an executive summary is created annually by the AIG Coordinator, AIG Specialists, and Advisory Board. This summary includes an analysis of program effectiveness and recommendations for improvement. It is shared with the local school board, published on the district website, and made available to the public.

At the school level, district and school personnel receive program evaluation updates during staff meetings, PLCs, and data reviews to ensure alignment with instructional goals. All shared data complies with FERPA and confidentiality guidelines. Program information and evaluation data are accessible through the district AIG website, and additional information is available upon request, in accordance with privacy laws.

*** Practice I**

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

In accordance with Article 9B and the state AIG standards, the district upholds the rights of all AIG students and their parents/families through written policies, procedures, and documentation of practices. Specifically, the district provides families with the following documents to adhere to Due Process rights:

1. Informed Consent for Testing: Prior to testing for AIG identification and services, parents are sent a letter explaining the testing procedure and form of assessment (NNAT). Parents/guardians are given the option to not have their child complete the testing.
2. Notification of Testing Results: Once testing is complete, parents are sent a notification of testing results. This letter explains the identification scores according to district policy and notifies parents of how their child did on the testing as well as what their child's results mean in accordance to identification and service procedures.
3. Informed Consent for Services: If students identify for services through the referral assessment/screener, parents are sent a letter outlining the services their child would be receiving based on their identification. Parents are given the option to accept or refuse services for their child, as well as the opportunity

to discuss any questions or concerns with the AIG Coordinator. Parents select the option for their child to receive services or not, and return the letter to school.

4. **Reassessment Procedures for Talent Development:** Parents of students who do not identify for AIG services in accordance to district policy but who show high-ability and potential are sent letters informing them of the possibility for their child to receive services through the district talent development program. This letter explains students in the talent development program will be reassessed for services quarterly to ensure students are continuing to benefit from services and are not being harmed academically and/or social-emotionally by missing regular instruction. Students who have been placed in the talent development program but have not been identified as gifted through district qualifications can be removed from services when data shows the service is not being beneficial. This decision must be approved by the regular education teacher, site-level AIG specialist, and district AIG Coordinator. Students who are identified gifted under district qualifications are never unidentified, and will only fall into the reassessment procedures window after a parent meeting has been scheduled and all parties (regular education teacher, site-level AIG specialist, administration, district AIG Coordinator, and parent) agree to the decision.

5. **Request for Removal:** While the district will never "degift or unidentified" a child from the AIG program once they have been placed in the program, parents and guardians have the option to remove their child from the program. To remove their child from the AIG program, parents/guardians need to fill out a form explaining why they would like their child removed, from which service they would like them removed from, and all parties (parent/guardian, regular education teacher, AIG Specialist, site-level administration, and AIG Coordinator) need to sign the form. This form is kept in the student's file until they graduate.

6. **Transfers from Other LEAs:** The district will honor in-state identification as noted in PowerSchool for all transfers and place students according to their gifted identification in PowerSchool when enrolled. Once enrolled, additional testing will be provided for in-state transfers to determine if the child should have a different identification according to district policy. Students transferring from out- of-state with gifted identification will be given the district screener and assessments to determine identification according to district policy as soon as parent permission to test is received.

7. **Procedures for Resolving Disagreements:** Kannapolis City Schools Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program goals, objectives, and service delivery options should be clearly communicated to parents. Parents who have questions or concerns should first talk with the Regular Education Teacher/Course Content Teacher and/or the AIG Specialist at their child's school. In the event that parents/guardians disagree with a screening, referral, identification, or placement decision, the goal is to resolve disagreements at the local level. The following procedures and order of disagreement levels should be followed to resolve any disagreements:

Step I. Appeal to the School-based AIG Team

1. The parent may request a conference with the school-based AIG team at the child's school. The team may consist of the AIG teacher, the regular education teacher, the counselor, and the grade-level assistant principal.

2. At the conference, the individual student profile will be examined and discussed. All information used to determine eligibility for services will be reviewed with the parent. Any new information or further documentation will be provided at this time.

3. The school-based team will inform the parent of any recommendations related to the child's AIG identification and placement.

4. A written summary of the meeting should be maintained in the student's folder.

If an appropriate solution cannot be determined at the school level, the parent should move to Level II.

Step II. Appeal to the Building Level Principal

1. The parent may appeal the school-based AIG team's recommendation for identification by requesting a conference with the principal to review the team's decision.

2. The principal will review the concern and the information from the school-based AIG team. Further information will be requested if needed.

3. The principal will inform the parent of any recommendations related to the child's AIG identification and placement.

4. A written summary of the meeting should be maintained in the student's folder.

If an appropriate solution cannot be determined at the school level, the parent should move to Level III.

Step III. Appeal to the District-Level AIG Coordinator

1. The parent may appeal the principal's recommendation for identification and services by requesting a conference with the district-level AIG Coordinator to review the principal's decision.

2. The AIG Coordinator will review the concern and the information from the school-based AIG team and the principal. Further information will be requested if needed.

3. The AIG Coordinator will inform the parent of any recommendations related to the child's AIG identification and placement.

4. A written summary of the meeting should be maintained in the student's folder.

If an appropriate solution cannot be determined at the school level, the parent should move to Level IV.

Step IV. Appeal to the Superintendent

1. The parent may appeal the AIG Coordinator's recommendation for identification and services by requesting a conference with the district's Superintendent to review the AIG Coordinator's decision.

2. The Superintendent will review the concern and the information from the previous conferences. Further information will be requested if needed.

3. The Superintendent may request an impartial mediator in order to resolve the concern.

4. The Superintendent will inform the parent of any recommendations related to the child's AIG identification and placement.

5. A written summary of the meeting should be maintained in the student's folder.

If an appropriate solution cannot be determined at the school level, the parent should move to Level V.

Step V. Appeal to the Local Board of Education

1. The parent may appeal the Superintendent's recommendation for identification and services by requesting a meeting with the Local Board of Education.

2. The members of the board will review the concern and the information from the previous appeals. Further information will be requested if needed.

3. The members of the board will inform the parent of any recommendations related to the child's AIG identification and placement.

4. A written summary of the meeting should be maintained in the student's folder.

If an appropriate solution cannot be determined at the school level, the parent should move to Level VI.


Step VI. State Level Grievance Procedure

Once all efforts have been exhausted within the system, the parents may file a petition for a contested case hearing in accordance with Article 3 of Chapter 150 B of the General Statutes, the Administrative Procedures Act, of North Carolina.

The issues for review shall be limited to:

1. Whether the local system improperly failed to determine eligibility for services within its gifted program.
2. Whether the local system implemented and provided those services specified within the district AIG plan.

Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall serve the final decision. The administrative law judge shall give a copy of the written findings and the decision to the parties and to the State Superintendent of Public Education.

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* Ideas for Strengthening the Standard

The district is considering ways to strengthen program accountability by refining how we visualize and report disaggregated data trends across student subgroups, particularly for referral, service access, and retention. We are also exploring the creation of an internal data dashboard to support real-time monitoring of AIG identification and service alignment. Additional efforts may include developing a formalized process for closing the feedback loop with stakeholders—sharing how input is used to inform decisions—and reviewing our budget tracking system to ensure resources are distributed equitably and intentionally. As we continue to implement and evaluate the 2025–2028 AIG Plan, we may further refine metrics for impact, especially around subgroup representation, student growth, and stakeholder satisfaction.

Planned Sources of Evidence

* AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey Letter-English and Spanish







* AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey-English and Spanish


* AIG Student Survey KMS


* AIG Plan Survey Teacher


* Notice of Testing- Fall NNAT

* Notice of Testing- Spring Screener	
* Testing Results/Identification	
* Permission for Services AIG DEP Services Letter-4th and 5th	
* Permission for Services AIG DEP Services Letter-6th-8th	
* Permission for Services Talent Development Nurturing Program Letter-4th and 5th	
* Permission for Services Talent Development through Honors Coursework-6th-8th	
* AIG Exit Form	
* AIG Request to Modify Services Form	


Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	 AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey, Letter-English and Spanish  AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey-English and Spanish  AIG Student Survey KMS  AIG Plan Survey Teacher  Notice of Testing- Fall NNAT  Notice of Testing- Spring Screener  Testing Results/Identification  Permission for Services AIG DEP Services Letter-4th and 5th  Permission for Services AIG DEP Services Letter-6th-8th

 [Permission for Services Talent Development Nurturing Program Letter-4th and 5th](#)

 [Permission for Services Talent Development through Honors Coursework-6th-7th](#)

 [Permission for Services Talent Development through Advanced Coursework 8th](#)


 [AIG Exit Form](#)

 [AIG Request to Modify Services Form Elementary](#)

 [AIG Request to Modify Services Form 6-8](#)




















Kannapolis City Schools (132) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

* Approved by local Board of Education on:

06/09/2025 


AIG Related Documents


Kannapolis City Schools (132) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0


Required Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
Local Board of Education Approval Signatures [Upload at least 1 document(s)]	 Local Board of Education Approval Template	 KCS AIG Local Plan Board Approval
Optional Documents		
Type	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 1 Additional Resources	N/A	 NNAT Screener Letter Fall  NNAT Screener Letter Spring  NNAT Results Letter K-5  NNAT Results Letter 6-8  Services Brochure  KCS Gifted Pathways Document  AIG DEP Services Letter 4-5  AIG DEP Services Letter 6-8  KCS Differentiated Education Plan Form  Talent Development Nurturing Program Letter  Pathway 2 Cover Letter  Pathway 2 Results Letter
AIG Standard 2 Additional Resources	N/A	 Grouping Presentation for Principals  8th grade Math 1/English 1 Letter  AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey  AIG/Talent Development Student Survey-Elementary  AIG/Talent Development Student Survey-Middle


		 <u>High School CDM Guidelines</u>
AIG Standard 3 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>4th Grade PBL Curriculum</u>  <u>5th Grade PBL Curriculum</u>  <u>AIG Social Emotional Curriculum</u>  <u>Meeting the Needs of Advanced Learners - In Any Content Area PD</u>
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>AIG Local Certification Brochure</u>  <u>KCS Advanced Learning Parent Meeting</u>
AIG Standard 5 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>Ways to Stay Informed Parent Letter</u>  <u>Research Gala Flyer</u>  <u>AIG Holiday Family Event</u>  <u>Rube Goldberg Event</u>  <u>3rd Quarter KCS Advanced Learning Newsletter</u>
AIG Standard 6 Additional Resources	N/A	 <u>AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey Letter-English and Spanish</u>  <u>AIG/Talent Development Parent Survey-English and Spanish</u>  <u>AIG Student Survey KMS</u>  <u>AIG Plan Survey Teacher</u>  <u>Notice of Testing- Fall NNAT</u>  <u>Notice of Testing- Spring Screener</u>  <u>Testing Results/Identification</u>  <u>Permission for Services AIG DEP Services Letter-4th and 5th</u>  <u>Permission for Services AIG DEP Services Letter-6th-8th</u>  <u>Permission for Services Talent Development Nurturing Program Letter-4th and 5th</u>  <u>Permission for Services Talent</u>

Development through Honors Coursework-
6th-7th

 Permission for Services Talent
Development through Advanced Coursework
8th

 AIG Exit Form

 AIG Request to Modify Services Form
Elementary

 AIG Request to Modify Services Form 6-8

Glossary

Kannapolis City Schools (132) Regular Local School District - FY 2025 - Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted Plan, 2025-2028 - Rev 0

Phrase	Definition
Aptitude:	A student's critical thinking and/or natural ability to complete a task. Aptitude is a separate skill set than achievement.
Achievement	A student's academic ability as measured by standardized tests and/or teacher observation. Achievement is a separate skill set than aptitude.
Highly Gifted	A student who shows above age level achievement in reading and math, without above age level aptitude scores.
Academically Gifted in Reading	A student who shows above age level achievement in reading only.
Academically Gifted in Math	A student who shows above age level achievement in math only.
Intellectually Gifted	A student who shows above age level aptitude without above age level achievement scores.
Cluster Grouping	The placement of a small group (usually the top 10-15%) of advanced learners together in one classroom with a teacher licensed or endorsed in AIG. This ensures gifted students have peers with similar abilities and receive differentiated instruction from an experienced teacher. While flexible grouping occurs during the day, cluster grouping is a purposeful placement to support their academic needs.
Flexible Grouping	The fluid formation of instructional groups based on current student performance, readiness, or mastery of specific content. These groups change frequently and are driven by assessment data, teacher observation, and student learning needs. It allows students-including those not placed in a formal cluster-to access advanced instruction in specific content areas when appropriate. It is short-term, content-specific, and not tied to classroom placement.
NNAT (Naglieri Nonverbal Assessment Test)	A nonverbal test composed of shapes and/or symbols to measure a student's aptitude.
Talent Development	In efforts to meet needs of all groups of students, the district intentionally looks at benchmark data to locate the top 20% of students each school based peer group. If these students show potential for high-ability based on classroom observation or other data, these students are served through district programming to develop their talents.