

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

*** Practice A**

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

The AIG director at the Central Office collaborates with the AIG coordinator to support AIG services, plan development, and program oversight. The AIG coordinator holds an AIG license and oversees the day-to-day operations of the AIG program and plan.

Responsibilities of the AIG Director

- Advocates for gifted students and gifted education.
- Actively participates in regional meetings, professional development opportunities, and other state initiatives to support gifted programming.
- Oversees the financial budget for the gifted education program.
- Provides administrative leadership to assure adherence to program guidelines.
- Helps to develop, plan, monitor, and evaluate the local AIG plan.
- Helps establish clear and comprehensive student identification procedures for gifted screening, referrals, and identification.
- Chairs the Central Review Team.
- Maintains documentation of Central Review Team decisions.
- Oversees accelerative instructional and placement options with the schools.
- Ensures consistency in program implementation and adherence to NC Board of Education policies and state legislation.
- Communicates district-wide program concerns to the Superintendent, Board of Education, principals, and the community as appropriate.
- Oversees processes for Differentiated Education Plans and annual reviews.
- Provides curricular resources to appropriately challenge and serve gifted learners and students with gifted potential.
- Provides support to personnel overseeing the delivery and planning of AIG instruction.

- Provides annual staff development for AIG teachers that address the AIG plan requirements, social emotional needs of gifted students, differentiation techniques, instructional grouping, and managing the AIG classroom.
 - Monitors the credentials of teachers serving AIG students and AIG cluster groups.
- Responsibilities of the AIG Coordinator
- Supports the AIG director with the responsibilities listed above.
 - Collaborates with the Needs Determination Teams during annual parent/guardian meetings, with program policies, and throughout plan implementation.
 - Collaborates with AIG chairpersons during the creation and implementation of the students' Differentiated Education Plans.
 - Shares and models best practices and resources for gifted learners with principals and teachers.
 - Promotes STEM activities that promote future ready skills at all grade levels.
 - Offers and participates in district professional development related to the academic, intellectual, and social emotional needs of gifted learners.
 - Provides CogAT preparation for second graders and data follow-up with administrators.
 - Teaches and provides support for the Primary Education Thinking Skills curriculum and critical thinking lessons.
 - Prepares, shares, and supports teachers with rigorous, differentiated lessons, projects, and materials for them to utilize with their students.
 - Supports the implementation of different enrichment opportunities such as Battle of the Books, Scripps National Spelling Bee, field trips, and Super Saturdays.
 - Provides support to students who have an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan through meetings, emails, and finding needed help in the areas of academics and/or social emotional concerns.
 - Assists counselors with providing support to students that address the problems and issues of underachievement.

*** 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.

Caswell County schools' AIG department is composed of the AIG director and the AIG coordinator. Due to the size of the department, it is critical that the school district employs teachers who are AIG certified or who complete the local AIG professional development requirements to serve the district's AIG population. Teachers who serve AIG students, school counselors, media specialists, and other school specialists are expected to meet the academic, intellectual, and social emotional needs of gifted learners within the schools each day.

Each teacher of AIG students and member of the school Needs Determination Teams (NDT) must meet the following qualifications: Bachelor's degree or higher in Education or Counseling from an accredited college/university; hold a North Carolina Teaching license; have the Academically or Intellectually Gifted licensure, hold a Masters in Gifted Education, or meet the local requirements of professional development coursework; and knowledge of state standards, educational guidelines, and effective differentiation teaching methods.

The AIG director is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the AIG program as described in the local AIG plan. Staff at the district and school levels implement the plan. See below for a detailed description of the responsibilities for each role involved in the academic, intellectual, and social emotional needs of K-12 learners.

Responsibilities of the AIG Director & AIG Coordinator

- See Standard 4 Practice A for a list of the director's and coordinator's responsibilities.

Responsibilities of Educators Teaching AIG Students (K-12)

- Collaborates with the NDT and other AIG teachers to develop and implement DEPs and end-of-the-year reviews.
- Communicates student progress to parents throughout the school year: DEPs, progress reports, report cards, and conferences.
- Provides appropriate and regular differentiation for identified gifted students and for those students who are in the Talent Development Pool.
- Documents and monitors ongoing evidence of DEPs.
- Participates in local and state professional development in gifted education and is strongly encouraged to obtain state certification or an advanced degree in gifted education if applicable.

Additional responsibilities of Honor Teachers (9-12)

- Prepares honors course curriculum, pacing guide, and syllabus with adequate rigor based on NCDPI's Honors Level Course Development and Evaluation Tool.
- Communicates class expectations, student performance, and other information to parents/guardians.
- Teaches specialized courses for which they have been trained.
- Plans enrichment opportunities that correlate to their standards and curriculum.

Responsibilities of Counselors

- Provides counseling and affective education for gifted students in need of social emotional support.
- Attends professional development addressing the social emotional needs of gifted students.
- Provides guidance regarding class selection (middle and high school).

- Collaborates and assists with college and career guidance that is appropriately different and delivered earlier than typical programs.
- Provides specialized intervention services for gifted students who do not demonstrate satisfactory performance in classes/courses.
- Provides counseling services that address the problems and issues of underachieving gifted students.

Responsibilities of Needs Determination Team

- Coordinates AIG identification by educating school staff on characteristics of gifted students, sharing AIG referral process procedures with teachers, gathering available data on students being nominated, and overseeing the appropriate creation and implementation of DEPs.
- Oversees the implementation of service delivery options by conferencing with teachers concerning appropriate differentiation strategies and meeting DEP expectations.
- Assists the principal and AIG department staff in providing leadership to improve instruction for AIG students.
- Attends professional development on gifted education.
- Provides information to parents/guardians about gifted education.
- Participates in AIG program planning and evaluation.

*** Practice C**

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

All stakeholders need to be involved in the AIG program and its services in Caswell County Schools. Understanding characteristics of AIG learners, as well as identifying and meeting their needs is an integral part of effective AIG programming. Therefore, stakeholders need training to ensure services are rendered appropriately. Teachers, counselors, and school administrators are encouraged to seek AIG licensure and/or meet the local requirements set forth for working with AIG students.

Teachers are afforded opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and understandings that are essential for successfully implementing instruction for gifted learners in local professional development that is offered through two courses totalling forty-eight hours of professional development each year.

The first course is entitled "Introduction to Gifted Education and the Social Emotional Needs of Gifted Learners". Topics covered include the following: characteristics of gifted learners; trends and issues related to the education of gifted students; using evidence based strategies to identify gifted students and ensuring that they are identified and served appropriately; recognizing ethnic, socio-economic, language, and home factors that can mask giftedness; achievement, motivation, emotional development, health, and social behaviors of gifted students; and understanding the local AIG plan. The second course is called "Differentiation and Instructional Strategies for AIG Students". This course covers the following subjects: effective differentiation and instruction; effective strategies and models of teaching; using various assessment tools; planning instruction according to the characteristics and special cognitive needs of gifted students; and research-based best practices.

To ensure that AIG services are provided by those who are involved with the AIG program, members of school Needs Determination Teams, school administrators, K-8 teachers serving AIG students, and Honors teachers are required to have acquired NC AIG licensure, be in the process of completing licensure courses at an Institute of Higher Education, or must complete the forty-eight hours of local professional development offered in the two courses described above. It is recommended that Exception Children's teachers take both course to be prepared for twice-exceptional students and that school counselors complete the "Introduction to Gifted Education and Social Emotional Needs of Gifted Learners".

Professional development requirements reflect the local AIG plan's emphasis on the shared responsibility for gifted learners by recognizing how all educators impact gifted learners and are involved with their education.

*** 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.

Caswell County Schools must ensure that every AIG student is placed in a classroom setting with a teacher who is highly qualified. In order to be considered highly qualified to teach gifted students, teachers should have AIG licensure or should meet the local requirement of completing the professional development courses described in Standard 4 Practice C.

Teachers' AIG licensure and local AIG requirement completion are shared with school administration prior to class placements and scheduling decisions. Students in grades K-8 are cluster-grouped and placed in classrooms with teachers who are highly qualified to teach AIG students. Administrators at each school, assisted by the AIG director and/or coordinator as requested, will develop class lists of cluster-grouped students and match them with teachers who have the appropriate training to ensure effective AIG placement.

In grades K-5, a cluster group of AIG students is assigned to a regular education classroom. The cluster teacher is highly qualified and works with the AIG coordinator to develop appropriate differentiated curriculum. If a school has fewer than eight identified students in a grade, these students will be clustered in one classroom.

In grades 6-8, core subject grouping within a team is assigned for specific blocks of instruction to content area teachers who are highly qualified. The group placement is open to AIG students as well as other students who meet certain criteria. Course should not have less than eight cluster-grouped AIG students. Students can also be identified for middle school advanced pathways. These advanced pathway courses are taught by highly qualified teachers.

Additionally, teachers of honors courses must be highly qualified in order to meet the criteria set forth in the Honors Level Course Guide. School counselors and the AIG coordinator work with AIG students as they choose courses to ensure these students are being instructed by teachers who know and understand differentiation and rigor.

*** Practice E**

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

Caswell County Schools (CCS) recognizes that having a teaching population that is AIG licensed and/or AIG trained is imperative to improving student performance because these educators know, understand, and can implement best practices that are beneficial to all students, in particular, gifted learners. To recruit teachers of these descriptions, the director of Human Resources and principals hold and attend recruitment fairs both at different colleges/universities and within the county. Schools welcome student teachers to fulfill their final training requirements with the hope that

they will return to CCS to work. Additionally, administrators include questions during the interview process to determine how prepared a candidate is to meet the needs of gifted learners.

Since many teachers that are hired in CCS are not AIG licensed, the AIG department offers two classes that equate to forty-eight hours of professional development that support understanding the characteristics of gifted learners, their social emotional needs, and how to appropriately differentiate instruction to meet their needs. This professional development is a great segway to pursuing licensure through an institute of higher education or by taking the Praxis in Gifted Education. The AIG coordinator discusses these options during the professional development to make participants aware of the opportunities. The AIG department offers assistance by providing study materials for the Gifted Education Praxis upon request.

To help with retaining highly qualified teachers, the Board of Education recognizes those teachers who complete both AIG professional development courses during one of their spring meetings. Additionally, the AIG department offers support through model lessons, lesson plans, and materials. Part of the AIG budget is set aside for instructional supplies that are provided, in part, to teachers of AIG students to support their differentiation efforts. It is the hope that if AIG licensed teachers feel supported and valued, they will continue to stay in CCS and teach the AIG population.

*** Practice F**

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

Caswell County Schools' AIG Department recognizes the importance of providing professional learning opportunities to help realize excellence for all in the AIG program. Topics related to screening, referral, and identification are thoroughly presented in the course, "Introduction to Gifted Education and the Social Emotional Needs of Gifted Learners", which is offered during the fall semester of every school year. Participants take a deep dive into the needs of gifted learners and the misconceptions associated with gifted education. The course challenges participants to look at stereotypes and discuss opportunities for changing their own mindset as well as the mindsets of others. Additionally, participants examine the policies outlined in the local AIG plan to ensure that they are safeguarding services for identified students and advocating for all potentially gifted students. In the course, "Differentiation & Instructional Strategies for AIG Students", which is offered during the spring semester of every school year, participants examine the best practices that benefit different types of students and how to differentiate instruction and modify assignments to meet the needs of every student.

The AIG chairpersons participate in round-table discussions at one of their meetings every year. By reflecting on and discussing policies and practices during the year, the concept of excellence for all students is constantly being addressed and brought to the attention of the AIG leaders in each school.

Finally, professional development can be requested by principals for Professional Learning Community meetings, Needs Determination Team meetings, staff meetings, or to be presented on workdays. Co-teaching and modeling of differentiation strategies and one-on-one support may also be solicited. Administrators can choose from a variety of topics that may help to change mindsets, explain policies, and/or offer practices. Topics may be similar to the ones addressed in the two courses described above or may specifically address a school's needs such as data or standardized test scores.

*** 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.

Due to high teacher turnover and a shift to the Science of Reading, Caswell County Schools has made aligning and improving core curriculum and instruction in all grades, Kindergarten-12, a high priority. This has created an overarching goal for the AIG department to support rigorous, differentiated instruction based on core standards and curriculum during small groups and advanced classes and courses, in order to meet the needs of the AIG population.

Action steps to reach this main goal include having the AIG director lead the district Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) team; collaboration among the Elementary Curriculum, Secondary Curriculum, Career Technical Education, Exceptional Children, and AIG departments; providing professional development about differentiation and best practices at the school and district level; supporting Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and MTSS teams as they analyze data and plan appropriate supports; and offering support to teachers, teacher assistants, and tutors as they implement standard treatment protocols and enrichment or extension activities. By collaborating with the different departments, directors, administrators, and teachers everyone understands the importance of differentiation. This leads to decision-making that encompasses the AIG goal of rigorous, differentiated instruction during small groups and advanced classes and courses while supporting the district's goal of aligning and improving core curriculum.

The AIG department understands that while everyone needs to have the same general understanding of differentiation, educators move at different paces of implementation due to their prior knowledge and experiences. Therefore, professional development is offered in various ways. The courses described in Standard 4 Practice C are offered every year for any teacher, counselor, or administrator in the district. Individual support is offered by the AIG coordinator. Teachers can request, modeling, co-teaching, and/or coaching at any time throughout the year. All of the above practices result in professional growth for teachers and the improvement of instruction at all schools.

*** Ideas for Strengthening the Standard**

The AIG department will continue to revamp its professional development curriculum as new requirements are made. It will continue to seek opportunities to provide resources and support teachers as they differentiate to meet the needs of their students.

Planned Sources of Evidence

- * Professional development descriptions, rosters, and sign-in sheets
- * Master list of teachers that hold a NC AIG license and/or who have completed the local requirements
- * Documentation of AIG coordinator-led events and activities such as programs, permission slips, sign-in sheets, etc.

Type	Documents	Document Template	Document/Link
AIG Standard 4 Additional Resources		N/A	