

Cleveland County Schools
Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan
Effective 2019-2022

Approved by local Board of Education on: 13-MAY-19
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Cleveland County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement 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 relate to the categories related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C-150.5). These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what an LEA should have in place, and guide LEAs to improve their programs.

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs and align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2019-2022. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

For 2019-2022, Cleveland County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

Cleveland County Schools Vision for local AIG program: Cleveland County Schools believes all children must be challenged to achieve academic excellence. Gifted students, who demonstrate the ability to achieve at higher levels than their peers, should receive challenging educational opportunities, an intellectually stimulating curriculum, and differentiated instruction to address their learning needs. Outstanding abilities and giftedness are present in all areas of human endeavor, and cross the lines of culture, socioeconomic status, race, and gender. A purposeful, high quality Academically and Intellectually Gifted program should nurture and develop Academically and Intellectually Gifted students by addressing their academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs, thus equipping them to be highly productive citizens and leaders in a globally competitive world.

Sources of funding for local AIG program (as of 2019)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
\$715210.00	\$46056.00	\$.00	\$.00

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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 screening and referral processes that lead to AIG identification at all grade levels.

District Response: Teachers, parents, other adults, or students may nominate any student for AIG services. Placement is based on a criteria sheet that includes both quantitative and qualitative data.

Practice B

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

District Response: Data for placement include multiple, research-based screening instruments which are both qualitative (observed behaviors checklist, anecdotal records, student portfolios/work samples/projects) and quantitative. Quantitative tests include both achievement (BOG/EOG/EOC, TRC, STAR, CBMs) and ability (NNAT, CogAT). In grades 3 -12, placement is based upon meeting three criteria – one qualitative and two quantitative. Quantitative scores must demonstrate performance at or above the 92nd percentile, or be at or above an aptitude score of 121, or show the student is performing at least two grade levels above current grade placement.

Cleveland County Schools administers the Naglieri Nonverbal Aptitude Test to all 3rd graders in the fall.

In grades 2 and below, the criteria for placement in the enrichment program includes state and local assessments and is based on a rubric that reveals students performing at the 90th percentile or above locally.

Practice C

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

District Response: The NNAT test given to all students is a culturally fair, non-biased test that reveals aptitude in all students. The K-2 program in Cleveland County provides skills, lessons, and activities to increase higher level thinking and problem solving. The criteria sheets used with K-2 students include data from state and local assessments and reveals students from traditionally

underrepresented populations. Personnel at all schools are trained in behaviors that can mask giftedness in all populations. Students from underrepresented populations are encouraged to take advanced courses in middle and high schools. Cleveland County Schools partners with outside agencies to ensure that advanced classes are available to all students

Practice D

Implements screening, referral, and identification processes consistently within the LEA.

District Response: All schools in Cleveland County have Needs Determination Teams. The NDT at each school may include, but is not limited to an administrator, a guidance counselor, the AIG specialist/contact, and a classroom teacher. The NDT ensures that referral and identification procedures at each school are implemented with fidelity. The AIG specialist/contact conducts annual training of the NDT at his/her school.

Practice E

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

District Response: The AIG program in Cleveland County publishes identification procedures using both written and electronic means. They are outlined on both the district AIG website as well as individual AIG teacher websites. The district coordinator ensures that all AIG teachers receive annual training in the identification procedures. The plan and procedures are discussed and approved at local board meetings.

Practice F

Documents a student's AIG identification process and evidence which leads to an identification decision. This documentation is reviewed with parents/families and maintained in student records.

District Response: The AIG program maintains individual documentation for each identified AIG student that is reviewed annually with parents/families. This documentation includes all assessments and evaluations considered in placement decisions signed by NDT members, signed permission to test forms (if additional testing is needed), and signed DEPs or IDEPs. These include student's placement area, service options, and options for differentiated instruction. IDEPs are developed for unique AIG students who need services not listed on the DEP. Middle and high school DEPs document accelerated coursework, honors courses, AP courses, dual/concurrent enrollment, Cleveland Early College High School, various enrichment activities, and/or early graduation options.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: The universal screening could be more indicative of all areas of strengths in students as opposed to identifying only nonverbal gifted students. This could be

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accomplished by using the Cognitive Abilities Test or a similar test with verbal and mathematical subsections in addition to a nonverbal section. Most students are identified in elementary school, so continued staff development on AIG identification at middle and high schools will be beneficial to both the school personnel and the students.

Sources of Evidence: NNAT (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test)

CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)

Beginning of Grade/End of Grade/End of Course Tests

Text Reading and Comprehension Assessment (TRC)

STAR reading assessment

Curriculum Based Measures

Authentic work samples

Observed Behaviors Checklist

Other nationally normed tests used with transfer students

Achievement/aptitude testing done by outside agencies

Referral criteria sheets

NDT meeting notes

AIG folders (to include referral data record, all assessments/evaluations for each individual student, any checklists used, signed DEPs and/or IDEPs, and any permission to test forms, if needed)

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

The LEA provides an array of K-12 programs and services by the total school community to meet the diverse academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Practice A

Delivers an AIG program with comprehensive services that address the needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and learning environments. These services are aligned to a student's AIG identification.

District Response:) The LEA provides AIG programming and services across all settings for K-12 students. AIG specialists develop and implement lessons that are aligned to a student's AIG identification and that address the social-emotional, and intellectual needs of gifted students. AIG specialists collaborate with other LEA AIG specialists to provide continuous support and resources at the elementary, intermediate, and middle school levels. In middle schools students are placed in accelerated classes in Language Arts and Math. The high schools have an AIG administrator who assists in providing resources and support to help differentiate the curriculum for gifted learners. High School students are offered accelerated course work, honors courses, advanced placement courses, dual/concurrent enrollment, Cleveland Early College High School, various enrichment activities and/or early graduation options.

Cleveland County students are provided an array of service delivery options. The AIG specialist at each school provides enrichment for students in K-2. The enrichment program is a flexible grouping of students based on CBM data, TRC scores, and other assessment data. The enrichment program provides students with critical thinking and problem solving activities.

AIG students receive services according to the identification area/areas (reading, math, both, or intellectually gifted). Identified AIG students in grades K-12 receive research-based specialized units of study emphasizing 21st century skills and learner needs. Some of the programs used are: The Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program, Hands on Equations, Thinking Maps, Primary Education Thinking Skills, and Mentoring Mathematical Minds. Teacher-created and other resources are available to AIG specialists on the shared Google docs. Gifted students are also offered other opportunities including but not limited to: math team competition, Mystery Day (deductive-reasoning day), First Lego League Robotics, Science for a Day, and Battle of the Books. High school students have opportunities for advanced or accelerated courses, including online courses and dual-enrollment with the local community college, Early College High School, First Tech Challenge, Governor's Schools and opportunities in subjects/courses other than the recognized placement areas of reading and math. The annual review of the DEP/IDEP provides an evaluation of service options and student needs

Practice B

Integrates and connects AIG services with the total instructional program and resources of the LEA in

policy and practice.

District Response: The AIG program will provide services aligned with the system policy and practice to provide all students an instructional program that includes rigorous curriculum, enhanced with technology, opportunities for involvement in the arts, and complex problem solving.

The strategic plan for Cleveland County Schools states that we will challenge each student with an exceptional educational experience that will lead each of them to become productive global citizens and lifelong learners. Our LEA adopted several core values. Our AIG program specifically addresses the following. "We will challenge students to reach their full potential, we will make student learning and development our primary focus, and we will support a community of learners."

Practice C

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

District Response: Cleveland County Schools develops procedures for flexible grouping in order to reach and support the growth of all AIG students. In the elementary and intermediate levels flexible grouping consist of but not limited to: intervention groups, guided reading groups, Accelerated Math, Accelerated Reading, and flexible enrichment groups. TRC, DIBELS, and CBM data help drive the flexibility of the groups in enrichment. Data obtained from standardized testing as well as other research based assessments are used to determine the grouping of students in elementary and intermediate school.

High school students have opportunities for advanced or accelerated courses, including online courses and dual-enrollment with the local community college, Early College High School, First Tech Challenge, Governor's Schools and opportunities in subjects/courses other than the recognized placement areas of reading and math.

Assessments are used to determine the grouping of students for the purpose of enrichment activities to include: Robotics, Math Team, and other academic competitions.

Practice D

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.

District Response: Communicating with all stakeholders is a necessary component in providing students with a quality 21st century education and being globally competitive. Deliberate communication provides opportunities to present and discuss components of the AIG plan, AIG related topics and guidelines.

AIG specialists will present to their staff within the first quarter of school about the delivery of differentiated services provided to AIG students and give an overview of the program. The AIG plan can be accessed from the Cleveland County Schools web page and also linked to school webpages.

Stakeholders are part of an ongoing, continuous evaluation of the AIG program effectiveness. The AIG plan, program and AIG-related topics will be communicated at designated meetings such as grade level meetings, site staff meetings, and meetings of the AIG specialists. Elementary, intermediate, middle and high schools will form an NDT team (Needs Determination Team) with selected members from the school. The NDT will meet when needed to discuss placement of students and students in the AIG program and their needs.

Practice E

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

District Response: Cleveland County Schools believes that communication is vital for student success and the success of our LEA. The AIG program provides information to teachers and schools regarding AIG students and areas identified for AIG services through annual meetings with the DEP/IDEPs.

Communication is needed at key transition points for students. AIG specialist at the elementary, intermediate, and middle schools will meet during the last quarter of school for those students who will be transitioning to the intermediate or middle schools to discuss and review the DEP/IDEPs and discuss needs and concerns of the AIG students. Freshman academy has been established to assist with the transition of middle school students into high school and build relationships with faculty.

Practice F

Addresses the social and emotional needs of AIG students through collaboration among school counseling personnel, regular education teachers, AIG specialists, and others.

District Response: Schools provide opportunities for school personnel, parents/families, and others to collaborate concerning the social-emotional needs of gifted students and students that display gifted characteristics.

AIG specialist will participate in school based PLC activities with regular education classroom teachers and counselors to share tools and increase the social and emotional resources and options for gifted students.

The NDT (Need Determination Team) will work together along with special areas teachers to meet the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

AIG specialist will be available to conference with teachers and parents on a regular basis.

Guidance counselors and AIG specialists will provide information at a faculty meeting during the first

quarter of school to help staff understand the unique social and emotional needs of gifted learners. In the elementary and intermediate settings Guidance counselors will provide guidance lessons in classrooms or small groups addressing typical social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Examples of student lesson topics include perfectionism, organizational strategies, sensitivity, anxiety, social acceptance, etc. Middle and high school settings will arrange sessions/lessons through guidance, ninth grade academies, and outside agencies such as the College Board to address the social-emotional needs of gifted middle and high school learners.

Practice G

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

District Response: Cleveland County Schools develops countywide, systematic, research based policies and procedures for acceleration, including instructional and placement options for gifted students. Communication takes place with appropriate school personnel when there is a need. At present, school personnel utilize formal and informal information, observations, checklists, and exemplars of above-grade- level work, test scores, and teacher recommendations.

Cleveland County Schools' policy defines the criteria for early admission to kindergarten. Students meeting the criteria may be considered for early entry to kindergarten.

Practice H

Implements intentional strategies to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities for under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional. These strategies may include talent development efforts.

District Response: Efforts such as the annual Education Summit to Raise Achievement and Close the Gap validate the desire for all students to be successful and to reach their maximum potential. The Cleveland County AIG Program continually seeks to implement services for under-represented populations by informing school personnel of AIG characteristics, sharing data, participating in the annual Education Summit to Raise Achievement and Close the Gap, researching various programs and publications, and participating in conferences and workshops that include information on reaching under represented populations.

AIG is proactive in providing services for under-represented populations through early elementary enrichment groups. Students from under-represented populations in grades K-2 may receive services from AIG that foster creative and critical thinking skills. AIG specialists help teachers understand how to look for indicators of gifted characteristics that may be masked by cultural differences, English language usage, low self-esteem, limited experiences beyond home, etc.. Elementary AIG specialists use a variety of research-based sources. Primary Education Thinking Skills is used to nurture critical and creative thinking skills and reveal the potential of under-represented students in enrichment groups.

Traditionally, CCS provides screening procedures for AIG services that are equitable and accessible for all students. Students, teachers, and parents may nominate at all grade levels. Cleveland County administers aptitude testing to all third grade students called the Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test. Departments within the system, such as the Exceptional Children's Program, provide insight into considering under-represented populations for AIG services. Information is shared on current and forthcoming efforts preparing for AIG and MTSS to work together to benefit AIG students, including the twice-exceptional AIG student.

Secondary schools work to recruit under-represented populations through many efforts. One avenue of recruitment is through Freshman Academies that support students and challenge them to select advanced course opportunities. Freshman Academy administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers encourage all students to reach their fullest potential. The Career and College Promise in conjunction with Cleveland Community College shows a steady increase in participation in the county.

Instructional leaders at the central office and school administrators endeavor to provide an array of advanced study opportunities for highly gifted students in K-12.

AIG specialists work to meet the needs of the highly gifted through collaboration with other teachers, projects, academic competitions such as First Lego League Robotics, Math Day, Science for a day, Mystery Day, Battle of the Books, and by encouraging students to take advantage of academic opportunities, such as the Duke Talent Identification program.

Practice I

Encourages extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG students.

District Response: Students have opportunities to select from a variety of programs and events. Some of the programs and events may include the following at different grade configurations. Elementary and middle school students may participate in First Lego League Robotics school competitions and Battle of the Books. Elementary students may also participate in a county Math Day, Mystery Day, Science for a day, and curriculum-related field trips, such as a trip to The White Water Center for 5th grade AIG students. Fourth-grade AIG students may take a trip to the Biltmore House for "Mystery of the Biltmore House". Other opportunities include the Duke Talent Identification Program, NC Honors Chorus, school productions, talents shows, art competitions, special programming provided to students through the Cleveland County Arts Council, and an array of other opportunities available to students through schools and the AIG program. Middle school students have many of the same opportunities as elementary students. Many middle schools host science fairs, participate in competitions such as Math Counts, Battle of the Books, Model UN, and Science Olympiad. Middle schools also have clubs, service project clubs, and competitions related to the arts.

High School students select from a variety of opportunities to enhance their development; some of the choices are similar to middle and elementary selections, such as music, drama, art, sports, special programs, poetry, and writing competitions.

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The AIG program will continue to encourage programs and events that are integral in developing the needs and interests of gifted students.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Continue to strengthen communication within the total school community to include guidance counselors and classroom teachers.

Sources of Evidence: CCS Website
AIG specialist meeting agendas and minutes
NDT meetings
Nurturing Criteria sheets
Schedules from the various "special days"

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

Practice A

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

District Response: Curriculum for the K-12 gifted learner is based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The curriculum is enriched, extended and accelerated through the use of a collection of units, lessons and activities, arranged by grade level, which include inter-disciplinary connections, field-trips, project-based learning, research and presentations. Lesson plans/units meet the criteria of a developed rubric. These resources are used to differentiate the curriculum of those students identified as AM, AR, AG, and AI, and IG. Elementary AIG specialists collaborate with other LEA AIG specialists to provide consistency in curriculum and delivery. AIG specialists plan consistency in curriculum and instruction by creating K-2 and 3-5 curriculum menus for AIG pullout instruction.

The AIG curriculum meets the needs of the gifted learner in specific content areas by providing opportunities that enrich, extend and accelerate the NCSCOS. Some of these opportunities are, but not limited to:

*Science for a Day – A day to provide acceleration and enrichment for students in grade 5 to enhance the science curriculum.

* Mystery Day – A day to provide enrichment for students in grade 4 to enhance the ELA curriculum.

* Math Field Day – A day to provide acceleration and enrichment to students in grade 5 to enhance the math curriculum.

* Battle of the Books – A day to provide interaction for teams (often including many AIG students) as they face-off over a list of novels that tie to the ELA curriculum.

Practice B

Employs diverse and effective instructional practices according to students' identified abilities, readiness, interests, and learning profiles, to address a range of learning needs at all grade levels.

District Response: The LEA provides diverse and effective instructional practices for the gifted learner by offering a curriculum that is organized by key concepts and principles of a discipline. The content is real-world with activities that cause them to process information at a higher level of thinking there by creating products which allow them to struggle with meaningful problems and propose defensible solutions. The pace of the curriculum responds to the individual needs of each learner. It

offers the gifted learner a chance to learn at a higher level of difficulty with less scaffolding from the teacher, while at the same time providing for a certain amount of risk taking needed to advance the gifted learner in their endeavors.

The LEA uses a variety of instructional strategies to provide rigor, depth, and complexity to the AIG curriculum. High level questioning, problem-based learning, tiered task/products, group investigations and inquiry based learning are just some of the strategies used to promote a more rigorous curriculum for the gifted learner.

Practice C

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

District Response: The AIG specialist /contact person at each school is given sufficient time to research and identify various research-based supplemental resources that enhance the AIG curriculum. The elementary AIG specialists meet monthly to collaborate and discuss current trends in AIG curriculum and share those ideas to enhance their instruction.

The AIG specialist/contact person at each school collaborates with their curriculum coordinator (CTC) to insure the needs of the gifted learner are being met within the framework of the school's curriculum model.

The elementary AIG specialist are given a chance to attend NCAGT when funds are available in order to gather new programming and research-based resources to support the gifted learner.

The AIG elementary and intermediate program uses a variety of research-based resources within their pull-out program as a part of their extended, accelerated curriculum. Some of these are:

- * The Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program
- * Hands-on Equations
- * Thinking Maps
- * Primary Education Thinking Skills
- * Mentoring Mathematical Minds
- * Project M3

Some of the supplemental resources used in the elementary AIG program are used in an after-school format but may take place during a specified time period of the school day set aside for special enrichment activities (WIN time) such as:

- * First Lego League
- * Battle of the Books
- * Math Team

Middle and high schools use a variety of resources to provide rigor and relevant curriculum and instruction and to extend the AIG instruction. Such as but not limited to:

- * Advanced/accelerated/honors courses
- * Virtual courses
- * College and Career Promise

- * Dual enrollments
- * Early College High School
- * Battle of the books/academic competitions/competitions in the arts
- * Great Books Launchpad
- * Keys to Literacy
- * Summer Ventures
- * First Tech Challenge
- * Model UN
- * Special programs such as Governor's School, legislative nominations, leadership programs, etc.

Practice D

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

District Response: The AIG curriculum fosters the development of 21st century content and skill development opportunities by integrating real world contextual learning into its program. The focus includes global awareness, civic and economic literacies, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration, research skills, applied information and media literacy, and applied life skills for leadership and social responsibility.

Units/lessons/activities which support 21st century learning are created and compiled on the Google Drive which can be accessed through the LEA email server. These lessons are developed through the collaboration of the LEA AIG specialists, regular education teachers and the CTC's at each school. Professional development is made available to each school which addresses the teaching and fostering of 21st century content and skills.

Real world learning opportunities are made available to the gifted learner outside the parameters of the AIG curriculum such as:

- * Model UN
- * First Lego League
- * Maker Space
- * Summer Ventures
- * Mystery Readers Book Club
- * Duke TIP

Practice E

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

District Response: Multiple assessments, both formative and summative, are on-going to plan for differentiation in the AIG curriculum and instruction. Assessment data provides teachers direction in these areas by revealing students' strengths and weaknesses in content areas but also by providing information on the AIG students' interest and learning styles.

The data collected is used to promote and inform flexible grouping practices used throughout the LEA. Research based assessments are used to group students for the purpose of differentiating the curriculum in areas such as math and ELA. Assessments are also used to determine the grouping of students for the purpose of enrichment activities such as Robotics team, math team, and other academic competitions.

Resources are used to support the AIG and classroom teachers' ability to evaluate the data collected such as Booster Shot series on NC AIG Wiki site and collaboration with the CTC at each individual school. The AIG specialist/contact is involved in the collection and interpretation of the data process at each school level.

The assessments used measure a range of students' needs and abilities and include but are not limited to:

- * Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- * Naglieri Non-verbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- * DIBELS
- * Curriculum-based measurements
- * Benchmark testing
- * TRC (Test of Reading Comprehension from mClass)

Formative classroom assessments such as four corners, exit tickets, pre-test, journaling/learning logs, interactive notebooks, peer/self-assessments, think pair share, STAR and accelerated math, standards-based quizzes.

- * Common assessments

Practice F

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

District Response: The social and emotional needs of the AIG learner is met through the use of enrichment classes provided by the classroom teacher, the school counselor and the AIG specialist/contact at each school. These classes may include: 7 Habits of Happy Kids, creative problem solving and more.

The school counselor, in class rooms/small groups provides guidance lessons that address typical social and emotional needs of the gifted learner.

A lending library is available in the AIG classroom at each school for classroom teachers. Resources include materials that highlight best practices for meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Freshman academy has been established in each of the four high schools in the county in order to assist with the transition to high school and build relationships with faculty.

Middle and Intermediate school days are planned at each transition level in order to assist students' transition into a new learning environment and evaluate student interest in elective areas of study.

Practice G

Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students through purposeful and intentional differentiated curriculum and instruction.

District Response: AIG Specialists provide pullout and push-in services to enrichment groups in elementary schools. The K-2 enrichment program targets the potential giftedness in all students, including under-represented populations. AIG Specialist use a variety of resources during enrichment instruction and incorporate technology, 21st century skills, critical thinking and the fostering of creativity into their lessons/units of instruction. The program also addresses the social and emotional needs of the young gifted learner by emphasizing areas of concern that may arise.

AIG Specialist at each school collaborates with classroom teachers to recognize students with outstanding potential and to help plan differentiated instruction and curriculum to develop gifted potential in young students.

K-2 students being served in the enrichment program have the opportunity for formal identification as the need arises.

K-2 enrichment groups allow for flexible grouping based on criteria obtained from various data points such as DIBELS and CBM's. This flexible grouping ensures that all students are exposed to intentional strategies to develop potential.

All third-grade students are evaluated prior to the formal identification process by the AIG specialist at each school.

Practice H

Develops and implements differentiated curriculum and instruction through collaboration among regular education teachers, AIG personnel, and other related instructional staff.

District Response: Elementary and intermediate have AIG specialist at each school. Middle and high schools have an AIG contact/administrator. The AIG specialist/contact provides resources and support to help differentiate the curriculum and instruction for the gifted learner and communicates program initiatives.

Each elementary, intermediate and middle school has a Needs Determination Team (NDT). The chairperson of the NDT is the AIG specialist/contact. School administrators and AIG specialist select NDT members. The NDT serves as the AIG-PLC. The team meets regularly to discuss both placement and gifted educational needs.

School administrators support/schedule collaboration times for grade level/content teachers, special education teachers and CTC's to develop and implement curriculum and instruction differentiation for gifted learners.

Practice I

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

District Response: Annual first quarter AIG parent/parent-student meetings occur at all schools. Service options and DEPs/IDEPs are explained, reviewed and signed at this meeting. The AIG specialist/contact will notify parents that do not attend to arrange another meeting. Documentation noting parent DEP/IDEP meetings will be kept by AIG specialist/contact. Evidence will include more than one attempt to contact parents/guardians.

AIG specialists/contacts schedule a meeting in May/June to transfer folders to the transitional school and discuss unique student needs and characteristics. Sending schools will provide typed documentation of unique needs and characteristics to accommodate gifted learners.

A gifted progress report is included with the regular report card at each marking period to provide additional communication on data, and services regarding the student's progress in the AIG classroom.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: AIG Specialist will collaborate to produce further units/lessons/activities for the students identified as IG. Incorporate social/emotional plans into already established units of study. (Try to include counselors in this role) More formal collaboration time between the AIG Specialist, classroom teachers and CTC's at each school needs to be developed.

Sources of Evidence: * Lesson plan/unit database LEA AIG specialist meeting agendas and minutes

* Agendas and minutes from individual school collaboration meetings with classroom teachers and CTC's

* LEA AIG website and pamphlet

* NDT meetings agendas and minutes

* Documentation from transitional meetings

* DEP'S/IDEP's

* Schedules from: Science for a Day, Math Field Day, Mystery Day, Robotics Day, EBOB, BOB

* List of AIG specialist/contact at each school

* Enrichment criteria sheets.

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

The LEA recruits and retains highly qualified professionals and provides relevant and effective professional development concerning the needs of gifted learners that is on-going 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.

District Response: The LEA employs a licensed educator to oversee the development, implementation, revision, and monitoring of the AIG program in Cleveland County. The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction is the current AIG director. Duties of the AIG Director include: managing the budget of the AIG program, advocating for the needs of gifted students, providing leadership in the planning, development, implementation, and monitoring of the AIG program and plan.

The AIG Director participates in all district leadership activities and collaborates with other leadership to develop appropriate AIG services for all students. The director will also participate actively in regional/area meetings and professional development opportunities, in order to, gather information about new best practices in AIG.

Practice B

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

District Response: AIG specialists are involved in tasks to meet the academic, intellectual, and the social-emotional needs of gifted students. Cleveland County AIG specialists have AIG licensure and participate in additional educational opportunities as well as appropriate PLC's to meet the comprehensive needs of gifted students. Elementary and intermediate AIG specialists attend meetings to review program components, implementation, plan curriculum, enrichment, and activities to meet the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted students.

AIG specialists receive instruction through educational opportunities, meetings, NC State conference, workshops, and LEA staff development. The specialists evaluate the aptness of the educational experiences they facilitate for gifted students through these instructional opportunities.

AIG specialists spend time in AIG job-related tasks including developing lessons/materials for gifted students, testing students, observing students, planning AIG staff development, scheduling collaboration with regular education teachers and school personnel, AIG NDT meetings, teaching and/or facilitating AIG professional development within PLC's.

Practice C

Establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and school administrators.

District Response: All AIG teachers must be either AIG certified or in the process of being AIG certified.

Classroom teachers are instructed annually by our AIG staff via a presentation during the first nine weeks of school. This training includes: characteristics of being gifted, how to identify, the referral process and ways to best meet their needs.

At the secondary level, teachers are trained to teach various AP courses and other advanced courses. Students are also eligible to take NCVPS, CCP courses, and other college level courses.

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.

District Response: The goal of Cleveland County Schools is to place AIG students in the most rigorous and challenging classrooms. Numerous trainings and activities are in place to help our teachers best serve our students. Some of those trainings include:

- Math Foundations
- Reading Foundations
- MTSS Keys to Literacy
- DIBELS/TRC workshops
- Guided Reading Training
- Digital Learning Courses
- On-line NC workshops
- NC AIG Conference
- AIG Booster Shots (from state of NC AIG)
- etc

Practice E

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

District Response: AIG curriculum is integrated within other professional development initiatives across the district. AIG specialists collaborate with instructional support staff to integrate best practices for gifted learners across professional development settings and topics.

DIBELS/TRC workshops
Guided Reading Training
NC AIG Conference

AIG Booster Shots (from state of NC AIG)
Keys to Literacy
Reading and Math Foundations
Eureka Math

Specialists have access to an electronic database of AIG plans on the state website through the NCDPI data warehouse.

Practice F

Provides opportunities for AIG specialists and other teachers to plan, implement, and refine applications of their professional development learning.

District Response: AIG Specialists attend meetings together to allow collaboration and to meet the needs of AIG students. Technologies such as email and Google docs are used to share new ideas and grade appropriate resource materials.

Continuing education, credits, coursework, certificates

We also send several AIG teachers to the state AIG Conference

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Additional training is needed to help regular classroom teachers serve our AIG students in the regular classroom setting.

LEA professional development guidelines need to be established for regular classrooms teachers in order to help with the AIG student placement process.

Sources of Evidence: List of certified teachers at each school AIG PLC minutes/agenda
AIG instructed Booster shots taught to teachers

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

Practice A

Develops partnerships with parents/families that are intentional and meaningful to support the following needs of AIG students:

- * academic and intellectual
- * social and emotional

District Response: Enriching events that are open to AIG students include the Scripps National Spelling Bee, Elementary and Middle School Battle of the Books Robotics, Math Field Day, Cleveland County Honors Chorus, Science Olympiad and a variety of field trips. Parents and families often attend these opportunities. Live-streaming of these events allows parents to view the events if they are unable to attend, keeping them involved through media.

Qualified students may be invited and apply to attend Governor's School. Opportunities to join honor societies include but are not limited to Beta Club, National Honor Society, and Career and Technical Honor Society.

All schools have orientations at which parents can meet teachers and sign/discuss their child's DEP for year.

Parent representatives are members of the Cleveland County AIG Plan Revision Team.

With the majority of our schools receiving Title I funding, all students, including AIG students, can benefit from parent involvement activities. Many schools have science nights open to all students, and all fifth graders and middle/high school students are provided a Career Day opportunity.

Practice B

Shares with stakeholders, including all students' parents/families, information regarding the local AIG program, the local AIG plan, and other policies relating to gifted education.

District Response: Elementary schools have a presentation at a beginning of the year meeting that details our AIG program guidelines.

Teachers meet with parents at the beginning of each year to discuss and sign DEPs. The AIG specialist keeps staff informed of placement and service policies and relays staff development opportunities.

The Cleveland County Schools AIG Plan is available on the district website.

Many of our forms and parent letters have been translated into Spanish.

Practice C

Establishes and utilizes an advisory group to develop, implement, and monitor 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 and families, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff.

District Response: Each school has a Needs Determination Team that may include an administrator, the AIG teacher, a school counselor and several teachers. This team meets to discuss student needs as they apply to services stipulated by our plan.

A diverse group of stakeholders, including parent representatives, are involved in the AIG plan revision. Parents of AIG students participate in the DEP process and support students in extra-curricular activities.

Practice D

Informs parents/families and the community of opportunities available to AIG students on an ongoing basis and in their native language.

District Response: Many of our forms and parent letters have been developed in languages representative of the local AIG populations, mainly Spanish.

Parent contacts are made through a variety of methods, including class newsletters, notes, webpages, texts, emails, phone messages, Twitter, class dojo, Facebook, Instagram, etc. Schools have ESL translators available.

Practice E

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

District Response:

Partnerships with the community and area businesses provide support and resources to the program. The local media provides support and coverage of events involving gifted students. The AIG program's affiliation with the Cleveland County Schools Educational Foundation (CCSEF) makes academic and enrichment opportunities/competitions available for students. Math Day and Robotics are two of the opportunities that the GCCSEF supports. Both are covered by local media and are live-streamed.

Local board members are present at many AIG events and activities involving gifted students. The Cleveland County Arts Council provides special programming to students, including gifted students.

Partnerships that enhance AIG programs include local businesses, the Dover Foundation, the CCSEF, Gardner-Webb University, Cleveland Community College, local media, Nippon Glass, Wal-

Mart Distribution Center, REA, Clearwater, Laughlin Furniture, Turner Trucking, Celanese Foundation, etc. These partnerships provide students 21st century academic and enrichment opportunities as well as scholarship opportunities for seniors.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Increased opportunities for parent involvement in the AIG program are always beneficial.

Middle and high schools should consistently have dedicated events for parents to sign and discuss their child's DEP.

Continue seeking out additional community sponsorships.

Sources of Evidence: Shelby Star/Shelby Shopper coverage of events
Live streaming of events for parents who cannot attend
Cleveland Community College broadcast on C-19
School orientations
Parent signatures on DEPs
AIG Plan Revision Team
Parent event sign-in sheets
Career Day
Field trip permission forms
CCS website
Newsletter, parent notes and emails, Class Dojo messages
Translated documents
Event programs listing sponsors

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 academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Practice A

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

District Response: Cleveland County Schools develops and maintains a four year comprehensive AIG plan that supports and assures the incorporation of programs and services that are legislated by the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction. The plan is reviewed and evaluated annually by the local board and any changes that are deemed necessary are made at the time of review. The plan is revised by a committee of stakeholders as mandated by the state, every four years. At this time, each component of the plan is discussed and necessary revisions are made to ensure the continuation of programs and services addressing the unique academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of the gifted learners. When changes are made, the AIG Director submits the changes to the local Board of Education for final approval. The revisions are then forwarded to the Department of Public Instruction.

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.

District Response: Cleveland County Schools is committed to ensuring conformity in the implementation of our AIG plan. The identification processes and service delivery models are consistent across the county. The AIG teachers meet frequently to plan, develop and strategize ways to maximize the teaching/learning opportunities for identified students. As referred to in other parts of this plan, a number of researched-based programs, resources and units of study are utilized consistently in each school at each grade level.

Also, the same identification process is utilized across the county. K-12 teachers responsible for the referral, testing, and placement processes are properly trained to ensure consistency in the service delivery models offered county-wide to our students.

All procedures are shared with regular classroom teachers, administrators parents, and all other stakeholders on a yearly basis. This information is also posed on the AIG website.

AIG Director serves as a member of the district level instructional team allowing for direct sharing of program information and monitoring of program implementation.

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.

District Response: Cleveland County Schools AIG Director oversees the expenditures of the state funds and works collaboratively with Cleveland County Schools Finance Department to ensure that all allocated funds are appropriately dispersed. State funds allocated for the local AIG program are used in the following ways:

AIG Licensed teachers' salaries and benefits

Curriculum resources and materials

Curriculum development

AIG/Advanced Placement teacher training

Advanced Placement courses and resources

Technology materials

Workshop expenses

AIG Conferences

Field Trips (as related to gifted education)

AIG sponsored countywide competitions and initiative

Special Programs for gifted learners- Science for a Day and Mystery Day, etc.

Practice D

Maintains, analyzes, and shares student achievement, student growth, and annual drop-out data for AIG students.

District Response: On a yearly basis, Cleveland County Schools maintains, analyzes and shares student performance growth data (in grades K-12) with all stakeholders including the local school board, central office personnel, school administrators, teachers, and parents. We not only look at yearly growth but also growth over time, in both elementary and middle schools. AIG teachers and regular classroom teachers use this data to plan and implement appropriate educational opportunities for gifted learners. The growth data we analyze and share includes:

End of Grade tests - reading results

End of Grade tests - math results

End of Grade tests - science results

County benchmark scores

Quarterly classroom performance data (report cards)

Informal/Formal assessments

Teacher led conferences with students, identifying areas of strength and weakness.

Practice E

Monitors the representation, performance, and retention of under-represented populations in the local AIG program, including students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

District Response: Cleveland County Schools AIG Department has worked diligently to be more inclusive of underrepresented populations. The Enrichment Program in our elementary schools, grades K-2, has given us an opportunity to identify students who demonstrate gifted potential. Many of these students do eventually meet the criteria for placement in the gifted program starting in grade 3. As a result, our percentage of identified minority and low socioeconomic students and twice-exceptional students is on the rise. However, we realize that there continues to be a need to offer more accelerated opportunities for our highly gifted students.

Annually, we support and encourage the representation and retention of underrepresented populations in our local AIG program in the following ways:

Implementing our Enrichment Program, Grades K-2, to include minority and low socioeconomic students who display gifted tendencies.

Work with teachers to identify English Language Learners who are very strong mathematically.

Work with special education teachers to identify students who have dual exceptionalities and offer accommodations to ensure successful learning experiences.

Utilize alternative assessments and nonverbal tests, such as the CogAT, to assist in the identification of students.

Offer accelerated services such as grade and/or content acceleration, early college, AP coursework, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, etc. for highly gifted students.

Encourage students to participate in extra-curricular opportunities that support academic excellence such as Battle of the Books, Robotics, Math Team, Governor's School, Early College, etc.

Practice F

Maintains current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students.

District Response: All AIG teachers in Cleveland County who currently serve students in grades K-5 are either AIG licensed or are actively pursuing licensure from an accredited university. Teachers work with the AIG Director and Human Resources Department in regards to AIG licensure and other Professional Development requirements.

Teachers in grades 9-12 who are teaching AP classes have already attended or will attend College Board Summer Institutes for their respective disciplines. At least once every five years, teachers may request to attend a College Board sponsored one-day update training session. These AP teachers also attend county PLC meetings to discuss strategies and effective teaching methods.

Practice G

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

District Response: Cleveland County School students, parents, teachers, and administrators are given an opportunity to complete a survey to share positive aspects as well as points for growth. The results of these surveys will be shared with stakeholders. We will make this information available to our stakeholders through:

Scheduled parent meetings

Faculty meetings

Principal/Assistant Principal meetings

Practice H

Utilizes multiple sources of data to review and revise the local AIG program and plan during comprehensive program evaluation.

District Response: Cleveland County Schools AIG Department uses multiple sources of data to assist with program and plan reviews and revisions including:

Advisory Board's feedback

End-of-Grade/End-of-Course/Advanced Placement test results

Students' classroom performance

Cleveland County's vision for academic success

Practice I

Disseminates all data from evaluation of the local AIG program to the public.

District Response: Cleveland County Schools AIG Department recognizes the need to disseminate program evaluation data to stakeholders. Since this data is used to evaluate and revise the local plan and programs, we believe it is imperative to make this data readily accessible to stakeholders. Ways to accomplish this task include sharing data with the following groups:

Staff members at individual schools

Countywide Parent Advisory Group

AIG Advisory Board

Instructional Committee of the Cleveland County Board of Education

Principals and Assistant Principals

Practice J

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents and families 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.

District Response: Cleveland County Schools AIG Department protects the rights of AIG students by requiring parental consent for student identification and placement, providing parents a copy of Cleveland County Schools Procedures to Resolve Disagreements (online), housing AIG students folders and personal information in locked file cabinets, and securing all student information that is transmitted electronically.

In the event parents/guardians, disagree with a decision, Cleveland county schools AIG Department has local procedures for resolving disagreements. This begins with a school level meeting with Needs Determination Team (NDT Team), and progresses to an administrative review at the system level, including the Director of the AIG Program.

The following policies, forms, and processes are used to safeguard students' rights:

(Policies)

The AIG Plan includes a policy to resolve disagreements that is defined according to the district's

Grievance Policy 4600 - Student and Parent Grievances (adopted September, 26, 2005)

The Policy Reads in Short:

A student, parent, or guardian may initiate the grievance procedure to appeal any final decision of school personnel within the school system.

Step 1 - Principal Conference--- The student, parent, or guardian wishing to invoke the grievance procedure shall request in writing to discuss the grievance and possible solutions. (Must be done within 30 days after the action or condition. The principal has 5 school days to grant the meeting once the request is received. Only the parents, guardian, and student may attend the meeting. The principal will notify in writing, his/her decision within 5 school days.

Step 2 - Appeal to Superintendent - If the grievance is not resolved at step 1, the student, parents or guardian, may appeal the principal's decision in writing to the superintendent. This appeal must occur within 5 school days. The superintendent or designee shall review the grievance within 5 school days. A written response will be sent to the family unless additional time or information is requested.

Step 3 - Appeal to the Board - If the grievance is not resolved and it involves an alleged violation of state or local board policy, it may be appealed in Writing to the CCS Board of Education. This appeal must occur within 10 school days following the written receipt from the superintendent. This review will be limited to written records only unless the board determines that additional information is necessary. The board may affirm, reverse, or modify his decision.

Notes: If at any point school administration does not adhere to the timeframe allotted, the grievant may advance to the next level. Also, a grievance may be voluntarily withdrawn at any level.

District policies safeguarding the rights of the AIG students and their parents is located on the CCS website.

Documentation of formal grievances and LEA responses will be on file in the Cleveland County Schools AIG Director's or Coordinator's office.

Forms are developed to obtain informed consent for identification and services.

Have rights translated and available in various formats and in the students' native language(s).

Connect local rights to parent rights in Article 9B.(Forms)

AIG Historical Data Sheet

AIG Nomination Letter/Modified Renzulli-Hartman Scale for Teachers

AIG Referral Data Record

AIG Needs Determination Team Decision

Academically/Intellectually Gifted Services Prior Notice and Parent/Guardian Consent For Evaluation

Academically/Intellectually Gifted Services Invitation to Conference

K-5 Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)

(Processes)

Elementary Students:

Students are placed in appropriate grade-level classrooms.

If a student transfers during the school year, school personnel notify the AIG teacher assigned to that school and appropriate placement is determined after reviewing the student's most current testing data and classroom performance.

Additional testing is administered if warranted.

AIG Team takes appropriate action.

Middle School Students:

The AIG Specialist will transition the student records to the middle school by contacting the Assistant Principal in charge of AIG Folders at the middle school level. This will ensure appropriate class placement.

Students will be flagged and data reviewed after the 5th grade EOG tests are completed. If a student performs at the 92% or better, more testing will occur to consider placement in the middle school grades. This testing may occur at the end of the student's 5th grade year, if time allows. If not, further testing will occur the following school year.

High School Students:

Students self-select and counseled to select classes using criteria for honors, advanced placement course offerings, CCVA, and CCP Courses for dual enrollment.

Ideas for Strengthen the Standard: Revisit AIG Rosters at the end of each year and prioritize teacher placements and budgets

Try to increase PLC time and collaboration to build leadership among our AIG staff

Sources of Evidence: New AIG Plan

CCS Website

PLC meetings and minutes

Board approval of the plan

Yearly reports from testing and accountability

NDT team members verification

CCS Policy Manual

Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):

min20190513.pdf (*Local Board Approval Document*)