

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

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 05-NOV-19

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Lee 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 to 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, Lee County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Lee County Schools Vision for local AIG program:** With a mindset of talent development, Lee County Schools seeks to recognize potential in all student populations. Recognizing that gifted behaviors may be evident in a student's aptitude, academic performance, motivation, or social interactions, Lee County Schools is committed to providing an academic, intellectual, and social/emotional support system so that students may reach their full potential by matching service with the students' identified abilities. In partnership with parents and community, Lee County Schools will identify, develop, and serve gifted potential in students.

**GOALS OF THE AIG PROGRAM:**

- 1. Identify academically and intellectually gifted students equitably across subgroups in order to provide appropriately differentiated learning opportunities. Develop gifted potential in students.**
- 2. Differentiate and enrich the core curriculum to challenge advanced learners in their identified area(s) of strength as part of an overall educational program that supports excellence for all students.**
- 3. Provide information regarding opportunities to earn licensure in gifted education so that teachers responsible for teaching gifted students acquire and develop an appropriate base of knowledge and methodology in gifted education.**

4. Set high expectations for academically and intellectually gifted students and support their attainment of knowledge, skills, and work habits to promote their becoming lifelong learners and productive members of society.
5. Provide appropriate counseling and support services to assure gifted students' social and emotional well-being is addressed.
6. Provide opportunities for gifted students to spend appropriate time with other students who are similar to themselves in order to foster cognitive, academic, and social growth.
7. Provide additional support to develop "gifted behaviors" in students who may not be maximizing their abilities or who may be under-represented in gifted populations.
8. Provide young students (K-3) with access to an appropriately stimulating and challenging education to shape their learning habits and challenge and develop their abilities.
9. Use an identification procedure with multiple criteria to appraise student need for differentiated service(s).

#### **TARGETS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:**

- T-1. Retain a full-time AIG Specialist at each elementary school.
- T-2. Provide training and implementation of the PETS talent development program at the alternative elementary school and enrichment training for all Pre-K teachers.
- T-3. Promote a mindset of growth and talent development.
- T-4. Expand the role of the AIG Specialist to serve the total school community as a differentiation coach/resource.
- T-5. Support/promote the research-based cluster model for placing students in homerooms, which facilitates differentiation and fosters growth in all students.
- T-6. Match AIG State-licensed teachers, or teachers who have the local AIG certificate, with clusters of AIG students. Encourage teachers to obtain the state license or local certificate.
- T-7. Provide staff development regarding the screening, referral, and identification processes (Standard 1) and service/differentiation (Standard 3) in the AIG Plan.
- T-8. Encourage collaboration between elementary schools to ensure consistency and equitable services for gifted students across the district.
- T-9. Meet with AIG Specialists monthly to promote consistency of service, receive feedback, and provide training/support.
- T-10. Offer district-wide parent education/information sessions throughout the year.
- T-11. Offer after-school enrichment opportunities and other extracurricular activities for interested students.
- T-12. Provide staff development for counselors, teachers and administrators with regard to the social/emotional needs of students who exhibit gifted behaviors.
- T-13. Provide staff development for all teachers regarding instructional strategies that enable visual/spatial learners to more successfully process content.
- T-14. Collaborate with AVID, MTSS Teams, ESL, EC and other district departments to support

underachieving AIG students.

#### **TARGETS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS:**

- T-1. Promote the AIG program in middle school with all stakeholders.**
- T-2. Provide an AIG Specialist for the middle schools. (Secondary AIG Specialist)**
- T-3. Encourage collaboration between middle schools to ensure consistency and equitable services for gifted students across the district.**
- T-4. Offer district-wide parent education/information sessions during the year.**
- T-5. Offer an elective course taught by an AIG Specialist or teacher with AIG local certificate.**
- T-6. Develop a process so that classroom teachers know which students on their rosters are identified and how they are identified.**
- T-7. Provide staff development for guidance counselors, teachers and administrators with regard to the social/emotional needs of students who exhibit gifted behaviors.**
- T-8. Encourage collaboration between the AIG Department and middle schools in the registration process, and in the development of a 4-year education plan/DEP (Differentiated Education Plan) for high school that begins with rising 8th graders for identified students.**
- T-9. Encourage middle school teachers to obtain the local AIG certificate or State AIG Licensure. Provide ongoing differentiation training and support.**
- T-10. Match AIG State-licensed teachers, or teachers who have the local AIG certificate, with clusters of AIG students in advanced courses.**
- T-11. Collaborate with AVID, MTSS Teams, ESL, EC, etc to support underachieving AIG students.**
- T-12. Collaborate with middle school and high school personnel to promote opportunities available in high school, such as: NAF Academies, CTE offerings, International Baccalaureate Program (IB), Honors and AP classes, Governor's School, Summer Ventures, etc.**
- T-13. Provide staff development regarding the screening, referral, and identification processes (Standard 1) and service/differentiation (Standard 3) in the AIG Plan.**

#### **TARGETS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS:**

- T-1. Promote the AIG program in high school with all stakeholders.**
- T-2. Provide a Secondary AIG Specialist for the high schools. In addition, each high school will have an AIG Lead Contact Teacher.**
- T-3. Offer student/parent information session/booth at Open House, orientation, curriculum nights, registration, etc.**
- T-4. Offer extracurricular opportunities for AIG students to meet together for purposeful discussions such AIG Seminars or problem-based learning activities with a focus on global or community related solutions.**
- T-5. Develop a process so that classroom teachers know which students on their rosters are identified and how they are identified. (AR, AM, AG, IG, AI)**
- T-6. Provide staff development for guidance counselors, teachers and administrators with regard to the academic, intellectual and social/emotional needs of students who exhibit gifted behaviors.**

- T-7. Create a collaboration between the AIG Department and high schools in the registration process, and in the development of a flexible 4-year education plan/DEP (Differentiated Education Plan) for AIG students, including personal goals for growth and self-challenge.
- T-8. Encourage more high school teachers to obtain the Local AIG Certificate and/or State AIG Add-on Licensure.
- T-9. Match AIG State-licensed teachers, and teachers who have the Local AIG Certificate, with advanced/AIG students in higher-level courses. This includes teachers that have received AP training through the College Board.
- T-10. Collaborate with AVID, EC, ESL, and other support personnel to support under-represented populations of AIG students. Under-represented populations include economically disadvantaged, culturally/ethnically diverse, twice-exceptional, highly gifted, and English language learners.
- T-11. Collaborate with high school personnel to promote various pathways, such as: the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB), NAF academies and CTE options.

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

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$897671.00</b>	<b>\$93298.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

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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:** The main goal of Lee County Schools' AIG screening and referral process is to ensure that all populations of students are reviewed for the need for gifted services at multiple points across their educational journey.

### **Screening:**

Lee County Schools seeks to promote and support gifted behaviors prior to formal identification with a K-3 nurturing program. AIG screening for student identification begins with nurturing using the Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) in K-3 (whole class and small group), and the use of Teacher Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) portfolio in K-2 for students exhibiting gifted behaviors. These folders follow students from grade to grade until the end of 5th grade to provide data to support their need for differentiated instruction. Screening also occurs through the review of student data such as mClass, state reading and math assessments, and local benchmarks.

Although students may be referred for identification in any grade, Lee County Schools conducts a broad sweep of all students in 3rd grade to screen for students that may qualify for the gifted program. An aptitude test, the CogAT (Test of Cognitive Abilities), is administered to all students in third grade in the fall of each school year. It is used as a screening instrument and is one of the multiple criteria used to formally identify gifted students. The CogAT gives three subtest scores: Verbal (reading), Quantitative (math), and Nonverbal (visual/spatial). These subtests will be referred to by initials V, Q, and NV in this plan. National or local norms may be used from the CogAT. Other screening occurs in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades through the review of student data such as, mClass, BOG, EOG, local quarterly benchmarks, ESL progression, and teacher observation.

In the middle schools and high schools, screening is ongoing through the review of all available data for students such as EOG/EOC, ACT, SAT, AP, IB, ESL progression, local benchmarks and teacher observation. Also reviewed are students who excel in atypical learning environments, or exhibit high interest/participation in enriching extra-curricular activities.

Beginning with this plan for 2019-2022, screening using standardized test data will include the disaggregation of data by student subgroups. The top 10 percent of student subgroups will be screened for possible referral. This screening will include looking at multiple criteria (see artifacts list in Practice 1B) for evidence that a student referral is warranted. That includes looking at the progression rate of students served in the ESL program and meeting with teachers of students in the Exceptional Children Program to review individual IQ scores/gifted behaviors that might indicate a need for AIG referral.

Referral:

Referrals may be made by a student (self-nomination), parent, teacher, administrator or other school staff member. Referrals to be evaluated for gifted services are accepted all year long. AIG Team decisions may be made at any point during the school year, as the need arises. In general, students are screened and referred during the school year, student data is collected and compiled for the school's AIG Team to review by the end of 3rd quarter. The AIG Team decides if additional testing or other data is needed. The goal is for all AIG identification decisions to be made by the AIG Team by the end of the school year. \*Any individual student referral (non-screening) must have a Summary of Student Eligibility form completed, Team evaluation and decision made, and parent conference held to complete the process. A parent conference must be held to share all information and the AIG Team decision regardless of whether the student qualified as gifted or not.

**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:** North Carolina's state definition of AIG Students, Article 9B, (N.C.G.S. § 115C150.5), states that, "Academically or intellectually gifted students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Academically or Intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor."

In compliance with the Article 9B, Lee County Schools has developed identification criteria to recognize potential and identify students exhibiting high performance, or potential to perform at high levels, in academic (reading and/or math) areas and intellectual areas.

A body of evidence consisting of qualitative and quantitative data will be gathered on each student that is referred for identification in order to create a comprehensive learner profile to be reviewed by a school's AIG Team for possible identification.

Standardized test scores should have been administered within the last two years. National, state or local norms (when available) may be used, whichever benefits the student. When using an IQ test, the full scale IQ or a relevant subtest may be used.

The checklist of gifted behaviors should be completed by the current-year teacher whenever possible.

A single criterion, if superior, may reveal a need for service. However, no single criterion can eliminate a student from identification.

**Identification Criteria for Grades K – 12:**

Identification areas include intellectually gifted (IG), academically and intellectually gifted (AI), academically gifted in reading (AR), academically gifted in math (AM), and academically gifted in reading and math (AG).

**IG - Intellectually Gifted** = 95% or higher on an IQ test or on the verbal, quantitative or the nonverbal subtest of the CogAT or other aptitude test.

**AI - Academically and Intellectually Gifted** = Meets the criteria for reading, math and intellectually gifted.

**Academic Pathway 1:**

\***AR** - Academically Gifted in Reading = 90% or higher on an IQ test or aptitude test (use verbal subtest) AND 90% or higher on a reading achievement test.

\***AM** - Academically Gifted in Math = 90% or higher on an IQ test or aptitude test (use quantitative subtest or quantitative/nonverbal subtest) AND 90% or higher on a math achievement test.

\***AG** - Academically Gifted = Meets the criteria for reading (AR) and math (AM).

.....**OR**.....

**Academic Pathway 2:**

\***AR** - Academically Gifted in Reading = 85% or higher on an IQ test or aptitude test (use verbal subtest) AND 85% or higher on a reading achievement test, AND a minimum of two \*\*artifacts showing clear supporting evidence for student identification.

\***AM** - Academically Gifted in Math = 85% or higher on an IQ test or aptitude test (use quantitative subtest or quantitative/nonverbal subtest), AND 85% or higher on a math achievement test, AND a minimum of two \*\*artifacts showing clear supporting evidence for student identification.

\***AG** - Academically Gifted = Meets the criteria for reading (AR) and math (AM).

\*\*Artifacts can be both quantitative and qualitative, showing clear supporting evidence for student identification. Artifacts may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Checklist of gifted behaviors
- Above grade level work
- Check-ins /quarterly assessments
- Student interest inventory
- Student motivation inventory
- Interviews



- Anecdotal notes (extenuating circumstances, adaptability, etc)
- WIDA/Access data (ESL progression)
- TOPS portfolios
- 3rd grade beginning-of-grade (BOG) in reading
- mClass data
- Outstanding academic achievement outside of the classroom
- Student writing reflections/achievements

Approved alternative assessments for use in the identification of academically and/or intellectually gifted students include, but are not limited to, the following:

\*Assessments of Intellect, Ability, or Aptitude:

- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scale (RIAS)
- Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children
- Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities
- Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT)

\*Assessments of Achievement:

- Iowa Test of Basic Skills
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement
- Weschler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)

If testing is completed by a private psychologist, or school personnel, the most recent form/version of the test must be utilized in order for the results to be valid for possible use. (The Department of Public Instruction has given a general rule of thumb that school psychologists have two years to transition to the most recent instrument.) Use of independent test results is at the discretion of the school AIG Team and/or the AIG Coordinator under the advisement of the Exceptional Children Department, if needed.

If the AIG Team determines that individual testing is needed, the AIG Specialist or AIG Chairperson will obtain signed parent consent with the Consent for Evaluation form. If the school psychologist is administering the additional testing, the student will undergo a vision and hearing screening if one has not been completed in the current school year. If this screening has taken place during the current school year, the date of screening and results may be documented on the Health Screening and Assessment Data form.

An AIG Specialist may administer the CogAT in small groups, or to individuals, as needed for any student that may have missed the whole grade screenings at 3rd grade or for any referred student whose existing aptitude score is over two years old. Individual administration of the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test (NNAT) may also be used.

**AIG TRANSFER STUDENTS WITHIN LEE COUNTY SCHOOLS:**

Parents of AIG students transferring from one Lee County School (LCS) to another LCS should have the opportunity to meet with the AIG teacher to discuss the receiving school's plan for service and DEP as stated in Lee County School's local AIG plan. It is expected that, as a courtesy, the teacher from the sending school will contact the teacher at the receiving school to make sure the student begins services upon arrival at the new school, if transfers are within the system.

### AIG TRANSFER STUDENTS FROM OUTSIDE OF LEE COUNTY SCHOOLS:

Every effort is made for an AIG student who was formerly placed in a gifted program outside our district, state, or country to receive services as soon as possible after enrollment in a Lee County School. The AIG Coordinator and the AIG PowerSchool data manager should be notified of this transfer into LCS via email by the AIG Specialist at elementary, or the PowerSchool data manager at middle school and high school. Upon enrollment, students will be placed in the gifted program with written and/or verbal AIG identification documentation from the previous school. The student's previous identification criteria will be reviewed by the AIG Coordinator and used to determine gifted services. An AIG Transfer Student form is completed by the AIG Coordinator, and a DEP (elementary and middle school) is completed by the student's teachers. Documents are shared at a parent conference in which parent and relevant content teacher(s) signatures are obtained.

Students who transfer to LCS without documentation of placement in a gifted program will be treated as any other student in our system in relation to screening, referral and identification procedures.

If a student withdraws to move within the district, or outside the district, the AIG Coordinator and the AIG PowerSchool data manager should be notified of this move via email by the AIG Specialist at elementary, or the PowerSchool data manager at middle school and high school. This will ensure appropriate coding within the information system as well to ensure the sending of appropriate information to the student's next school.

### **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:** Lee County Schools continues to seek ways to identify under-represented populations in the AIG program and strives to align representation in the gifted program with that of the district student population. School subgroup percentages are compared to AIG representation percentages for those subgroups to determine which subgroups are under-represented in AIG identification and service.

The district and AIG personnel review the performance of student subgroups on the North Carolina EOGs as achievement indicators and EVAAS data for growth.

Tentative plans have been made to purchase CogAT 8 as the universal screener for aptitude at the elementary level. This decision was made to offer a more updated version of the CogAT, as well as, to provide a less biased version of the test. This should help capture more of our under-represented students.

During the screening process, the school AIG Team and/or the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team disaggregates data, such as CogAT scores and standardized achievement tests, quarterly assessments, etc by subgroups of students as data is collected during the year. Along with other students who may be referred, students in the top 10% of each subgroup on the CogAT will be screened for potential referral.

In this plan cycle, the identification criteria has been revised to include an alternative academic pathway to reading and/or math identification, which considers “artifacts” (see Standard 1B) of supporting evidence. This criteria includes qualitative and quantitative data, such as, TOPS portfolios, a checklist of gifted behaviors, mClass, ESL progression, etc.

School AIG Teams actively seek under-served populations who are demonstrating evidence of gifted potential. To ensure accessibility for language learners, exceptional education students, intellectually gifted, economically disadvantaged, etc., the district researches alternative assessment measures for identification. For example, school AIG teams consider alternative tests such as nonverbal measures or measures in the student’s native language. Psychologists may be invited to the AIG Team meetings in order to make professional judgments regarding the most appropriate test for the child under consideration.

Psychologists assist in identification when needed by administering individual aptitude, intelligence and achievement tests and making recommendations related to AIG placement. The Lee County AIG Program has additional aptitude test(s) such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test Individual (NNATI) and/or the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) that can be administered by the AIG Specialist, AIG Lead Specialist, or AIG Coordinator.

AIG Specialist, AIG Lead teachers, and school AIG Teams collaborate with English Learner (EL) and Exceptional Children (EC) staff to consider students who quickly test out of ESL and exceptional education students who may qualify as twice exceptional. An AIG staff member attends IEP meetings of any twice exceptional student.

AIG staff analyzes data from TOPS and PETS to seek correlations between students serviced K-3 and identified/not identified within different subgroups by 4th grade.

The AIG Coordinator, AIG Lead Specialist, and AIG Specialists assigned to schools, provide ongoing training with all teachers (classroom, EC, EL, resource, etc.), administrators, and counselors on how to best recognize gifted potential in students, especially in under-represented populations. All of Lee County Schools’ elementary schools are designated as Title I schools. Thirty-seven percent of students in our school district are Hispanic.

An annual review is conducted by the AIG Team at each school and by the AIG Advisory Council to evaluate effectiveness in identifying under-represented populations.

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** The AIG Coordinator creates and implements AIG screening, referral, and identification timelines and related checklists for teachers, principals and the AIG Specialist at each school to ensure each step of all processes are completed consistently across schools. Staff

development is provided for school staff including teachers, AIG contact teachers and AIG Team members at each school by the AIG Coordinator, the District AIG Lead Specialist, and AIG Specialists. This staff development includes reviewing changes in the 2019-2022 AIG Plan regarding screening and referral processes and revised identification criteria.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist meet with the AIG Specialists from the schools at least quarterly to explain procedures and give information for specialists to share with their school staff. Individual meetings are held to share timelines and procedures with secondary teachers serving as AIG Contact teachers for their schools. Timelines and checklists are shared with teachers and administrators throughout the year to serve as reminders and to “chunk” processes to be completed.

AIG Specialists, along with their AIG Team members, create a Data Collection Spreadsheet, to document all students being referred during the school year. The spreadsheet contains all student data to be considered and any decisions made by the AIG Team. All students who are referred are listed on the Data Collection Spreadsheet and remain there, whether the team decision was to qualify or not. During the identification meetings, data on the spreadsheet is displayed for the team to review/discuss together.

All completed Data Collection Spreadsheets are shared electronically with the AIG Coordinator at Central Office and saved to the school’s AIG flash drive. Minutes of the AIG Team meetings are kept in the AIG Green Notebook at each school or in an AIG digital file. Minutes of AIG Team meetings are also shared electronically with the AIG Coordinator.

AIG Specialists meet with teachers in grade level PLCs to explain how to complete the Teacher’s Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) portfolio, the checklist of gifted behaviors, characteristics of students exhibiting intellectually gifted behaviors, gifted behaviors of language learners, etc.

The AIG Coordinator attends all district Administrative Meetings, Directors’ Meetings, and Curriculum and Instruction Meetings throughout the year to share AIG processes, timelines, updates, highlights, etc.

### Basic Elementary Timeline for Screening, Referral and Identification

#### Beginning of the year:

- \*Share screening and referral processes and identification criteria with staff
- \*TOPS portfolio training for K-2 teachers
- \*Share/explain new checklist of gifted behaviors (3rd-5th teachers)
- \*Begin creating/updating Data Collection Spreadsheets
- \*Parent notification of CogAT administration (3rd grade)
- \*CogAT given in November to all 3rd graders

#### Middle of the year:

- \*CogAT meeting for AIG Specialists (January)
- \*Each school analyzes CogAT data in January (gather initial pool of students)
- \*Identify which students in pool will need additional evidence/artifacts and begin gathering the evidence/artifacts

End of third quarter:

- \*Teacher(s) complete the checklist of gifted behaviors and complete any anecdotal notes.
- \*Discussion of students in the pool
- \*Collect more data as needed. (additional testing, etc.)

End of the year:

- \*Analyze all data and evidence
- \*Identify students
- \*Hold parent conferences
- \*Send AIG green folder to AIG Coordinator for review
- \*Enter identified students' data into PowerSchool

Basic Secondary Timeline for Screening, Referral, and Identification

Beginning of the year:

- \*Share screening and referral processes and identification criteria with staff
- \*Share/explain new checklist of gifted behaviors and other artifacts
- \*Begin creating/updating Data Collection Spreadsheets

Middle of the year:

- \*Analyze student data and gather initial pool of students for referral
- \*By student, determine what additional evidence/artifacts may support identification and begin gathering the evidence/artifacts

End of third quarter:

- \*Teacher(s) complete the checklist of gifted behaviors and complete any anecdotal notes.
- \*Discussion of students in the pool
- \*Collect more data as needed.
- \*Complete additional testing, if needed

End of the year:

- \*Analyze all data and evidence
- \*Identify students
- \*Hold parent conferences
- \*Send AIG green folder to AIG Coordinator for review
- \*Enter identified students' data into PowerSchool

The basic elementary and secondary timelines serve as our general sweep for students exhibiting gifted potential. However, individual referrals and identifications may be made at any time during the school year.

K-3 Nurturing for all students:

All students in K-3 have an opportunity to participate in enrichment/nurturing opportunities in Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) and Jacob's Ladder reading materials. These materials aid in developing thinking skills and extend gifted potential for learners who have indicated such a need. K-2 teachers are trained in the use of the Teacher Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) Portfolio to

help recognize talent and support students with gifted characteristics. They are also trained in strategies and materials that support differentiation for students with gifted characteristics. The K-2 TOPS portfolios follow the K-2 student to the next grade level. This provides the next year's teacher with valuable information about observed characteristics from the previous year's teacher. TOPS portfolios may be used in the identification process as "artifacts" of supporting evidence.

In 3rd grade, teachers use the district-approved checklist of gifted behaviors to document gifted characteristics and behaviors. At the beginning of the year in 3rd grade, a checklist should be started on any student that has a TOPS portfolio from any grade K-2 and for any other student exhibiting gifted behaviors.

### **The School AIG Team**

In the past two years, schools in the Lee County district have been implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). Within the MTSS structure, data-based problem solving teams have been created at each school to more closely and effectively address the instructional and behavioral needs of students. Some schools have merged the AIG Team into a team within the MTSS framework. Other schools have developed "instructional teams" within the AVID structure which also includes the responsibilities of the traditional AIG Team. Elementary schools typically have a traditional AIG Team structure. Along with monitoring screening, referral and identification processes, the AIG Team and/or MTSS Team addresses the academic, intellectual and social/emotional needs of all advanced learners and gifted students.

The traditional AIG Team includes individuals with a background in gifted education and others. A team/committee is established at each school site and includes the principal (or principal's designee), AIG teacher(s), ESL teacher(s), EC teacher(s), and guidance counselor. In addition, at the elementary level, one classroom teacher per grade level also serves on the AIG Team. At the middle school, at least two teachers (ideally one being advanced English Language Arts and the other advanced math) per grade level serve on the AIG Team. The high school team includes teacher representatives from advanced classes and other school staff as needed.

The AIG Specialist, if assigned to a school, serves as the chairperson of the AIG Team. The school psychologist should attend as needed.

AIG Team members may volunteer and/or be nominated by the principal to serve. It is suggested that members serve for 2 to 3 years, with experienced members rotating off and new members joining the team in such a way the AIG Team always consists of experienced and inexperienced members.

Classroom teachers, or other staff, nominating a student for referral should attend the AIG Team meeting (at the time pertinent to that student) to share supporting information about the referred student, but will not participate in any committee decision regarding that particular student.

Each school submits an AIG Team Membership form, listing the members of the school AIG Team, to the AIG Coordinator in September of the new school year.

### **AIG Team: Decision-Making Process for Screening/Referrals/Identifications**

STEP 1: Monitor ongoing screenings.

- STEP 2: Analyze screening results to create a pool of students for referral.
- STEP 3: Collect data/evidence/artifacts in the Data Collection Spreadsheet
- STEP 4: Review all data/evidence/artifacts.
- STEP 5: Determine which students continue in the referral process.
- STEP 7: Collect other data/evidence/artifacts.
- STEP 8: Make final decisions for identification and collect team members' signatures.
- STEP 9: Individual parent conferences held to share team decision and to obtain consent for services for identified students.
- STEP 10: Students' AIG green folders are sent to AIG Coordinator for review/audit.
- STEP 11: Identified students' data is entered into PowerSchool

\*The Data Collection Spreadsheets for each school are periodically reviewed by the AIG Coordinator and/or AIG Lead Specialists throughout the steps listed above and at the end of the year.

### **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 Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist conduct training with AIG Specialists and AIG Contact teachers at the beginning of the school year. This training includes sharing the revised plan highlights, calendars, district initiatives, and refresher training for the screening, referral, and identification processes.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist conduct an AIG Program Overview training with all certified staff at each school at the beginning of the school year. A PowerPoint presentation is shared. Elementary AIG Specialist conduct this training at their assigned school.

The AIG Coordinator shares screening, referral and identification processes in Central Office Directors' Meetings, the superintendent's Administrative Meetings, Curriculum and Instruction Meetings, Principal Meetings, etc.

The identification criteria and highlights of the gifted program are printed in the Sanford Herald at the beginning of the school year.

The AIG Coordinator and District AIG Lead Specialist conduct training with the AIG Specialists, and the Specialists then train school staff as needed. Elementary Specialists are the onsite resource for implementation of the plan throughout the school year at their respective schools.

A secondary AIG Specialist position has been included in the proposed budget for next year and will share AIG processes and procedures with the middle schools and high schools if approved. Currently AIG processes and procedures are coordinated by the AIG Lead Specialist in collaboration with the AIG Lead Contact teachers at middle schools and high schools.

AIG Parent Nights are held at every school at the beginning of the school year. K-8

District-wide Parent Information Nights are held several times per year, to include guest speakers

(Duke TIP), student presentations, teachers, administrators, AIG Coordinator, community members, etc.

AIG Specialists plan / share with teachers in Professional Learning Communities (PLC).

Advisory Council meetings with all stakeholders represented are conducted once per quarter.

The AIG web page is updated as part of the Lee County Schools website and provides access to the current AIG Plan. AIG information is also shared via the AIG Facebook page: LCS Kaleidoscope.

The AIG department revises and publishes AIG (K-12) Program brochures in English and Spanish that outline screening, identification, and service procedures. Brochures are displayed at all schools and at locations around the community. The AIG Program brochures are shared at open houses, Kindergarten registration, and in new student/transfer registration packets.

Elementary AIG Specialists and some secondary AIG contact teachers have designed brochures for their individual schools and tri-fold boards with AIG program information to share at open house and curriculum nights.

### **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:** AIG Green Folder:

An AIG green folder, considered part of the student's cumulative record, is created for each student who is referred to the AIG Team to be evaluated for AIG identification. The AIG green folder contains all documentation related to the student's AIG referral, identification, and service.

If a referred student qualifies for AIG services, an official Lee County Schools AIG green services folder is created and considered an active AIG folder. If a referred student does not qualify for AIG services, AIG paperwork is placed in a basic green file folder and labeled, "Did Not Qualify." Parent conferences are required for any student for whom a green folder is created, regardless of whether the student qualified or not. At the time of the conference, parents must receive copies of all paperwork that requires their signature and a copy of the Parents' Rights Booklet.

Both active and inactive green folders are housed within the student's cumulative folder in the student records' filing cabinet. As the student progresses from elementary to middle school and middle to high school, the green folder, along with the cumulative folder, follows the student. If the student transfers to another school within the district, the green folder, along with the cumulative folder, follows the student. If a student transfers out of the district, copies of the contents of the green folder are made and sent to the receiving school. The actual green folder is then stored with the cumulative folder in the designated filing cabinet for students who have withdrawn.



AIG Green folders include the following forms (required):

- \*Sign-in Sheet for Confidential Records
- \*AIG Summary of Student Eligibility (one or more) or the AIG Summary of Student Eligibility for Transfer Students
- \*Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) (one for every year of service)
- \*Annual Review (end-of-year) (one for every year of service)

AIG Green folders may include the following forms (as needed):

- \*Checklist of Gifted Characteristics
- \*Consent for evaluation
- \*Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP)
- \*Artifacts of clearly supporting evidence
- \*Parent's written request for student to exit program
- \*Other parent letters
- \*Individual testing results
- \*AIG documentation from previous district/state (transfer students)

The contents of AIG green folders are kept at the high school for three years after graduation. The records are then sent to Central Office to be digitally microfilmed with the cumulative record.

**AIG Summary of Student Eligibility (K-12):**

An AIG Summary of Student Eligibility document is created when a student is referred to the school's AIG Team to be evaluated for AIG identification. This is a document that summarizes student data for evaluation, the AIG Team's decision, the area(s) of identification, the parent's signed response regarding the AIG Team's decision, and acknowledgement that the parent has received the AIG Parents' Rights booklet. An AIG Summary of Eligibility document is completed each time a student is evaluated for gifted services, even if the student is already identified and adding an additional service area. AIG Team members sign this document, a parent conference is held in which the parent signs, and the parent receives a copy of the AIG Summary of Student Eligibility document.

**The Data Collection Spreadsheet:**

Each school creates and maintains a Data Collection Spreadsheet for each grade level of referred and identified students. This spreadsheet serves as documentation of students that have been referred, all student data collected, AIG Team decisions regarding identification, and areas in which students qualified. The spreadsheets are saved electronically on a flash drive kept by the AIG Specialist or AIG contact teacher and should be saved to computers as back up. Data collection spreadsheets are sent electronically to the AIG Coordinator and AIG Lead Specialist after the final AIG team meeting in June and as requested during the school year.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** \*Purchase and move to the administration of CogAT Form 8 as the universal screener for aptitude at 3rd grade.

\*Explore funding to use the IOWA Test of Basic Skills as the achievement test criterion instead of NC End-of-Grade (EOG) tests for reading and math.

- \*Share the screening, referral, and identification processes with the community-at-large by speaking at civic organizations district parent nights.
- \*Create a longitudinal database for K-2 using TOPS portfolio folders.
- \*Create a graphic/flowchart of the screening, referral, identification process.
- \*Add a FAQ section and a quick reference guide to the AIG Plan on the AIG webpage.

**Sources of Evidence:** \*Agendas from meetings with AIG personnel, teachers, parents

- \*Agendas from PLCs and Advisory Council meetings
- \*AIG information published in the Sanford Herald newspaper
- \*AIG brochure
- \*AIG web page on district website and LCS Kaleidoscope on Facebook
- \*AIG Plan describing procedures and documentation
- \*TOPS portfolios and checklists of gifted behaviors
- \*Student assessment data
- \*Training and professional development rosters
- \*AIG personnels' monitoring data of under-represented populations
- \*AIG Plan procedures/documents
- \*Screening and referral timelines and checklists
- \*Identification checklist and process
- \*AIG Team minutes/calendars
- \*Data collection spreadsheets
- \*Students' AIG green folders
- \*AIG forms/documentation in the AIG folder
- \*Schedule of parent conferences and signed documents

## **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 district seeks to offer an array of gifted services at each grade span and to improve matching identified students' needs to appropriate content modification and learning environments. AIG personnel provide professional development opportunities demonstrating how to effectively match gifted service options with demonstrated student need through the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). For example, AIG personnel hold regular staff development sessions with schools (per principal request) across the district to support differentiated curriculum in reading and math (academically gifted), specific content modifications for the visual/spatial (intellectually gifted) learner, and social/emotional support for all gifted students.

Gifted students' DEPs are filed inside the students' cumulative folders for easy access by classroom teachers, AIG Specialists, and guidance counselors.

The AIG Specialists, AIG lead teachers, and secondary lead teachers collaborate with other staff on a regular basis such as classroom teachers, counselors, Exceptional Education (EC) teachers, English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, and administrators to address the social and emotional needs of gifted students and problem-solve related issues gifted students might be experiencing.

For academically gifted students in reading and/or math (AR, AM, AG, AI), advanced curriculum opportunities in reading and math are provided at all grade spans. Every school in the district offers some type of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) opportunities. STEM activities provide a good service match for our intellectually gifted (IG) students. Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses also provide opportunities for IG students, as well as, all gifted students. Differentiation of curriculum and best practice instructional strategies for working with gifted students (reading, math, intellectually) are promoted in all content areas.

### **Services at Elementary**

AIG Specialists in the elementary schools serve as the onsite AIG program facilitator and ensure consistency of services and resources across the district. Specialists directly and indirectly serve nurtured and identified gifted students. The specialists serve as the differentiation resource on their school campus. AIG Specialists assist classroom teachers with the identification process and developing the student's DEP to match need with services. Teachers and specialist may collaborate to co-teach. The Specialist co-plans with grade level teachers in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) regularly and with individual teachers as requested.

The AIG Specialist is responsible for using purchased AIG instructional materials with nurtured and

gifted students K-5. Each school has a tub of instructional materials purchased in consideration of the needs of advanced learners and to promote the idea of talent development in all students. Regular classroom teachers, and other educators, are encouraged to check-out these materials as needed.

AIG Specialists at each elementary school have been supported to create Makerspace opportunities for gifted students and talent development students they may serve. Makerspace/STEM challenges/lessons provide an opportunity for independent projects, creativity, innovative thinking, etc. from which gifted students, especially the highly gifted and intellectually gifted students may benefit. It is a program goal to see Makerspaces created at every school in the district so that all students may benefit.

In the fall of 2019, Lee County Schools will open a new S.T.E.A.M. elementary school, W.B. Wicker Elementary. Curriculum and instruction at this school will be guided by the A+ philosophy, which is the integration of the arts into curriculum. Multiple Makerspace labs will be available for classroom teachers to use.

Enrollment at this school will be a hybrid of attendance zone and choice, therefore, parents of gifted students, especially those students with visual/spatial strengths, might consider this school as an option for services.

Most of the elementary schools in the district are either AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) schools or Leader-In-Me schools.

The AIG department provides support to the alternative elementary school which has grades PreK-5. In addition, enrichment training is provided to all Pre-K teachers in the district.

Throughout K-5, to promote a talent development mindset, AIG Specialists will continue to receive training with, and implement within schools, Joseph Renzulli's Enrichment Triad Model comprised of three types of activities.

Type I – general exploratory activities

Type II – group training activities

Type III – individual and small group investigation of real-world problems

**Service options are listed by grade span below.**

Elementary School Services, K-2 Grades:

\*Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum for all students.

\*Whole class lessons from PETS.

\*Small, flexible enrichment classes with PETS curriculum and content-area extension, and/or interest-based instruction.

\*Differentiated curriculum (reading and math) in the regular classroom as needed.

\*Students identified as gifted are served with a combination of pull-out, co-teaching, or push-in depending on the area(s) of identification and needs of the student.

\*Specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to implement the U-STAR-PLUS program. (Using Science, Talents, and Abilities to Recognize Students - Promoting Learning for Underrepresented Students).

\*Specialists trains teachers to see and document gifted behaviors through the use of Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) portfolios.

Elementary School Services, 3rd Grade:

- \*Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) curriculum for all students.
- \*Whole class lessons from PETS.
- \*Small, flexible enrichment classes from PETS and content-area extension, and/or interest-based instruction.
- \*Differentiated curriculum (reading and math) in the regular classroom as needed.
- \*Students identified as gifted are served with a combination of pull-out, co-teaching, or push-in depending on the area(s) of identification and needs of the student.
- \*Specialists train teachers on completing the Checklist of Gifted Behaviors and anecdotal artifacts.

Elementary School Services, 4th - 5th Grades:

- \*AIG Specialists teach pull-out classes of reading, math and intellectually gifted students to extend, enrich, and accelerate the Standard Course of Study (SCOS), explore student interest, and provide opportunities for critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and problem solving. These classes may include students identified as reading-only, math-only, intellectually-only, or any combination of those gifted areas.
- \*Differentiated curriculum in the area of identification (in the regular classroom).
- \*Makerspace / STEM challenges and lessons. (Especially helpful to help meet the service needs of the intellectually-only identified students.)
- \*Specialists will develop and teach lessons to understand what it means to be gifted, and to address the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Middle School Services, 6th - 8th Grades:

- \*Lee County Schools offers advanced courses in mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) at 6th, 7th and 8th grades. Math I and English I are offered at 8th grade. Advanced courses, Math I, and English I are available to any student who meets the qualifying criteria on a general education rubric designed for placement in the course.
- \*AIG personnel and secondary lead content teachers assist teachers of advanced classes offered in language arts and mathematics at the middle schools to further differentiate curriculum for academically gifted students.
- \*A STEM elective class is offered at each middle school.
- \*Participation in AVID is offered at all middle schools and one middle school is a National AVID Demonstration School. Schoolwide AVID strategies with WICOR to guide instruction are in place at all middle schools.
- \*NC Virtual Public School online courses (NCVPS)
- \*It is a program goal to offer an “exploratory” elective class (interest-based, critical and analytical thinking, problem-solving) designed for motivated, advanced learners. This class may be based on the International Baccalaureate (IB) principles of learning.
- \*AIG personnel collaborate with AVID to include gifted students.
- \*An AIG program goal is to bring gifted students together periodically to discuss relevant topics, share information/opportunities, and provide social and emotional support.

High School Services, 9th - 12th grades:

If budget allows, there will be one Secondary AIG Lead Specialist to serve the middle schools and high

schools.

The district's high schools partner with Central Carolina Community College to give students an opportunity to earn college credits or an associate's degree.

- \*Content-area Honors and AP courses
- \*Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses (certificates and credentials)
- \*IB Diploma Programme at Lee County High School
- \*Academy offerings at Lee County High School and Southern Lee High School (Academy of Engineering, Academy of Business and Finance, Academy of Hospitality and Tourism)
- \*Lee Early College (option to graduate with a 2-year associate's degree)
- \*Career and College Promise (CCP) - dual enrollment (earn community college credits in high school)
- \*NC Virtual Public School online courses (NCVPS)
- \*NC School of Science and Math (NCSSM) - Distance Education or Online Education
- \*AIG personnel collaborate with AVID to include gifted students.
- \*An AIG program goal is to bring gifted students together in a seminar possibly during the advisor/advisee time, or periodically after school to discuss relevant topics/global issues, to share information/opportunities, and to provide social and emotional support.
- \*The AIG department will work to support teachers as advisors for AIG students during the registration process at high school. Classroom teachers are currently serving as advisors during spring registration.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Elementary principals consult their AIG Specialist when creating the school's master schedule in order to develop the specialist's schedule of gifted services to most effectively address the needs of gifted students.

A goal in this AIG plan is to collaborate with the Director of CTE to transition 9th graders entering high school to an "electronic version" of the 4-year plan for high school students. The plan would serve as the annual DEP for high school gifted students. The plan would be reviewed and revised, if needed, each year at the beginning of the year and/or registration and would be flexible based on evolving student interests and career plans after high school.

At the high school, vertically aligning courses with the appropriate Honors, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB), CTE, etc. course sequences will help students and families to define a career path/education plan that best matches their future goals.

Each teacher in the district follows the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (SCOS) to plan and deliver instruction. AIG personnel support the SCOS by working with teachers to develop differentiated content to extend and enrich classroom instruction. AIG Specialists also provide differentiated

curriculum from the SCOS in enrichment classes and classes for the gifted. The AIG program reflects the district's goals for teaching and learning.

AIG personnel and teachers of advanced learners are trained in differentiation strategies to promote learning of the North Carolina SCOS. Teachers consider differentiation in content, process, product and the learning environment when planning units of study. For gifted students differentiation includes enrichment, extension and acceleration.

AIG Specialists and AIG Lead Teachers collaborate with colleagues and share best practices for instruction for gifted learners at the school. All AIG personnel at the school and district level collaborate with educators in other departments as needed to best meet the needs of gifted students. This includes ESL personnel, EC personnel, counselors, and the Director of Student Resources. AIG personnel incorporate the Leader In Me and AVID district initiatives into lesson plans and projects.

The School AIG Team operates in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) role advocating and informing appropriate instruction for AIG learners. PLCs offer regular opportunities for teachers to plan collaboratively and analyze data to improve AIG student learning.

Unit planning using Understanding by Design with a focus on the SCOS encourages cognitive processing beyond remembering and understanding to applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating. This has been a district-wide initiative. AIG instruction planned for our summer two-week AIG enrichment program, Kaleidoscope Camp, uses the Understanding by Design unit planning process described above. AIG teachers create rigorous, challenging and fun units to create a highly performance-based learning experience.

The district provides local funding to support additional personnel in the AIG Program. Local funds support AIG personnel needs and ensures that the Kaleidoscope Camp (summer enrichment program) takes place each summer.

Lee County Schools has a District Director of AVID. The AIG Coordinator and the Director of AVID collaborate to include gifted students who would benefit from AVID participation.

The AIG Coordinator attends and shares AIG updates and information at monthly Administrative meetings and is a contributing member of the Curriculum and Instruction Committees (elementary, middle and high school). The AIG Coordinator also participates in weekly district Directors' meetings. On occasion, the Coordinator attends Board of Education meetings to present information related to the gifted program and to share student achievements.

The AIG Coordinator requests to attend and contribute to Principals' meetings (elementary, middle and high school) as needed to provide information, gather feedback, or provide training. The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist meet with administrative teams at the school level as needed or requested.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist review Board of Education Policies that relate to AIG (policy #3525) to ensure those policies are effective and based on current best practice. Recommendations for new policy will be made as needed.

As part of the district-wide implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), and with the feedback of teachers, principals, and district administrators, a list of ten "foundational elements of core

instruction” was created to represent the expectations for every class, every day. These foundational elements encumber focal points of other district initiatives such as AVID’s emphasis on writing and inquiry, the differentiated core of MTSS to meet the needs of all students, and the collaboration and academic discourse necessary for English language learners.

#### Lee County Schools’ Foundational Elements of Core Instruction

1. Instruction aligned with the NC Standard Course of Study
2. Writing across the curriculum
3. Inquiry and questioning requiring increasingly complex thought processes
4. Collaboration and academic discourse
5. Organization and study skills
6. Reading and engagement with a wide variety of texts
7. Formative and summative assessment of learning
8. Differentiated instruction to respond to student needs
9. Real world application of learning
10. A safe, respectful, and responsible environment

The AIG Plan initiatives of curriculum differentiation and a match of identification needs to gifted service mesh nicely with the district initiatives of MTSS and AVID. The AIG Coordinator is a member of the District MTSS Team and serves as a MTSS consultant for assigned schools.

#### **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:** Elementary school principals receive training on, and are encouraged to use, the research-based cluster grouping model to place gifted students in homeroom clusters, with consideration given to areas of identification. Non-identified students scoring the highest level on the state’s math EOG are cluster grouped for more advanced math instruction. Cluster grouping in grades K-5 helps meet the needs of advanced learners in all grades.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist provide training and assistance for principals on the implementation of cluster grouping using multiple points of student data. Also highlighted are the positive effects on the academic and social/emotional growth of all students.

Flexible grouping practices are part of the K-3 PETS and enrichment classes in the primary grades. Fourth and fifth grade identified students are flexibly grouped within content area classes to provide for more effective delivery of differentiated curriculum.

At the elementary and middle school levels EOG, EOC, and CogAT scores of students are monitored to determine the effectiveness of current grouping practices and course offerings.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist meet with teachers, administrators, and AIG Teams to provide training on understanding assessment data for the district, schools, and individual



students. This training includes analysis of CogAT composite scores, subtest scores, and how to use student profiles to group students to provide effective instructional strategies, including intellectually gifted students. Local norms established from district EOG and CogAT scores are shared and explained at this training.

At middle school, there is a Lee County Schools' general education rubric for advanced courses in math and ELA, which determines which students are qualified to take advanced classes, regardless of gifted identification status. This includes Math I and English I courses in 8th grade. Also, state law, NC HB-986, requires local school systems to automatically enroll any student in the third grade or above in advanced math courses if they receive the highest level score on their end-of-grade math test. Students can opt out of the advanced classes with written permission from a parent or guardian. Also, in Lee County Schools, parents may sign a waiver to place their child into an advanced class in the event that their child does not meet the rubric, with the understanding that the child did not meet the criteria considered necessary for success in an advanced course.

Lee County Schools monitors the performance of students in the advanced language arts and mathematics classes in middle school using quarterly benchmark data, EVAAS data, EOG, and EOC scores to evaluate the effectiveness of the need/service match on the DEP of gifted students. Lee County Schools strives to improve access to advanced, Honors, and AP classes for traditional and underrepresented diverse learners in all middle and high schools.

At high school, the AIG Coordinator collaborates with the Coordinator of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) to share information and to promote interest and participation in the IB Programme. The AIG Coordinator collaborates with the Director of CTE to promote interest and participation in CTE courses and other advanced offerings.

#### **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:** The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist discuss the locally adopted AIG plan with all school personnel. AIG personnel request meetings with, and share relevant aspects of the plan with, administrators, teachers, counselors, school psychologists, ESL teachers, EC teachers, and data managers. Service needs and information regarding AIG students and the AIG plan are shared with principals, teachers, and other staff at sessions offered in the Summer Institute, our week of local professional development for educators and administrators.

The AIG program requires that teachers serving on the School AIG Teams understand the regulations associated with the gifted education plan to ensure the schools' commitment to the gifted learner. AIG Specialists and AIG Lead Teachers will ensure that the AIG Team understands the AIG plan at the school level. School AIG Team members will offer information and guidance at their schools about all aspects of the plan. An AIG Team member who is also a School Improvement Team member may share the program and plan at School Improvement Team meetings.

At a meeting with all AIG Specialists and teachers of advanced learners at the beginning of the school, the AIG Coordinator will go over the plan. A notebook with a copy of the updated AIG plan will be provided to each school principal, AIG Specialist, and AIG Lead Contact Teacher. Along with the AIG Plan, the notebook will have sections with calendars, timelines, forms, procedures, processes and resources.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist will share about the plan and program with schools through staff meetings, professional development opportunities, and AIG Team meetings. A PowerPoint to be used on AIG Parent Nights at the schools will inform parents about the AIG program. This PowerPoint is also shared at AIG Team meetings, grade level meetings, or whole staff meetings.

Information related to the AIG Plan will be offered with regular opportunities for learning about the plan and how to best serve students. AIG Lead Contact Teachers' meetings and AIG Specialists' PLCs will be a vehicle for discussing the AIG program and plan.

The approved AIG Plan for 2019-2022 will be posted on the district website in its entirety (English and Spanish versions). However, educator-friendly and parent-friendly versions will also be posted in order to highlight the essential components of the plan relevant to each group. The AIG website will offer information related to the plan and the differentiation needs of our AIG students. Updates and best practices will be shared on the AIG Facebook page: LCS Kaleidoscope. Schools may also use their website to disseminate information about the AIG program and plan. A brochure about the program will be available to all stakeholders. Brochures will be placed in each school and at the district's central office.

### **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:** Lee County Schools communicates among and between teachers and schools to ensure an effective continuation of services, especially at key transition points. Through Professional Learning Communities, vertical planning opportunities exist for teachers to communicate across grade levels.

At the beginning of each year, AIG rosters, with identification areas are sent to each school's AIG Specialist or AIG Lead Contact teacher. The AIG district personnel meet with school AIG personnel to share student needs and the completion of Differentiated Education Plans (DEP) for gifted students. AIG-related whole-staff training is provided monthly at elementary by the AIG Specialist and monthly or quarterly at middle and high schools.

Teachers write detailed Individual Differentiated Education Plans (IDEPs) for gifted students who are struggling or need extra support. These are completed by the teacher at the next grade level.

The district provides curriculum planning in grade spans for the Standard Course of Study that

promotes communication across grades and schools.

School staff participates in whole school and smaller group information sessions about AIG services. AIG Teams meet, at least quarterly, to discuss services within the school. This information is shared with school staff.

AIG Specialists and AIG Lead Contact Teacher meetings involve elementary, middle and high school teachers. These are opportunities to share information vertically. Issues related to transitioning from elementary to middle and middle to high school are discussed, as are services provided at the different levels.

AIG Specialists will train their elementary staff in Teacher Observation of Student Potential (TOPS), the checklist of gifted behaviors, Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) and Jacob's Ladder. This may include teachers who teach music, art, ESL, EC, etc. This builds capacity for understanding services offered through the AIG program and how regular and special teachers can support gifted students.

The AIG Coordinator shares information about the AIG program at Principals' meetings and Administrative meetings to promote greater understanding of the AIG program across K-12 and the services available to gifted students.

We continue to look for ways to improve communication at the high school level. We currently have an AIG Lead Contact Teacher at one high school that meets with high school teachers who teach AP and Honors courses to promote communication about high school gifted students and how to best meet their needs, especially as they transition from middle school to 9th grade and in 12th grade as they prepare for college/career.

### **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:** Lee County Schools' AIG students have particular social and emotional needs as evidenced by underachieving gifted students. District personnel must be knowledgeable about peer relationship issues among AIG students. Knowing that gifted students may be faced with home and peer pressures, the program desires improved collaboration among school counseling personnel, regular education teachers, parents/families, and other stakeholders to address students' social and emotional needs.

The AIG Coordinator will continue to collaborate with the Director of Student Resources to improve the district's ability to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students. The AIG Coordinator collaborates with district directors to problem-solve issues of developing the "whole child" in Directors' meetings, principals' meetings and Curriculum and Instruction meetings.

Lee County Schools provides professional development on social and emotional needs of gifted learners for teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, and parents. Social and Emotional

Booster Shots, training material provided by NCDPI, will be used to for this professional development.

Counselors play a vital role in scheduling students within the school day as well as working with students on an individual basis. The gifted education program seeks to more clearly define the counselor's role in support of those gifted learners who demonstrate a need for affective service options such as counseling. Teachers are encouraged to include counselors in the Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) development for students who are struggling or need additional differentiation and social/emotional issues are contributing factors. AIG personnel assist counselors in communicating effectively on gifted issues with students, parents, and teachers.

Lee County Schools includes regular education teachers, ESL teachers, EC teachers, and counselors on AIG Teams, and they are invited to join the AIG Advisory Council.

High school students and middle school students will be invited to participate on the AIG Advisory Council. Upper elementary students will be invited as guest speakers on occasion.

Lee County Schools will establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with representation from various departments (AIG, EC, ESL, and regular education) and grade level PLCs to share tools and resources that support the social/emotional development of AIG students. District-wide implementation of MTSS has led to the creation of data-based problem solving teams at each school which includes the social and emotional health (behaviors) of gifted students, as well as, all student subgroups. AIG personnel are members on these teams at most schools.

Lee County Schools continues to promote Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) and Leader In Me to support under-represented students at all schools and to address the social and emotional needs of all gifted students.

Lee County Schools provides opportunities for parent involvement opportunities via online, printed, and face-to-face presentations.

Lee County Schools supports professional learning communities at each school including School AIG Teams and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to support and inform services for gifted students. The gifted education program develops opportunities for teachers of gifted learners to come together centrally to discuss strategies for the social/emotional development and related issues throughout the year.

The AIG Coordinator, District AIG Lead Specialist and AIG Specialist meet with school personnel in staff meetings, etc. to enlighten and offer the "Booster Shots" regarding social/emotional issues of the gifted.

Grade appropriate curriculum materials for elementary and middle school students have been purchased regarding "what it means to be gifted." AIG Specialists will be developing units of study and/or seminars to implement a curriculum to support social and emotional growth related to giftedness.

The Differentiated Education Plan will be revised to include strategies to meet the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

### **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:** Lee County Schools is committed to meeting the needs of individual gifted students. Counselors and teachers work with students and parents to develop a challenging program that will meet students' needs. Advance math and ELA courses (compacted content) are available in middle schools. At high school, Advanced Placement courses and Honors courses, including advanced electives are self-selected by students. Certain programs and courses are offered through the local community college (CCCC) with prerequisites and credit decided upon by instructors at the high school in collaboration with instructors at the community college. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is offered at one high school. Content-specific "academies" are offered at two high schools. Online courses offered through the NC Virtual Public School can be accessed by all middle and high school students. High school students can take online courses through the NC School of Science and Mathematics. Lee Early College provides an opportunity to students who successfully complete the application process. Students at middle school and high school may be participate in mentor/shadowing opportunities through CTE courses and initiatives.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is the process by which middle and high school students may earn credit for a high school course without course enrollment or seat time. Students who wish to pursue CDM will need to show mastery of an eligible course in two phases. Phase 1 consists of achieving a qualifying score on an approved assessment. Phase 2 consists of the completion of an artifact which exhibits deep understanding and application of the course content according to an established rubric. Artifacts may be in the form of a product, performance, essay, oral interview, open-ended assessment, etc. In Lee County Schools, applications to CDM a course are typically due in October with a spring testing (phase 1) window in February. More information, timelines, eligible courses, and applications for CDM may be found on the AIG webpage, Lee County Schools webpage, and in the school guidance counselor's office.

At elementary and middle schools "cross grade grouping" is an option. Students are placed in a higher grade for a specific subject for part of their day. Accelerated students at all levels have access to one-on-one time with an AIG Specialist.

Lee County Schools Board of Education Policy Manual has a subject and grade acceleration policy and a dual enrollment policy in place for advanced students who indicate a need. These policies document and outline the requirements for subject and grade acceleration and dual enrollment. (Policy #3420 and policy #3101)

Grade Acceleration: For any K-8 student considered for grade acceleration (skipping a grade), a case study is recommended for each individual student. It is recommended that the IOWA Acceleration Scales (IAS) manual be used in the decision-making process for grade acceleration. Following the IAS manual provides a body of evidence for this decision and should involve a team of the following: AIG Coordinator, AIG Specialist, principal, school psychologist, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, student's current teachers, assigned teacher at next grade level, parents, and student (middle school and high school). Other educational professionals may be invited to be part of the team

based on student needs (ESL, EC, etc). It is important to ensure that concepts and content are not missed that may cause future learning issues as well as social and emotional considerations for an accelerated student. Students may be highly gifted in one area and not others.

If grade acceleration is the decision, a 3-5 year plan and an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) for learning should guide academic needs, including missed content, and address potential social/emotional challenges for the student.

**Early Entrance to Kindergarten:** Early admittance to kindergarten follows state statutes. Parents with questions concerning early admittance may contact the AIG Specialist at their child's school or the AIG Coordinator at Central Office. (Standards for Early Admission to Kindergarten, NC State BOE Policy KNEC-001.)

All acceleration opportunities and procedures will be shared on the AIG web page, at parent information nights, and in the AIG brochure.

### **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:** The AIG Program of Lee County Schools has revised identification procedures in the 2019-2022 AIG plan to better support identification of students from culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners (ELL), highly gifted and twice exceptional populations. A second pathway for academically gifted identification has been developed to allow for a variety of artifacts to be considered as qualifying criteria in that pathway. Artifacts include consulting English as a Second Language (ESL) personnel to provide insights into how quickly a second language learner might be advancing through ESL services (ESL progression). In this plan cycle, nurturing and talent development of all students exhibiting gifted behaviors will be a major focus. It is our hope that this mindset will lead to the identification and service of a higher percentage of under-represented populations. To that end, some of the service/programming options and many of the extracurricular activities will be designed for gifted students but may also include any motivated student exhibiting gifted behaviors.

The K-3 nurturing program has been strengthened in Lee County to support younger students who require exposure to challenging instruction to support their giftedness prior to formal identification. Training is offered to regular teachers, as well as EC and ESL teachers, and those who teach special areas like music, art and PE with the philosophy that more informed eyes are a benefit. Elementary teachers also receive training in the use of Primary Education Thinking Skills and Jacob's Ladder, challenging materials to support young learners.

The AIG Program provides K-3 nurturing services to all students through the use of appropriate materials such as Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS), Jacob's Ladder and Challenge Math. Using Science, Talents, and Abilities to Recognize Students ~ Promoting Learning for Under-Represented Students (U-STARS~PLUS) will be implemented at all elementary schools during

the AIG Specialists “whole group” time with K-3 students. Training will be provided to AIG Specialists and teachers.

Teacher’s Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) portfolios are developed for K-2 students to identify and offer differentiated services to students who display gifted behaviors in the primary grades. Portfolios completed for students who display gifted characteristics will follow the child to the teacher at the next grade level. AIG Specialists will oversee this process of collection at the end of school year and the distribution at the start of the next school year. This process builds a much needed infrastructure for supporting the learning of these young students and builds the awareness of their teachers about their gifted characteristics. Previously such information was not available year to year for these children and important information related to their learning was lost. Under-represented students may not appear gifted without on-going opportunities for talent development, especially before taking the CogAT for formal identification in third grade. Practicing with different types of thinking along the way ensures greater success in capturing under-represented populations.

AIG personnel conduct a periodic analysis of the ratio of under-represented populations with a TOPS portfolio to the number of that subgroup in the grade level and in the school. Specialist conduct a similar analysis of data on the Data Collection Spreadsheet regarding referrals for identification picked up by AIG program’s screening measures.

An Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) is developed for any identified student that may be under-performing for any reason. An IDEP will be used to support student engagement, growth and achievement. (AIG students are not exited from the program due to under-achievement.)

MTSS Teams which are made up of educators from all departments, serve as a forum for problem solving the identification and retention of under-represented populations. Teams may explore options such as mentorships, shadowing, curriculum compacting, and interest-based explorations to motivate at-risk identified gifted students or any student exhibiting gifted behaviors.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Lee County Schools offers extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG students such as Governor's School, Duke TIP, Kaleidoscope Camp, summer STEM Camps and participation in a local robotics competition. The AIG Coordinator collaborates with the Middle School Curriculum Specialist to allow district participation in the Scripps National Spelling Bee (grades 3-8). AIG Specialists organize school-wide bees at their schools. Elementary students in 4th and 5th grades may participate in the district-wide Battle of the Books competition. It is an AIG program goal to add Battle of the Books at middle school.

Lee County Schools participates annually in the search for Governor's Schools candidates among qualifying 11th grade high school students. The AIG Coordinator oversees Governor's School process in the district and works closely with high school counselors to encourage and support student

participation. Governor's School candidates are selected at the high school and applications are sent to the AIG Coordinator. The AIG Coordinator organizes a committee at the Central Office for review of the applications and a selection of the candidates to submit to the State Department of Public Instruction for review. The district pays the tuition cost for students selected to attend. The selected students and their families are invited to attend a Board of Education meeting where the students' accomplishments are highlighted.

Information about Duke TIP (grades 4-6 and grade 7) is shared with the schools directly from Duke TIP. The AIG Coordinator sends reminders about timelines and participation to the AIG Specialists and AIG contact teachers, who then share information to students who qualify.

Kaleidoscope Camp has been in operation for over 40 years in Lee County and is supported by local funding. This camp is held for two weeks at the end of June and serves rising AIG 6th graders. The camp is an enrichment camp with daily guest speakers and a challenging and fun curriculum in science, technology, engineering, the art, music, drama, social studies and writing. Efforts are made to build the camp curriculum based on student interest. A three-day trip to Washington D.C. occurs after the camp for students whose parents wish for them to participate and are willing to pay. Need-based scholarships are offered. Community donations and financial contributions from the department of Student Resources support these scholarships. The itinerary is packed with experiences related to history and the arts. It is a multi-generational experience for some families where parents have been to camp and to D.C., and AIG siblings have had the same experience.

The Career and Technical Education Department offers a variety of learning opportunities for students. For middle school students, a summer STEM Camp provides a challenging and fun curriculum in science, technology, engineering and math. At the high school level, during the school year, students compete at the state and national levels in engineering/STEM-related competitions. At the elementary level, a STEM Club is offered once a month for interested AIG 5th graders. This club is led by a high school instructor and students from the Academy of Engineering and is held on a high school campus after school.

Participation in Jr. Beta Club is offered at one middle school. Community service projects are part of that experience. The AIG department will promote establishing a Jr. Beta Club at the other middle schools. Participation in Beta Club is also offered in high school. Also at high school, a wide variety of interest-based clubs and academic competitions are offered.

At elementary schools, AIG Specialists lead AIG 4th and 5th graders in service learning projects to benefit local or global communities.

Extracurricular programs and events are shared on the AIG web page, in the AIG brochure, and on the AIG Facebook page: LCS Kaleidoscope.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** \*Develop at least one elective class designed to promote creative



and critical thinking through problem/project-based learning. This course, or another similar course, might involve interest exploration with a mentor, internship, or community service project. These courses could be added to the DEP.

- \*Provide a meeting of “feeder” teachers and “receiving” teachers to review programming, services, and student goals at the next level.
- \*Provide a small library for students at each school of books dealing with understanding what it means to be gifted and related issues.
- \*Create a resource guide for extra-curricular programs offered across grade spans.
- \*Offer more extracurricular opportunities, especially at elementary and middle schools.

**Sources of Evidence:** \*AIG class schedules

- \*AIG Team and PLC agendas/minutes
- \*Professional development rosters
- \*Advance class offerings
- \*Student AIG DEPs and IDEPs
- \*Compliance check to monitor DEP/IDEP alignment and documentation
- \*Walk-Through observations
- \*Tubs of materials at elementary schools
- \*AIG Unit Plans and regular classroom plans based on SCOS.
- \*UbD units
- \*Differentiation reflected in regular classroom teachers' unit/lesson plans for AIG students.
- \*District level meeting agendas and Board of Education agendas
- \*AIG Program PowerPoint
- \*AIG plan and related information on district and local websites
- \*AIG plan notebooks and brochures
- \*Student DEPs and IDEPs in the AIG green folder found in the cumulative folder
- \*Curriculum materials regarding “what it means to be gifted”
- \*Booster Shot calendar/roster
- \*Listing of advanced learning opportunities and gifted student enrollment data
- \*Board of Education policies
- \*Web page postings of acceleration opportunities and processes
- \*AIG brochure
- \*TOPS portfolios
- \*Multiple identification criteria in revised AIG plan
- \*Number of students identified from under-represented populations
- \*AIG Headcount
- \*Number of AIG students participating
- \*Agendas of training sessions.
- \*Homeroom rosters and flexible groupings.
- \*Assessment scores.

### **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:** The AIG department in the district aligns program options for differentiating the SCOS with national and state gifted education standards, as well as expands the curriculum goals listed in the SCOS. During training for the local AIG certificate offered to teachers of advanced learners, Lee County Schools incorporates training on how to adapt the SCOS for gifted learners.

After the local certificate training is complete, Lee County Schools' AIG Coordinator and District AIG Lead Specialist (Gifted Personnel) follow-up with these teachers to assist with implementation of the differentiation strategies.

In 2015-2016, Lee County Schools added district Secondary Lead Teachers/coaches in the areas of math, science and ELA (English, Language Arts). Although the Secondary Lead Teachers assist with differentiation for all students, they serve as a valuable partner and resource for AIG personnel and all teachers of advanced learners at the secondary level.

At the elementary level, the full-time AIG Specialist collaborates and plans with classroom teachers in grade-level PLCs to differentiate the SCOS for advanced learners. Principals are encouraged to cluster group gifted/advanced K-5 students as described in the research-based cluster model of grouping students. This will facilitate the AIG Specialist co-teaching with the classroom teacher, scheduling pull-out time for gifted students, and flexible grouping for K-3 small group PETS lessons.

In order to create a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of educators for the gifted learner, the AIG staff implements "Best Practice" sessions throughout the year to gather teachers together and have them share strategies for extending, enriching or accelerating the SCOS which have proven effective with gifted learners.

The district has offered, and continues to offer, training in differentiation strategies such as tiered assignments, Understanding by Design, and curriculum compacting. A refresher training will be offered in curriculum compacting.

The AIG Coordinator, District AIG Lead Specialist and AIG Specialist visit classrooms to provide feedback and coaching on differentiation in the content areas.

#### **The Grade Spans:**

**\*K-2:** The gifted specialist collaborates with the classroom teacher to deliver whole class PETS lessons

to all students and small group lessons to those students needing enrichment. The smaller enrichment groups meet with the AIG Specialist on a regular schedule. Student placement in the enrichment group is flexible and should change as different students exhibit gifted behaviors. Small group activities will also extend the SCOS through collaborative planning in PLCs with the gifted specialists. The AIG Specialist, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, will create a plan of implementation for the U-STAR~PLUS (Utilizing Science, Talents, and Abilities to Recognize Students ~ Promoting Learning for Under-represented Students to enrich and extend the curriculum.

**\*3rd - 5th:** District gifted personnel collaborate with classroom teachers to develop units using the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework to ensure differentiation which enriches, extends, and accelerates the SCOS. (Stage 3 in UbD addresses tailoring instruction for different needs.) Units are developed around big ideas with supporting essential questions, performance based tasks, and activities which are tailored to the gifted learner. Enrichment activities could be completed in the regular classroom, with the extension and acceleration activities offered during the time with the gifted specialist. Or, UbD units may be created to enrich, extend or accelerate in small group settings with the gifted specialists.

Envision materials have been purchased for each elementary school and are used for differentiation in enrichment classes. Envision is a series of multidisciplinary independent projects that challenges students at the highest levels of thinking.

4th and 5th graders have the option to participate in the extracurricular Battle of the Books contest between schools. This is a year-long contest in which teams of students are assigned a list of novels to read throughout the year. Students meet to discuss the books in regular meetings. At the end of the year they compete against other schools to see which school is most knowledgeable of the books.

In 2019-2022, to better differentiate for gifted 4th and 5th graders and to provide consistency across the district, gifted personnel at the elementary level will create two project-based units for 4th grade and two units for 5th grade. For each grade level, 4th and 5th, the two units below will be created:

\*Research-based Social Studies Project (Social Studies and ELA) – SCOS topic for grade level.

\*Math Project – SCOS topic for grade level.

Gifted students in 4th and 5th grades participate in STEM activities with the AIG Specialists.

**\*6th - 12th:** Gifted personnel work with content teachers to develop enrichment, extension, and acceleration activities within the content areas in collaboration with the district Secondary Lead Teachers/coaches in the content areas of math, ELA and science. Also, at the middle schools, advanced math and advanced English Language Arts classes are offered at each grade level. In addition, at 8th grade, Math I and English I are offered. At the high schools, Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes are offered. At one high school, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) is offered. At two high schools, "Academies" in the areas of business, engineering and tourism/hospitality are offered. Students may also attend Lee Early College. All of the high schools offer classes with extended, enriched, and accelerated SCOS. Also at the high schools, a variety of interests may be pursued through Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses.

### **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:** Gifted personnel assist classroom teachers in selecting or creating informal assessments to determine readiness, interest and learning profile of students.

The gifted specialists assist classroom teachers with administering interest inventories and learning profiles at the beginning of the year.

Teachers may use online diagnostic tools and other state and district assessments to identify gifted students' readiness in reading and math.

CogAT data will be analyzed to provide insights in students' potential strengths and weaknesses. This information will be used to develop differentiated activities which match individual student needs.

The district continues to offer professional development courses to promote the development of differentiation strategies and practices such as: tiered assignments, curriculum compacting, independent investigations, and Paideia Seminars. These strategies and practices are used K-12.

The Local AIG Certificate training is offered each year. This is a 35-hour course offered to all teachers, but highly encouraged for teachers of advanced learners. This course emphasizes the need for differentiation for advanced learners. Diverse and effective instructional practices are shared, as well as, content differentiation strategies. Teachers are encouraged to design lessons that include real-world application, problem-based learning, creative design/solutions, etc.

Sharing the model of Joseph Renzulli's 3 rings of giftedness (above average ability, creativity and task commitment) and Mr. Renzulli's Enrichment Triad Model of three types of enrichment activities, teachers are challenged to consider each of these areas when developing assignments for advanced learners. Posters of the 3 rings of giftedness model are displayed in classrooms and shared with students. Training for classroom teachers and AIG Specialists will be provided by the AIG department on the Enrichment Triad Model.

Enrichment Triad Model: K-8

Type I – general exploratory activities

Type II – group training activities

Type III – individual and small group investigations of real problems

In order to create a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of educators for the gifted learner, AIG staff members implement "Best Practice" sessions throughout the year to gather teachers together and have them share effective strategies for providing rigor, depth, complexity, sophistication and abstractness.

At the elementary level, students are challenged with independent and/or group projects and investigations. Students engage in advanced-level Envision projects based on their interest.

In middle school, discussions are underway to offer a project-based or problem-based exploratory class.

Incorporate community-based projects at middle and high schools based on students' interests. (See "Ideas to Strengthen Standard")

**Areas of Emphasis:**

- \*Analogies (in all content areas)
- \*Tangrams, geometry, fractions, algebraic thinking (hands-on learning)
- \*Writing across the curriculum
- \*Scientific Method
- \*Advanced vocabulary development J (Caesar's English by Michael Clay Thompson)
- \*Using art to think differently: This will be the hallmark of the new W.B. Wicker S.T.E.A.M. Elementary School opening in August 2019.
- \*Thinking critically about global issues: Making an impact

\*Developing Research Skills – that build over time. (using Independent Investigation Method with Science and Social Studies topics). Suggestions for grade spans:

- K – 1st grades – whole group project.
- 2nd – 3rd grades – partner or small group project.
- 4th grade – individual project, monologue.
- 5th grade – formal research writing, act in a play.
- 6th – 8th – interest-based, real world issues, community service project.
- 9th – 12+ - interest-based mentorships and internships, community service projects.

**Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Lee County Schools uses a variety of research-based supplemental resources that augment curriculum and instruction. Teachers have access to these resources at their schools. The district uses AIG and local funds to purchase research-based supplemental resources. Individual requests for these supplemental resources from AIG Specialists and teachers of advanced learners are honored as long as the budget will allow.

PETS (Primary Education Thinking Skills), U-STARS~PLUS (Using Science, Talents and Abilities to Recognize Students ~ Promoting Learning for Under-Represented Students), Jacob's Ladder, and Challenge Math materials have been provided for all elementary schools for use in the K-3 Nurturing Program and in grades 4 and 5 for identified AIG students. Materials have been provided for every grade level.

Jacob's Ladder materials have been provided to middle school AIG teachers.

From the William and Mary Center for Gifted Education, Language Arts Units (grades 7-9) have been purchased for middle schools. Language Arts Units (grades 1-2 and grades 4-5) have been purchased for elementary schools.

TOPS (Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students) portfolios are provided to all K-2 teachers along with training on how to use the portfolios to support instruction.

Grades 3-5 and grades 6-8 teachers have been given a checklist of gifted behaviors, along with training on how to use the instrument to guide instruction.

K-12 AIG units designed by AIG teachers created with the Understanding by Design template are available for use. These units offer models for differentiated instruction for AIG students. The creation of AIG units is ongoing. Training on creating units in the Understanding by Design format has been offered district-wide.

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** District-wide professional development has been offered over a period of time to train Lee County educators in Leader-In-Me and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) initiatives. Both programs foster the development of 21st century skills. Teachers have also received training to develop differentiated units integrating 21st century skills using Understanding by Design (UbD) templates. Many teachers in the district have collaborated to create UbD units in various content areas. Teachers are encouraged to share these units.

At the high school level, Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered to advanced learners. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) is offered at one high school in Lee County. Two high schools offer real-world applications and Internship opportunities in various "academies" specific to business, hospitality / tourism, and engineering. Lee Early College challenges student teams by assigning issues to solve in real-world scenarios such as a project and design proposal to revitalize a vacant property somewhere in Lee County.

Many of the high school and middle school teachers of advanced classes have received training in Paideia seminars and/or Socratic seminars which take place frequently in advanced courses. Critical thinking skills and communication are imbedded within these advanced programs.

The Career and Technical Education Department assists students with internship opportunities at the high school level. Students take part in a variety of competition options which promotes leadership, collaboration, critical thinking, etc.

Caterpillar Youth Apprenticeship Program is a collaboration between Lee County Schools, Central Carolina Community College and Caterpillar, Inc. This is a two-year apprenticeship program.

Extracurricular opportunities are found with competitions such as DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America), Quiz Bowl, Envirothon, and Science Olympiad. These enrichment activities enable

students to delve into global issues and topics and participate in competitions as a team.

At the elementary level, advanced 4th and 5th grade reading students are given the opportunity to participate in Battle of the Books. Students collaborate in teams to read a large number of novels over the course of the year. Books are read and discussed. At the end of the year, teams from each school compete against each other to determine which team is most knowledgeable about the books.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Lee County Schools' initiative to promote Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in schools has provided teachers with knowledge regarding the use of data driven information to plan differentiated curriculum and instruction. The district's quarterly assessment data and common assessments analyzed in PLCs provide teachers with student and class feedback in both reading and math. AIG Specialists participate in grade level PLCs and assist teachers in the development of formative assessments to use along with summative assessments to chart student growth and plan the most appropriate student instruction.

With the implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), school staff members are currently receiving training on how to use data-based problem solving to meet the literacy, math, and behavioral / social & emotional needs of students. This includes ensuring a strong, differentiated core curriculum. In this process, on-going assessments will continue to provide critical information on student performance, program effectiveness, instructional design and flexible grouping.

Gifted personnel will create and access UbD units and lesson plans, and other differentiated activities in a shared Google drive.

In grades K-2, the TOPS portfolios provide important data for young students showing gifted characteristics. Portfolio information facilitates flexible grouping to provide enrichment. This anecdotal observational data follows the child to the next year's teacher so the information can be used for instructional planning.

Running records and the use of mClass give reading data for early elementary students. School teams utilize Lee County's intervention process which uses universal screenings to target those students who are performing below their academic potential and those performing well above grade level.

District personnel plan challenging units for gifted students using Understanding by Design which requires assessment for the unit to be addressed before further planning of instruction. This approach supports formative assessments developed to higher levels of thinking that are tied to district foundational elements of core instruction.

The AIG department provides opportunities for participation in Professional Development Certification

courses to train teachers in tiered assignments, curriculum compacting, and independent studies with the development and use of assessments explicitly addressed.

AIG personnel work within Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to analyze assessment data in order to develop differentiated curriculum based on gifted students' needs.

The AIG Team at each school examines assessment data and makes recommendations to support academic decisions.

The AIG department maintains spreadsheets of gifted students' assessment data related to achievement and aptitude. This information is shared with AIG Specialists, administrators and teachers in schools to facilitate grouping practices to enable differentiation for advanced learners.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** AIG Specialists in the elementary schools implement units of study with identified 4th and 5th graders during their allotted time with the Specialists. Resources titled What it Means to be Gifted and The Gifted Kids Survival Guide will be used.

Elementary principals have been trained in the research-based cluster grouping model. Cluster grouping at the elementary level facilitates delivery of services with regard to social / emotional curriculum.

Counselors and the AIG personnel will collaborate to work with middle school students using the curriculum presented in the book, The Essential Guide to Talking with Gifted Teens. Another resource that the AIG department has purchased specifically for teachers of middle school students is Educating Gifted Students in Middle School.

AIG personnel research and identify relevant information concerning the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. AIG personnel use this information to create professional development for teachers, administrators and school counselors. This information is also shared with parents through parent meetings, brochures, websites and other media. It is important for parents to understand the unique social and emotional needs of their gifted child so that they can support the efforts of school personnel in meeting these needs of gifted students.

Promoting a growth mindset is a district initiative for all students.

Beginning in 2019-2022, the AIG Coordinator may conduct a book study related to the social and emotional needs of gifted students with counselors and social workers in collaboration with the Director of Student Resources. (The book title is to be determined in the summer of 2019). Published articles and current research will also be discussed as seminar topics.



MTSS teams and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) such as school AIG Teams, AIG Specialists, grade levels, counselors, etc., offer a forum to discuss strategies to support identified needs for AIG students so that appropriate supports are in place and to address social implications within the core curriculum.

At the district office of the AIG Coordinator, a lending library is available to all educators. This library includes a variety of books and curriculum materials related to the social and emotional needs of gifted students. An inventory of all library titles is shared with educators at the beginning of the year. The process for checking out materials is shared.

Counselors support appropriate placement of gifted students through services when applicable as follows:

- \*Subject acceleration
- \*Grade acceleration
- \*Early entrance to kindergarten
- \*Dual enrollment
- \*NC Virtual High School
- \*Early College
- \*Career and College Promise

Counselors also meet the needs of gifted students by assisting them with:

- \*Course selections
- \*Grade transitions
- \*College applications
- \*Career planning
- \*Scholarships
- \*Enrichment opportunities such as Governor's School (applications and timelines)
- \*Sessions (group or individual) to address social and emotional issues

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** Lee County Schools implements a K-3 talent development program designed to motivate and stimulate all learners to reach their maximum potential, and to bridge the gap between gifted services and those students who exhibit high potential yet are not formally identified. Supporting the regular education program, the talent development program provides a challenging curriculum that develops the abilities, skills, and talents of all students including those students from under-represented populations. Through participation in this program, potentially gifted students strengthen skills and abilities which often support their transition into gifted services.

All elementary schools have a full-time AIG Specialist. The AIG Coordinator and AIG District Lead

Specialist provide support for the staff of the alternative elementary school as well. In K-3, the AIG Specialist models lessons and co-teaches with the classroom teacher as needed. The Specialist will also meets with small, flexible groups of students for more specific differentiation and enrichment.

Lee County Schools currently uses Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS), Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program, and Primary Grades Math as tools for teachers and AIG Specialists to nurture the thinking skills of K-3 students. AIG Specialists will be trained in the implementation of USTARS~PLUS (Using Science, Talents, and Abilities to Recognize Students ~ Promoting Learning for Under-Represented Students) which is used in conjunction with the TOPS portfolios. (Teacher Observation of Potential in Students)

The AIG Specialist meets in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at each grade level K-3 to plan whole group lessons in PETS and U-STAR~PLUS. The Specialist also shares new differentiation strategies and resources in PLCs.

The Teacher Observation of Student Potential (TOPS) Portfolios are used at all elementary schools providing an infrastructure to identify and support young (K-2) students exhibiting gifted characteristics. The portfolios are placed in the child's cumulative folder so next year's teacher can support on-going differentiation. Training is provided in grades 3-5 with the checklist of gifted behaviors. Teachers may use informal instruments like classroom performance, student interest inventories, and assessment data to help identify high potential. K-5 teachers and gifted specialists receive training in the use of Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) and Jacob's Ladder materials.

The AIG department will support the nurturing of gifted behaviors and talent development in K-3 students by providing a variety of supplemental materials that enable appropriate differentiation using creative and critical thinking skills activities. Each school has its own set of enrichment materials housed on site.

The AIG department offers ongoing training for elementary AIG Specialists with regard to differentiation strategies and nurturing students. This training will be offered at monthly AIG Specialists' PLCs. Elementary AIG Specialists will then train teachers in K-3, ESL, EC and the AIG Team at their school with the support of the AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist.

### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist provide information sessions, and attend monthly meetings, to collaborate with administrators, Exceptional Education personnel, ESL personnel, District Lead Teachers and other district personnel regarding differentiated curriculum for advanced learners.

AIG Team meetings have the dual role of being the AIG PLC Team for the school. In that role there is

discussion of differentiated strategies to advance the learning of AIG students.

At the elementary school, the AIG Specialist acts as chairperson of the AIG Team. Each AIG Team should include in its membership an ESL teacher. An Exceptional Education teacher should attend the AIG Team meeting anytime an exceptional education student's data/differentiation is reviewed or discussed by the AIG Team. Content area teachers of students being discussed or reviewed at the AIG Team meeting are invited to be part of the conversation.

AIG Team meetings at middle and high schools consist of at least one teacher at each grade level who teaches advanced courses in math and English Language Arts (ELA). An administrator, counselor, and ESL teacher are also members. An AIG Lead Teachers acts as the chairperson of the AIG Team.

AIG Specialists (K-5) attend grade level PLCs on a regular basis and schedule a time to meet with grade levels on quarterly planning days.

AIG Specialists and AIG Lead Teachers are asked to share a 5-10 minute "best practice" or "booster shot" at monthly staff meetings. Gifted personnel provide more in-depth differentiation as needed/requested by staff.

When meeting with teachers, AIG personnel use guiding questions to facilitate a thoughtful and reflective discussion on classroom differentiation for advanced learners.

Sample questions:

1. Does the student need differentiation in more than one content area?
2. Is the differentiation needed at a substantially high level?
3. How often does differentiation for gifted students occur in my classroom?
4. Are gifted students given the opportunity to expand upon their interests?
5. Are gifted students given the opportunity to NOT succeed with ease in order to develop flexible, creative and critical thinking skills needed to reach their full potential?

The AIG department recommends that educators with an AIG state license or local AIG certificate be included as members of the MTSS Team and the School Improvement Team at each school site.

Gifted personnel attend IEP meetings of twice exceptional (2e) students. Twice exceptional refers to a student who is identified gifted and has an identified learning disability.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist train other gifted personnel, administrators and classroom teachers on how to understand and use student profiles from CogAT scores to plan differentiation. Training on other assessment data include: Beginning of Grade (BOG) in 3rd grade, EVAAS data, EOG/EOC, SAT, and ACT.

Teachers of gifted students and other educators are invited to attend the NCAGT Conference each year. Teachers who attend are asked to share with their schools and/or departments regarding AIG practices they found relevant to instruction for advanced 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:** Lee County Schools has a continuum of services available to gifted students. The district provides these services to gifted students based on the level of differentiation needed. These options enable students to develop their potential through an array of flexible and dynamic service delivery options. After the identification process is complete and a student's area of giftedness has been determined, a plan for differentiation is developed. Development of Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs), or Individualized Differentiated Education Plans (IDEPs) for AIG students with special needs, provides documentation of how differentiation is provided for gifted students.

### **Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)**

At the beginning of each school year, gifted personnel, teachers of advanced content, AIG Lead Teachers, and AIG Teams collaborate to develop DEPs or IDEPs for gifted students. Appropriate differentiation options are selected and indicated on each student's DEP.

In September of the new school year, each school schedules an AIG Parent Night. Parents are given a copy of their student's DEP. Information about the AIG Program is shared and the basic format and purpose of the DEP is explained. Content area teachers and administrators are in attendance and contribute to the conversation. Differentiation options and examples are shared and discussed. Parents are given the opportunity to ask questions. They may sign the DEP at that time and/or set up an individual conference for further discussion/revision. (Individual conferences may be held at any time of the year upon parent request.) DEP differentiation options will be revised at the beginning of the next school year.

At the end of each school year, the AIG Team at each school reviews achievement and performance data for each identified gifted student. Using an AIG Annual Review document, the AIG Team indicates their decision to continue differentiation services or develop an IDEP. Differentiation strategies are reviewed and discussed. The Annual Review document is shared with parents in the final report card. A parent conference is held at the beginning of the next year for any student needing an IDEP and for any other student upon parent request.

### **Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP):**

An IDEP serves as a documented plan of support when a gifted student has substantial differentiation needs or when a gifted student exhibits a significant reduction in performance. The IDEP has two parts. Usually Part 1 of the IDEP is completed at the end of the school year as part of the annual review process. Part 2 of the IDEP is developed in collaboration with the new content teacher, parent, and student at a conference held during the first quarter of the new school year. The purpose of this conference is to plan individual differentiation based on the identified need. However, an IDEP may be started any time during the year when there is demonstrated need for individualized differentiation.

IDEPs are created as needed.

AIG personnel are invited to attend IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings for twice exceptional gifted students. The IEP may be used as a support document for the development of the DEP or IDEP.

At one high school, an AIG information booth is manned during registration to assist parents and students. This idea will be shared and supported at other high schools in the district.

There is a DEP for each grade span: an elementary DEP, a middle school DEP, and a high school DEP. The high school DEP, a flexible 4-year plan, is revisited each year at the registration conference with students and parents.

On the elementary and middle school DEPs, differentiation occurs in two ways: by learning environment and by content modification. Differentiation options may vary by grade span. Offered below is a brief description of each category.

## **1. Learning Environments:**

### **ADVANCED CLASSES**

Advanced classes are offered in middle school at each grade level in the content areas of Math and English Language Arts (ELA). In addition, at the 8th grade level, Math I and English I are offered.

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES**

The Advanced Placement (AP) program consists of college-level courses and examinations for high school students.

### **CLUSTER GROUPING WITHIN A HETEROGENEOUS CLASS**

A small cluster group consisting of approximately four to eight gifted students is assigned to a regular heterogeneous class based on the research-based cluster model.

### **CLUSTER GROUPING ACROSS TEAMS**

Each team identifies students performing at an advanced skill level. Such students are pulled together during an instructional period and taught by one teacher. The group usually stays together for a specific marking period or instructional unit. At the end of that time, the groups may be reconfigured, thus keeping the grouping flexible. In order for this arrangement to work effectively, teams must meet regularly and plan collaboratively.

### **CLUSTER GROUPING WITHIN TEAMS**

Students are assigned to heterogeneous teams. The academically able students within each team are re-assigned to one or more teachers for a specific block of instructional time. Placement within this group is flexible and based on student performance. Teams meet on a regular basis to review student progress.

### **CROSS-GRADE GROUPING**

Students are placed in a higher grade for a specific subject for part of their day.

### **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

This option allows students to be enrolled in two levels of schooling at the same time (elementary and

middle school and high school, or high school and community college).

#### ENRICHMENT CLASSES K-5

High ability students may be served without formal identification especially to enhance communication skills and/or math. Under-represented students who are demonstrating gifted potential need to be included in these nurturing classes as early and as consistently as possible. This flexible service practice should be based on academic need.

#### FLEXIBLE GROUPING

Students in each class are assigned to a small group for instruction. These groups may be homogeneously grouped according to skill level. To be effective, grouping should be flexible and fit the instructional purpose.

#### GRADE ACCELERATION

Students move ahead one or more years, skipping grade levels in the normal sequence of promotion. Schools will follow Board of Education policy on acceleration as outlined in the IOWA Acceleration Scale.

#### INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB-DP) is an assessed program for students aged 16-19. Students are prepared for success in higher education and to be active participants in a global society.

#### SPECIAL SETTING

Students from a school travel to a special location to join with peers for instruction.

### **2. Content Modifications:**

#### COMPUTER-BASED INSTRUCTION

Computer-based instruction can be used both to enrich the curriculum and to remediate specific skill deficits.

#### DISTANCE LEARNING

Online courses are available to students in North Carolina through the State Department of Public Instruction Virtual Web of NC/NC Virtual Public High School.

#### CONTRACTS

Learning contracts are agreements made between teacher and student that allow the student to work independently on either accelerated or enriched materials related to a unit of study.

#### CURRICULUM COMPACTING

Curriculum compacting is modifying or streamlining the regular curriculum in order to eliminate repetition of previously mastered material, upgrade the challenge level of the regular curriculum, and provide time for appropriate enrichment and/or acceleration activities while ensuring mastery of basic

skills.

#### DIFFERENTIATED UNITS

One of the most effective ways to deliver differentiated curriculum to gifted students is through designing differentiated units that incorporate individual learning abilities and levels of content and skill. This instructional design has proved to be an effective planning tool and is appropriate for gifted students in regular classrooms, part-time classes, resource settings, and full-time placements. One example, The Understanding by Design method of unit differentiation, is recommended and supported by Lee County Schools.

#### INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS

Students displaying content mastery and having a special interest may contract with the teacher for an independent study project. Independent study may also be used at the secondary level as a course in which students work independently and come together periodically to share experiences in a seminar.

#### INTEREST-BASED

Special electives provide opportunities for students to pursue areas of interest or special talent through dual enrollment and/or distance learning.

#### INTERNSHIPS

An Internship is an opportunity for a student to spend time with one or more employees at a business, non-profit organization, or government agency.

#### LEARNING CENTERS

These are usually designed as tabletop workstations for individual or group work. Students may self-select centers or be assigned to a center on a rotating basis.

#### MENTORSHIPS

Students having strong interest in specific topics are assigned to an adult with similar interests and experience. The mentor serves as a resource to the student who is completing an independent investigation.

#### SELECTED PROJECTS

Optional projects are offered that students can collaborate with instructors to pursue individual areas of interest as partial completion of coursework.

#### SEMINARS

Students with similar interests have an opportunity to come together at a specific time and discuss topics of interest or content-area topics with knowledgeable adults. Seminars can also be used as a vehicle for bringing together students working on independent studies. Such sessions are held periodically and provide a structure for depth of knowledge conversations.

#### THEMATIC UNITS

Thematic units deal with information from various disciplines that is integrated under a broad based theme such as conflict, power, patterns, etc. Because it provides the opportunity to deal with content at a highly abstract level of sophistication, it is an appropriate way to modify curriculum for gifted students.

#### TIERED ASSIGNMENTS

The teacher develops different levels of activities within a class to accommodate the needs of the students. Students may explore basically the same content but at different levels of complexity.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** \*Create an electronic, flexible, four-year plan of coursework to serve as the high school AIG student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). The high school electronic four-year plan will be based on the four-year plan created by students/families in the spring semester of eighth grade. It is reviewed and updated each year at registration with the student/family. The electronic four-year plan is meant to be a guide to help students and parents more effectively plan for post high school endeavors, yet be flexible enough to accommodate a student's changing interest.

\*At the middle schools and high schools, design and offer Project Based Learning or Problem Based Learning type elective courses designed for gifted students, but available to all students. This course could also vary by semester to include real-world applications involving community projects and /or internship/mentoring components. Collaborate with CTE and other departments.

\*Establishing AIG Youth Advisory Councils in high schools to gather feedback and address the social, emotional, academic, and intellectual needs of gifted students.

\*At the high schools, collaborate with administrators to cluster AIG students in advisor/advisee periods to promote social/emotional peer support and to more easily share opportunities and other pertinent information.

\*At middle school and high school, create a club for gifted/advanced learners with a purpose. (Develop leadership skills, career exploration, world issues, community service, etc.)

\*At elementary school, add extracurricular opportunities such as Odyssey of the Mind, chess club, computer coding, etc.

\*Create bibliotherapy lessons/units for teachers to use with students.

**Sources of Evidence:** \*Data for AIG growth

\*Local Training Certificate course syllabus

\*Advanced Placement/Honors classes rosters

\*Classroom visit feedback from AIG personnel

\*Use of AIG Units based on Understanding by Design

\*Implementation of Teacher Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) Portfolios K-2

\*Interest Inventories and Learner Profiles

\*Profession development calendars/rosters

\*Best Practices session notes and shared on AIG web page

\*Student products and projects

\*Teachers' and AIG Specialists' lesson plans

\*Collaboration with teachers on use of resources by the gifted personnel

\*School materials inventory



- \*AP, IB, Advanced Courses lesson plans
- \*Extracurricular club schedules and agendas
- \*School and district website listings of departments and opportunities
- \*Progress monitoring checks
- \*Benchmark data
- \*Quarterly assessment data
- \*Running records
- \*TOPS portfolio dates
- \*AIG spreadsheets of student data
- \*PLC agendas
- \*Brochures, PowerPoints, AIG website
- \*Book study calendar for counselors
- \*Library inventory, resource titles, and other materials
- \*Teacher Observation of Potential (TOPS) Portfolios (K-2)
- \*Renzulli Checklist of Displayed Characteristics (grade 3)
- \*K-3 Understanding by Design units developed for gifted learners
- \*Lesson plans: PETS, U-STARS
- \*Diversity of students identified for AIG placement
- \*Grade level PLC agendas and quarterly planning schedules
- \*EVAAS growth, CogAT profile strategies, other test scores
- \*AIG Team minutes and member rosters
- \*Staff meeting agendas
- \*NCAGT completion/attendance certificates
- \*IEP meeting minutes
- \*DEPs and/or IDEPs in student's AIG green folder
- \*Compliance checks from AIG Coordinator and AIG District Lead Specialist
- \*AIG student scheduling
- \*Annual parent conferencing for AIG students related to DEP and IDEPs
- \*AIG Parent Night agenda

## **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:** Lee County Schools employs a full-time, state licensed, AIG Coordinator. In addition, a half-time District AIG Lead Specialist provides oversight and leadership for the Lee County Schools AIG Program. The District AIG Lead Specialist is also a state licensed AIG teacher. Both have extensive experience and knowledge of the local program and of academically gifted programs in general.

The role of full-time AIG Coordinator has added an important dimension to the Central Office services for teachers in the district as well as administrators. This position allows for a greater school and classroom presence for the AIG Program in our schools. The AIG Coordinator and District AIG Lead Specialist work closely to revise the AIG program and plan including: screening and referral, identification, matching services to need, AIG forms/processes, staff development, monitoring, etc. This ensures implementation of the local AIG plan with fidelity.

The AIG Coordinator attends a weekly meeting with other district leadership to collaborate on behalf of students, as well as monthly district-wide Administrative Meetings, Curriculum and Instruction meetings. AIG Contact Teacher Meetings and AIG Advisory Council Meetings are held quarterly. District AIG PLC meetings with AIG Specialists are held monthly. The AIG Coordinator serves as a consultant to schools as a member of the district MTSS team.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist participate in regional/area AIG Coordinator meetings throughout the year. The coordinator and lead teacher, along with other gifted personnel, participate in the North Carolina Association for Gifted and Talented (NCAGT) state conference each year. After returning from the state conference, gifted personnel share conference materials and train staff at their respective schools.

The AIG Coordinator collaborates with community, experts in gifted topics, and institutions of higher learning to provide ongoing staff development for AIG specialists, classroom teachers, counselors, social workers, and administrators regarding differentiation, service options, social/emotional development, and career opportunities related to gifted students.

The AIG Coordinator, in collaboration with other AIG personnel organize and conduct parent/community information nights several times per year to engage stakeholders.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES of Full-time AIG Coordinator:**

Under the general direction of the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, the AIG

Coordinator performs the following services which include, but are not limited to the following examples of duties and functions.

1. Must hold an AIG State License, a Master's degree pertinent to the program, and have five years experience teaching gifted students.
2. Oversees the AIG budget.
3. Coordinates and provides district-wide AIG-related staff development.
4. Oversees screening, referral, and identification processes.
5. Develops, monitors and evaluates the local AIG plan.
6. Directs Kaleidoscope Camp and Washington, D.C. trip.
7. Supports development of curriculum with district leaders.
8. Supports selection of materials.
9. Coordinates assessments for AIG identification.
10. Consults with, and supports, teachers and administrators.
11. Coordinates communication to parent and community.
12. Works with community agencies to provide mentorships, internships, and field experiences.
13. Assists in program evaluation in meetings with district leaders. (EVAAS)
14. Collaborates with district leadership to create the middle school rubric for advanced classes and monitor student placement in advanced classes.
15. Collaborates with the Middle School Curriculum Coach to manage district participation in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.
16. Collaborates with the CTE Director to support the STEM Club for AIG 5th graders.
17. District coordinator of the Governor's School process in collaboration with high school guidance counselors.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Lee County Schools currently has one AIG Specialist in each elementary school. If budget allows, there will be one secondary AIG Specialist assigned to the three middle schools, two high schools, one alternative school, and Lee Early College. Middle schools and high schools have one or two AIG contact teachers. There is also one part-time District AIG Lead Specialist serving the AIG Program.

Along with providing services directly to students (elementary), gifted specialists serve as knowledgeable professionals in the planning, implementation, and improvement of the AIG Program. Specialists may co-teach with, and coach, classroom teachers in appropriate methods for differentiation for high achieving/gifted learners. They also provide staff development on differentiated instruction for gifted students and on the social and emotional needs of the gifted.

AIG Specialists attend monthly meetings to plan differentiated units related to instruction and social and

emotional learning. The AIG Coordinator has created a team drive for AIG Specialists to access resources, documents, units, etc. A team drive has been created for each middle school's AIG Team.

AIG Specialists and AIG Lead Contact teachers have been given the opportunity to take online courses related to gifted services through GT-Ignite. Specialists are also encouraged to sign-up for regular emails from online resources, such as: Edutopia, NAGC, and NCAGT.

AIG Specialist must hold an AIG State License or be enrolled in a university program working on courses for state licensure in AIG. Licensure must be completed within a two year AIG Specialist teaching cycle if employed by Lee County Schools.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES of the District AIG Lead Specialist:

Under the general direction of the AIG Coordinator, performs the following services which include but are not limited to the following examples of duties and functions:

1. Coaches, models and advises AIG staff on appropriate methods of instruction for high ability students, lesson delivery and program design, scheduling, and service models.
2. Provides assistance to the AIG teaching staff by planning, organizing and coordinating staff functions.
3. Assists site level administrators and/or the AIG Coordinator in supporting, training and coaching certified personnel within the AIG program.
4. Develops and/or coordinates effective and inclusive practices in instruction for AIG students.
5. Coordinates the alignment and articulation of the Core Curriculum + Essential Standards and AIG practices with a focus on literacy instruction.
6. Assists with program implementation and evaluation.
7. Participates in compliance, monitoring and technical assistance reviews in accordance with local and state laws and guidelines.
8. Observes/coaches/models differentiated strategies for colleagues.
9. Serves on district-level committees/teams and communicates with stakeholders in the school, home and community as appropriate.
10. Assists with data collection and provides programmatic recommendations based upon results.
11. Maintains knowledge of current laws and regulations pertaining to AIG learners through attendance at meetings, in-service programs, conferences and reading current literature.
12. Participates on school-based AIG Teams and on School Improvement Teams as appropriate.
13. Maintains district AIG website.
14. Serves as a knowledgeable and experienced professional in the AIG Education planning and improvement process.
15. Consults with administrators, teachers, ESL staff, Exceptional Ed. Staff, counselors, and other professionals, as appropriate, to meet the academic, intellectually, social and emotional needs of high ability learners.
16. Informs/supports K-3 teachers in their understanding of gifted characteristics and practices to ensure all students have the opportunity to participate in enrichment opportunities prior to formal identification.

### RESPONSIBILITIES of Elementary AIG Specialists:

Under the general direction of the AIG Coordinator, an AIG Specialist at the elementary school performs the following services which include, but are not limited to the following examples of duties and functions.

1. Within the master schedule provides time for K-3 Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) whole class lessons which lead to small group nurturing classes.
2. Within the master schedule provides time for 4th and 5th grade pull-out AIG classes.
3. Inventories AIG material in August and in May.
4. Schedules and leads the AIG Team meetings at least once per quarter.
5. Plans and assists in presenting the AIG Parent Night at assigned schools.
6. Develops with the regular classroom the AIG Differentiated Education Plan and/or an Individual Differentiated Education Plan.
7. Trains teachers on how to observe and complete Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) Portfolios for grades K-2 and also will add additional observation data.
8. Meets with K-5 teachers in grade level professional learning communities (PLCs) to plan and implement differentiated curriculum.
9. Assists classroom teachers with parent/teacher conferences.
10. Conducts parent conferences related to identification.
11. Presents staff development on the AIG Plan, gifted characteristics, screening, referral, identification, differentiation, and social and emotional needs.
12. Presents with the AIG Coordinator and AIG District Lead Teacher at yearly AIG staff trainings at assigned schools.
13. Helps analyze the data for gifted students at school and develops ways to improve.
14. Works with the AIG Team and teachers at school to implement the AIG Plan for 2019-2022.
15. Trains classroom teacher on how to use the CogAT data for instruction and offer a parent meeting to explain the scores.
16. Develops differentiated curriculum for elementary AIG students and any student exhibiting gifted potential.
17. Participates in monthly district meetings for AIG Specialists conducted by the AIG Coordinator or AIG Lead Specialist.

### RESPONSIBILITIES of Secondary AIG Specialists (Middle School and High School):

Under the general direction of the AIG Coordinator, the Secondary AIG Specialist performs the following services which include, but are not limited to the following examples of duties and functions. This position is itinerant between three middle schools and two traditional high schools, one alternative school and Lee Early College.

1. Provides opportunities for co-teaching.

2. Develops a regular schedule for differentiated activities.
3. Verifies AIG headcount at each school. Shares AIG rosters with teachers.
4. Schedules and co-chairs AIG Team meetings at least once a quarter.
5. Plans and assists in presenting the AIG Parent Night at assigned schools.
6. Assists with AIG Differentiated Education Plans and Individual Differentiated Education Plan development.
7. Assists teachers with completion of the checklist of gifted behaviors, as needed.
8. Meets with Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to plan and implement differentiated activities.
9. Works with individual teachers in planning differentiation.
10. Meets with teachers, students, and parents.
11. Presents staff development on the AIG Plan by standards.
12. Presents AIG-related training with the AIG Coordinator and AIG District Lead Teacher at staff meetings  
at assigned schools.
  
13. Helps analyze the data for gifted students at school and develops ways to improve service, achievement  
and growth.
14. Works with the AIG Team and teachers at school to implement the AIG Plan for 2019-2022.
15. Reviews progress of AIG students with school counselors periodically and/or conferences with students  
regarding performance and course selection on an annual basis.
16. Hold quarterly meetings with gifted students to share enrichment opportunities  
and to discuss other topics relevant to gifted students.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES of the AIG Lead Contact Teachers (Middle and High School):

Under the general direction of the AIG Coordinator, the AIG Lead Contact Teacher performs the following services:

1. Schedules and leads AIG Team meetings quarterly.
2. Shares AIG rosters (with student identification areas) with grade level teachers.
3. Coordinates all procedures according to timeline provided by AIG Coordinator.
4. Assists and monitors the completion of DEPs, IDEPs, and yearly reviews.
5. Coordinates and assists in holding the AIG Parent Night at the beginning of the year.
6. Assists with verifying the AIG headcount twice a year.

In addition, all AIG Specialists and teachers of gifted students will:

- \* Emphasize school-wide talent development and nurture gifted potential.
- \* Emphasize the development of the whole child at AIG teacher meetings and in staff development with classroom teachers and other school staff.
- \* Work with staff to better understand the characteristics of giftedness, including non-teacher pleasing behaviors, underachieving, and the intellectually gifted.
- \* Coordinate social and emotional needs of AIG students with the Director of Student Services, teachers,

counselors and social workers.

\* Provide information to parents on academic and social/emotional needs at parent meetings.

### **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:** Lee County Schools continues to establish specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, exceptional children's personnel, counselors, and school administrators. Teachers of advanced students are encouraged to seek state AIG add-on licensure, obtain the Local AIG Certificate offered locally, and/or obtain the Advanced Placement/IB credentials for relevant courses in high school.

#### Professional Development for Classroom Teachers:

Lee County continues to offer a local AIG certificate using the course entitled, "Curriculum Differentiation for the Gifted Learner in Lee County." All K-12 teachers are invited to participate. Teachers teaching AIG students in math and/or reading are required to have the AIG state add-on license or the local AIG certificate, or be working toward obtaining either one. The local AIG certificate is obtained by completing a 35 hour course (3.5 CEUs) offered by the AIG department. In order to earn the state AIG add-on licensure, teachers may take the AIG Praxis test or complete coursework via an accredited institute of higher education (IHE). Teachers with qualifying years of experience, or related coursework, may also be considered.

AIG Specialists receive training from monthly sessions with the AIG Coordinator and AIG Lead Specialist, conferences, online training, professional websites, etc. AIG Specialists then train their school staff members during schoolwide staff meetings, grade-level PLCs with teachers, or targeted AIG training sessions as directed by the principal. Specialists provide professional development for all teachers, administrators, and school counselor, such as: recognizing gifted potential and talent development, how to complete the TOPs portfolio and checklist of gifted behaviors, how to differentiate curriculum for advanced learners, understanding and addressing the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. For staff development sessions, AIG Specialists use the following PowerPoints provided by NCDPI: AIG Booster Shots for Differentiation and AIG Booster Shots for Social and Emotional Needs.

The AIG Coordinator and AIG Lead Specialist provide year-long differentiation training for middle school and high school teachers as requested by principals. The "booster shot" PowerPoints are used as one resource. The coordinator and lead specialist meet with AIG Lead Contact teachers and AIG teams at the middle school to provide training for identification processes, headcounts, DEP/IDEP completion, AIG Parent Nights, etc. This training is then carried back and shared with the grade level team.

A schedule will be developed to go to every school at the beginning of each year to give an overview of the 2019-2022 AIG Plan.

### Professional Development (PD) for Other Educators:

\*Beginning Teachers (BTs) - During beginning teacher orientation week in August, the AIG Coordinator is invited to share an AIG program overview with all beginning teachers. After school starts, the AIG Coordinator has the opportunity to meet monthly with groups of beginning teachers to provide AIG PD focused on differentiating curriculum, extending the curriculum, recognizing and understanding gifted behaviors, twice-exceptional students, debunking the myths, etc.

\*Administrators - During Lee County Schools professional development week offered in the summer, the AIG Coordinator and AIG Lead Specialist offer a half day PD entitled, AIG 101 for Administrators, which is designed for principals and assistant principals. This PD primarily focuses on AIG programming within the total school community: cluster grouping and flexible grouping practices, master schedules, areas of identification, differentiated services, opportunities for acceleration, key transition points, broadening access to under-represented populations, etc. Other PD for administrators takes place in grade-span specific principal meetings throughout the year.

\*Counselors - Professional development (PD) for school counselors primarily focuses on the social and emotional needs of gifted/advanced learners, addressing among other topics, underachievement, feelings of isolation, and perfectionism. Another focus will be the counselor's role in providing information sessions and assistance for extracurricular opportunities at the middle and high schools (Duke TIP, Governor's School, Summer Ventures, etc.) PD opportunities are offered in a variety of formats. An online course (Canvas) using the AIG Booster Shots for Social and Emotional Needs will be developed for counselors. A book study will be offered for counselors interested in that option. Renewal credits may be earned for the Canvas and book study options. Specific bite-sized PD may be offered within their regularly scheduled meetings with the Director of Student Services. Access to resources and articles will be shared via a google team drive for counselors.

\*Special Education Teachers - The primary focus of PD for special education teachers is understanding, and addressing, the unique academic and social/emotional needs of the twice exceptional gifted student. An example of a twice-exceptional student would be a student who is identified gifted in math, as well as, being identified learning disabled in reading. Guidance is given on using a student's strengths to find success and sharing those strategies with classroom teachers. One resource for PD is the video documentary, "2e: Twice Exceptional." Special education teachers in elementary schools receive PD in the AIG Specialist's whole staff training and in MTSS data-based problem solving meetings. Elementary, middle, and high school special education teachers may receive bite-sized PD within their regularly scheduled meetings with the Director for Exceptional Children and in other scheduled sessions as needed or requested.

\*English as a Second Language (ESL) Teachers - Professional development for ESL teachers involves helping them understand their role in the screening, referral, and identification processes. Recognizing the characteristics of gifted behaviors in English learners (EL) is vital to the identification of gifted EL students. Understanding AIG services at each level K-12, special differentiation strategies, and the purpose of the DEP or IDEP is also essential. Since many of our ESL teachers help translate AIG parent conferences, they need a solid understanding of the areas of identification and the criteria to meet for each area of identification. This includes explaining all paperwork shared with parents. ESL teachers at the elementary schools typically serve on the AIG Team and receive team training with the AIG Specialist. Elementary ESL teachers also receive whole staff training with the AIG Specialist. All



ESL teachers may receive bite-sized PD within regularly scheduled meetings with the Director of ESL and in other sessions as needed or requested.

Knowledge of, and access to, resources and tools for all stakeholders will be provided including: AIG Booster Shots for Differentiation and AIG Booster Shots for Social and Emotional Needs (provided by NCDPI), websites of gifted resources, online PD, etc.

#### **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:** In grades K-8, Lee County Schools places AIG and advanced students in classrooms with teachers who are AIG licensed or working on state AIG licensure, or have completed, or are working toward completion, of the local AIG certificate. Teachers with qualifying years of experience, or related coursework, may also be considered. Honors classes in high school are taught by teachers who are completing or have completed the Honors Credentials Course. Within three years of beginning teaching honors level courses, the teacher must have completed this credential course. Advanced Placement teachers must certify through the College Board's Advanced Placement process and renew this certification every three years. Lee County Schools supports teachers through workshop registration, travel, payment for substitutes and other expenses for this advanced placement requirement. Online professional development contracted through GT-Ignite is offered to teachers of gifted and advanced students, AIG lead contact teachers, and AIG contact teachers.

In elementary schools, principals place AIG students in cluster groups with no less than seven (if possible) AIG students per heterogeneous classroom for reading and math content in 4th and 5th grades. It is recommended that advanced students in grades K-3 are cluster grouped as well. Elementary principals receive PD on schoolwide cluster grouping. Principals and the AIG Coordinator collaborate, as needed, to create effective AIG clusters, based on areas of identification.

\*Cluster Grouping - when a group of students with like or similar gifts and talents are intentionally placed in the same mixed-ability classroom.

In middle school, teachers of advanced ELA and math classes are required, when practicable, to be AIG licensed or working on state AIG licensure, or have completed or working toward completion of the local AIG certificate. Teachers with qualifying years of experience, or related coursework, may also be considered.

Principals receive a list from the AIG Coordinator of teachers who have completed the local AIG certificate through the course offered by the AIG department. This information is available from the Human Resources (HR) office as well. HR maintains a list of state AIG licensed personnel and lets administrators know that AIG students must be placed with state licensed or locally certified personnel for math and reading. The AIG Coordinator also shares this information and monitors for compliance to state regulations. Lee County Schools is committed to providing instruction to AIG students from qualified personnel.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Lee County Schools provides gifted students with quality instruction by AIG licensed teachers and/or teachers trained locally in targeted gifted education pedagogy. The licensure/training process increases a teacher's ability to meet the needs of our diverse population of gifted students. College courses, professional development offered at the school and district levels, the local AIG certificate, and Honors/AP/IB training provide research-based strategies that meet the academic needs of gifted learners within the service options.

Lee County Schools AIG program supports district initiatives, which include Professional Learning Communities and lesson plans developed by K-12 AIG teachers utilizing the Understanding by Design (UbD) approach adopted by the district for curriculum planning related to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The AIG department incorporates district initiatives such as Leader In Me and school wide AVID philosophies and practices into differentiated lessons and activities.

Lee County Schools began development of a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), which begins with strong, differentiated core instruction for all students. This is a common goal of many departments in the district, including the AIG department. The AIG Coordinator is a member of the district MTSS team. AIG, EC, and ESL personnel across the district are providing differentiation training to support the goals of MTSS and their respective departments. In addition to a strongly differentiated core, AIG and MTSS share other goals: addressing behavior needs of students, social and emotional well-being, flexible grouping for enrichment and acceleration, and providing challenging, yet engaging tasks with scaffolded support. Many of the AIG Specialists are members of their school-based MTSS team.

Lee County Schools has implemented a Literacy Framework for Secondary Schools, which meshes nicely with our English/Language Arts goals for gifted students. Such training will support student growth and prepare them for writing in the content areas and for better performance on assessments like the English II EOC. Writing supports gifted students' learning in all content areas.

The AIG Coordinator collaborates with the district's math, ELA, and science curriculum coaches to integrate best practices and improve services for gifted and advanced students.

The AIG Coordinator plans with the Beginning Teacher Coordinator to share AIG training sessions with the beginning teachers (0-3 years experience) in the district.

The AIG Coordinator communicates with other district personnel to request that AIG Specialists be included in all content-specific staff development appropriate to the grade level of students they serve.

AIG Specialists conduct comprehensive PD with school staff throughout the school year including characteristics of the gifted, differentiation, and the social and emotional needs of the gifted.

The AIG Coordinator collaborates with a district team of directors to create a week of staff development for all types of educators offered in the summer called the "Summer Institute." This team of directors

synergizes to create a comprehensive slate of courses to address the PD goals of each department.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** At the beginning of the school year, on Directors' Day, a workday before school starts, AIG Specialists attend a half day AIG update session which includes a review of the AIG Plan, paperwork and procedures, and implementation of the plan at the district, school, grade level and the individual classroom.

AIG Specialists attend monthly meetings (PLCs) with the AIG Coordinator and District AIG Lead Specialist to receive training/booster shots in AIG topics such as characteristics of gifted, differentiation strategies, social and emotional needs of the gifted learner, twice-exceptional (2e), etc. AIG Specialists then go back and train the staff at their school within PLCs and/or whole staff meetings.

AIG Specialists and other teachers of the gifted are offered an opportunity to attend the North Carolina Association of Gifted and Talented (NCAGT) conference in March. Specialists are asked to share information learned at the conference with each other at the next PLC. They are also asked to share with teachers at their schools.

The AIG department has created several online team drives for different groups of teachers and one for the AIG Specialists. For example, teachers in the differentiation course for obtaining the local AIG certificate have a team drive. Included in the team drive are gifted resources and examples of differentiated units, interest inventories, lesson plans, tiered assignments, etc.

Teachers will be given the opportunity to participate in a multi-disciplinary summer institute offered by the district. Sessions and/or strands may include best practices from each department.

Professional development is offered to assist teachers in implementing differentiation strategies (i.e. tiered assignments, curriculum compacting, independent study, Paideia seminars and writing).

#### District Goals:

- Establish best practice sharing sessions within AIG PLCs. Encourage AIG Specialists to do the same in PLCs with teachers and staff meetings.
- Provide and protect time for gifted PLCs to meet regarding gifted service delivery within schools and across the district
- Provide professional development opportunities for AIG Coordinator and District AIG Lead Specialist to refine and increase strategies

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist will provide this support through the following opportunities:

- \*Offer professional development on teaching writing as a process and writing within all content areas.
- \*Develop an appropriate and constructive walk-through protocol which allows teachers to understand how they can improve the instructional planning for the gifted learner.
- \*Offer training and support on the most recent research-based gifted pedagogy.

Lee County Schools will provide these professional development opportunities through:

- \*professional development opportunities online or face-to-face,
- \*purchasing of resources that provide professional development,
- \*attendance at various professional development opportunities related to gifted services.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** \*Employ a full-time Secondary AIG Specialist.

- \*Create online modules (Canvas) with AIG training for different groups of educators.
- \*Use technology to share new ideas, differentiated lesson plans, and resource materials.
- \*Create a survey for educators to determine staff development needs regarding service to gifted students.
- \*Provide recognition at BOE meetings of teachers completing add-on licensure or local AIG certificate.

**Sources of Evidence:** \*Full-time AIG-licensed Coordinator

- \*Part-time AIG-licensed District AIG Lead Specialist
- \*District leadership meeting agendas/sign-in sheets
- \*Regional AIG Coordinator meeting sign-in sheets
- \*AIG Professional Development calendar
- \*AIG Parent Night calendar/agendas
- \*AIG-licensed Specialists at eight elementary schools
- \*AIG Specialist lesson plans and co-teaching plans
- \*AIG Team minutes and rosters
- \*Staff development agendas
- \*AIG Specialist evaluations by the principal
- \*List from Human Resources of AIG-licensed teachers and the school /position assigned.
- \*List of Local AIG Certificate holders and the school/position assigned.
- \*Money budgeted for teacher partial scholarship to obtain AIG license
- \*AIG professional development calendars/agendas
- \*PLC dates
- \*UbD lesson plans
- \*Lesson plans incorporating AVID and Leader In Me components/philosophies
- \*MTSS training materials and minutes of training sessions
- \*AIG professional development calendars/agendas

- \*Director's Day agenda for teachers of gifted
- \*AIG Specialist meeting/PLC agendas
- \*School Staff meeting agendas
- \*Walk-through protocol and feedback

## **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:** Parent Information Nights are held at least two times per year to disseminate information about the AIG program, have guest speakers share topics of special interest to gifted learners, act as a forum for students to share projects/experiences, and invite community partners to share ideas and contributions to gifted services.

Each K-8 school holds an AIG Parent Night presentation for AIG families and other interested families in the beginning of the school year. Parents have the opportunity to receive program information and discuss concerns and areas of interest related to gifted students. Beginning in 2019, parents will be asked to complete an “exit ticket.” The exit ticket will consist of the following three questions to answer:

1. Are you interested in becoming an AIG Advisory Council member?
2. Do you have a hobby or area of interest/expertise you would be willing to share with students (classroom / camp presentation)?
3. Do you have other ideas of how you could partner with the gifted program to improve services for gifted students?

In high school, the lead AIG contact teacher, creates a booth at registration to share the AIG program information, enrichment opportunities, and to answer questions.

Parents of AIG students and other community members are invited to be guest speakers in AIG resource classes and at Kaleidoscope Camp, a STEAM Camp for rising 6th grade AIG students.

AIG personnel communicate with parents each year to advise them about their students’ services through students’ Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) and, if appropriate, the Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP).

In elementary schools, AIG Specialist engage 4th and 5th grade parents/families to participate in fundraising efforts to provide funding toward the Washington, D.C. trip of any 5th grade AIG student signed up for the trip and needing financial assistance. AIG Specialists also invite families to come in and see special projects created by their gifted students such as a wax museum of famous people.

### **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:** Lee County Schools has a district curriculum website that houses the district AIG web page. AIG personnel review the AIG web page monthly and welcome feedback from all stakeholders to ensure that the web page is user-friendly and easy to understand. A glossary of acronyms and terms related to gifted education is posted on the district AIG web page and in the AIG Plan. Also shared on the webpage are the target goals for elementary, middle, and high school.

The AIG Department has a Facebook page dedicated to providing information about AIG services, updates, events, etc. Facebook page: LCS Kaleidoscope. This page is linked to other school and district Facebook pages.

AIG Specialists maintain a gifted services web page at their school with a link to the district AIG web page.

The current district brochure for describing the K-12 AIG program will be reviewed by the AIG Coordinator, the District AIG Lead Specialist and the AIG Advisory Council for updating to reflect the AIG plan revisions. Brochures will be available at the schools and placed in area businesses to inform stakeholders about the program. At the beginning of the school year, the AIG Specialist will share the AIG brochure and be available to answer questions at a table/booth set up at Open House at their assigned school.

Digital AIG presentations describing the AIG program for elementary, middle school, and high school are available for schools to share at the AIG Parent Nights. These presentations will include major findings from the annual surveys and how teachers will provide the service options on the DEP. All parents at the school are invited to attend AIG Parent Night presentations. These presentations are often held early in the year on a school's curriculum night to which all parents are invited.

A hard copy of the updated AIG Plan is provided to each school in a notebook for easy reference, which is housed in the principal's office. Each AIG Specialist and AIG Lead Contact also has a notebook. A digital copy of the AIG Plan is posted on the AIG website.

In presentations and meetings with AIG teachers and administrators, the importance of parent/community communication is emphasized.

Automated calls are sent to notify parents of AIG students of upcoming district-wide meetings, parent nights, Kaleidoscope meetings, educational opportunities, etc. This information is also posted on Facebook at: LCS Kaleidoscope.

AIG students accomplishments are shared with the local newspaper and in the Lee County Schools digital digest called, "Inspired." Each summer the local newspaper writes an article about Kaleidoscope Camp featuring pictures of gifted students as they participate in camp activities. After returning from the Washington, D.C. trip, the students' group photo is printed in the newspaper, with a short caption.

### **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:** Lee County Schools has an AIG Advisory Council that has influence/input in an advisory capacity on AIG issues and policies. It is a goal of the AIG Program to promote diversity in the membership of the council. The AIG Coordinator will continue to seek parent, district, and community representation that reflects our student population on the council. The AIG Coordinator schedules and leads the AIG Advisory Council.

The AIG Advisory Council has representation from each grade span. Membership includes educators, parents, students, district personnel, and community members. Representatives from each stakeholder group will be nominated from schools. Any other interested stakeholders may participate in the council. The AIG Coordinator actively seeks participation of community members.

This advisory group will meet on a regular basis (generally 4 times a year unless special meetings are called), either as a full group or in subgroups concerned with specific aspects of the program. AIG teachers and administrators will be informed of AIG Council meetings. AIG Specialists attend at least one meeting per year.

The AIG Advisory Council serves to enhance more effective communication between all stakeholder groups and to express community perspectives through brainstorming sessions, analysis of surveys, and suggestions on how to improve services for the gifted population.

The AIG Coordinator facilitates the creation of AIG Advisory Council subcommittees to work on areas of improvement in the AIG program. These subcommittees are generally formed based on needs. Examples of areas that subcommittees have worked on, or are currently working on, are: student identification criteria, AIG differentiated curriculum and service, parent communication, and AIG plan revisions. Council work provides helpful direction based on group study for continuous improvement and accomplishes important work. Each meeting is designed for collaboration on an assigned task and to provide an opportunity to ask “burning questions.”

### **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:** The AIG plan outlines the information that the district will provide to parents and families of AIG students. Lee County Schools provides information about opportunities for AIG students in the Spanish language as there is a large Hispanic population in the district, 37 percent as of May 2019. The vast majority of limited English proficient students in the district speak Spanish. The remaining limited English proficient students are native speakers of a language other than Spanish. Schools, in collaboration with the ESL and AIG departments, seek communication avenues to assist these parents on a case by case basis.

AIG documents are, or will be, translated into Spanish and other languages as necessary. This includes brochures describing AIG identification and services at K-12, fliers, automated phone calls, and information listed on the AIG webpage. Translation services are provided at AIG Parent Nights, parent conferences, and other gatherings. Other services are provided as needed. For example, a sign language interpreter is contracted for AIG parent meetings and conferences for the hearing impaired parents of one of our gifted students.

AIG personnel collaborate with ESL personnel to provide special services, including translations, to ESL students and families. The ESL Program employs bilingual teacher assistants to assist with translation both written and oral such as in conferences and by phone. Currently such assistants are in all K-8 schools. There is a bilingual high school counselor as well as bilingual ESL teachers in both high schools. These individuals are resources for the Hispanic parents and students. Languages other than Spanish are handled on an individual basis when the need arises. The AIG Coordinator assists when contacted to help find resources available within or outside the district for these families.

The ESL teacher serves on their school's AIG Team to serve as an advocate and resource for limited English proficient students, families, and teachers. An ESL teacher serves on the AIG Advisory Council.

Automated phone calls, parent emails, fliers, Remind 101, and the AIG Facebook page are used by schools and the AIG department to share information related to opportunities for students, parent meetings, etc.

The AIG department shares information (in English and Spanish) with students and families of 5th grade AIG students regarding a monthly STEM Club offered by the CTE department in collaboration with the AIG department. The AIG department also promotes participation of AIG/advanced students in the CTE's STEM Camp offered in the summer to rising 6th grade through 9th grade students.

### **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:** The district desires to enhance opportunities for community stakeholders to

partner with the AIG department to provide opportunities for gifted students.

Partnerships with school PTOs, churches, businesses, civic organizations, and individuals result in financial support for gifted students (rising 6th graders) who participate in the AIG Kaleidoscope Camp and the Washington, DC trip in the summer. The AIG department sends partnership invitations to various business, industry and civic organizations through the mail and to the public on the Facebook page. Through such efforts, consistent partnerships have been formed. Framed photos of the Washington trip group photo are presented to consistent community partners. The AIG Coordinator speaks at civic organization meetings to provide updates on Kaleidoscope Camp and the trip. During camp community members and former Kaleidoscope campers volunteer as guest speakers at the summer enrichment camp. A professor from Campbell University volunteers to present science demonstrations at Kaleidoscope Camp each year. On the final day of camp, parents, district personnel, Board of Education members, and community partners are invited to attend the culminating showcase of students' projects and performances. A list of community partners is included in the program bulletin distributed at the showcase event.

Community partners are invited to events and competitions involving gifted students throughout the district such as, Battle of the Books, district spelling bee, wax museums, Scholar's Day, etc.

Since March 2019, the AIG Coordinator has collaborated with the Program Coordinator of Somos Carolina. This is a new program under LatinxEd, a project of the Center for Global Initiatives at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Somos Carolina is a summer enrichment program for rising 8th graders who identify as Hispanic/Latinx. During the program, students will explore their cultural heritage, develop leadership skills, and start preparing for their college and career journey. AIG personnel help to promote this opportunity for Lee County Schools' gifted/advanced Hispanic students currently in 7th grade.

The AIG department invites community stakeholders, along with parents, to district information sessions that include topics of interest in gifted education.

The District AIG Lead Specialist is a member of the Lee County Education Foundation. The Lee County Education Foundation is a model of public-private partnership to fund programs that raise the level of student performance and prepare students for a 21st century workforce. Support for, and interest in, AIG services and programs may be cultivated in meetings of the Lee County Education Foundation.

Lee Early College partners with Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) to share resources. Lee Early College is located on the campus of CCCC.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** \*The AIG Coordinator and District AIG Lead Specialist will collaborate to publish a quarterly AIG newsletter, which will be shared with AIG students/families and on the LCS Kaleidoscope Facebook page.

\*Prepare an AIG PowerPoint presentation to share on the AIG website for families new to Lee County Schools and other interested parents.

\*Promote and encourage gifted students' participation in Odyssey of the Mind and other extracurricular activities.

\*At the beginning of the 2019 school year, the AIG department will seek to partner with the Lee County Youth Council to assess needs and concerns of gifted learners and to encourage council members to share those needs with existing and potential new partners in business and industry in support of the local AIG program.

\*The AIG Coordinator will create a contact list, or other form of electronic communication, to share information about gifted services or opportunities with parents, district personnel and community partners.

\*The AIG Coordinator will present AIG information at principals' meetings at least twice a year.

\*Establish a functioning AIG committee/team at each middle and high school.

**Sources of Evidence:** \*AIG Advisory Council agendas and roster

\*AIG Program website

\*Parent Information Night agendas

\*Documentation of DEP/IDEP parent conferences

\*AIG Website and digital presentations of the AIG program and services

\*AIG Specialists' web pages

\*AIG Plan notebooks (green)

\*Feedback from Advisory Council members and others about communication

\*Parent night agendas

\*A glossary of acronyms and terms included in the AIG Plan

\*Brochures describing Lee County Schools' AIG Program and services

\*Attendance by non-native speakers at school and district AIG meetings

\*Roster of AIG Advisory Council members

\*Translated documents and translation services for parent/public meetings

\*Schools' AIG Team roster/minutes

•Information session agendas

\*Kaleidoscope Camp events calendar

## **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:** The AIG plan contains an extensive array of services for implementation within the gifted education program. In the development of this local plan, the Lee County Schools' AIG Plan describes the implementation of practices within the following 6 Standards:

1. Student screening and identification..
2. Comprehensive programming within the total school community.
3. Differentiated curriculum and instruction with service options.
4. Qualified personnel roles and professional development.
5. Creation of partnerships and the involvement of various stakeholders.
6. AIG program accountability.

Development and Revision of the AIG Plan:

Feedback is gathered from stakeholders in the form of surveys from students, parents, teachers, administrators, district personnel, and AIG Advisory Council members. Additional feedback is gathered from discussions in Advisory Council meetings, district-level Curriculum and Instruction meetings, Directors' meetings, Administrators' meetings, AIG Specialist and Lead Teacher meetings, school-level teacher and parent meetings, and AIG Team meetings. Feedback from these sources is analyzed for program strengths and weaknesses to be addressed in the revision of the AIG plan.

The AIG program self-assessment is completed by the AIG Coordinator and staff.

In determining identification criteria in Standard 1, Lee County students' Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) data and End of Grade (EOG) test data are analyzed to establish local norms, which are used in the identification criteria.

Elementary, middle, and high school teachers of gifted students, along with the AIG Coordinator and District AIG Lead Specialist, collaborate on the written revisions of the AIG Plan using the feedback from stakeholders and feedback from the Department of Public Instruction, as well as, the NC AIG Program Standards Unpacking Documents provided by the Department of Public Instruction.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist attend state and regional AIG Coordinator meetings to receive guidance and support of the AIG Plan development and improvement. They also participate in webinars from the Department of Public Instruction related to AIG Plan development and

improvement.

As drafts of each of the 6 AIG Standards are completed, they are sent by email to a representative group of stakeholders who agree to read the standards and provide feedback as to the clarity and effectiveness of the Standards.

Once developed, the AIG Coordinator presents a draft of AIG plan to a district-level curriculum and instruction (C&I) committee. The Curriculum & Instruction committee makes a motion for the plan to be taken to the Local Board of Education for approval as board policy. After the Board of Education approves the AIG Plan, the AIG Coordinator submits the plan to the Department of Public Instruction for comment.

### **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:** Lee County Schools monitors the implementation of the program and plan in accordance with Article 9B. The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist monitor the goals/targets for the AIG program through multiple means to ensure compliance and a quality instructional program. During the plan cycle years when the plan is not being updated, the AIG Coordinator will provide an update about the implementation of the plan to district personnel at the weekly Directors' Meeting, to the AIG Advisory Council four times a year, and to the monthly Curriculum and Instruction Committees (elementary, middle, and high school).

The AIG Coordinator completes Interim reports to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) regarding the effectiveness of the Lee County Schools' AIG Program. Feedback from all stakeholders is compiled and analyzed to ensure that the Interim report accurately reflects the implementation of the AIG Plan.

A concise outline of the six AIG Standards and accompanying practices is shared with teachers, principals, and AIG Specialists, AIG Teams, and district leaders.

Each principal, AIG Specialist, AIG Lead Teacher and AIG Coordinator has a hard copy of the AIG Plan (green notebook). The AIG Plan is available on the AIG web page on the Lee County Schools' website.

The AIG Coordinator works with the District AIG Lead Specialist to oversee implementation to fidelity through regular school visits and attendance at school-based AIG Team meetings to provide support and guidance.

In the spring of each year AIG Specialists meet with their principal to have a summative plus/delta conversation regarding improvements to the implementation of gifted services for the next school year.

At monthly AIG PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) with AIG Specialists and AIG Lead

Teachers, effective processes and practices will be highlighted and shared with other schools as a part of the learning process for continuous improvement.

The AIG Coordinator will analyze feedback gathered from monitoring, AIG PLC's, and surveys for patterns of strengths and areas of need across the district. These patterns will offer direction for assistance and training needed from the district level.

### **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:** The AIG Coordinator develops the budget for PRC 034 state funds under the guidance and approval of the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and the Chief Finance Officer. Collaboratively these individuals monitor the funds for the AIG program and develop a budget to ensure proper use of state allotted funds. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent work with the Chief Finance Officer to provide funding beyond the annual state allotment for the Lee County Schools AIG Program as needed. Such additional funding is substantial and reflects the commitment of the district to gifted students.

The AIG Coordinator develops an annual planning budget for use of PRC 034 (AIG Program) funds for the upcoming school year in collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. The budget is also reviewed by the Chief Finance Officer. Amendments and adjustments are made periodically to ensure that the line items are corrected from the planning budget. The Chief Finance Officer works closely with the AIG Coordinator to ensure funds are expended according to state policy.

A full-time administrative assistant assists the AIG Coordinator with management of the AIG budget.

Careful consideration is given to the effectiveness of expenditures and how students will benefit. AIG expenditures are prioritized by the measure of greatest impact on students and consistency of services across the district. AIG funds support the implementation of all 6 Standards in the AIG Plan. Funds are used to ensure gifted personnel are teaching gifted students, screening and identification are taking place, appropriate differentiation materials are provided, relevant professional development is offered, a continuum of services is offered K-12, partnerships with all stakeholders are formed, and program accountability is taking place.

The AIG Coordinator collaborates with personnel who oversee federal Title 2 funds to support teachers of gifted students.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** The AIG Coordinator, with the support of the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, the Executive Director of Instruction for Performance, and the Director of Accountability, maintains, analyzes and shares records that show student growth and achievement data and dropout data for AIG students. AIG personnel continue to investigate ways to share this information and improve performance.

AIG personnel strive to support continuous improvement of AIG student achievement and growth through the maintenance and analysis of data such as: EOG/EOC, AP, IB, ACT, and SAT.

Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT) scores (or other aptitude measures), indicative of student potential, are compared to achievement and growth data to gauge the effectiveness and appropriateness of differentiated services.

Local and state achievement benchmark data are gathered and analyzed quarterly for K-8 nurtured and gifted students. Performance growth of gifted students in all subgroups and demographic groups is analyzed to determine if there are disparities.

Other indicators of AIG student success and achievement are collected and include the following:

- \*Scholarships awarded
- \*Governor's School participants
- \*AP and IB participation and class completion rates
- \*College acceptance/attendance information
- \*Information on Internships and Mentorships
- \*Number of AIG students graduating with more than a high school diploma

Under the direction of the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, along with the Director of Accountability, the AIG Coordinator and other senior directors, a study of AIG student proficiency and growth occurs annually. The AIG student dropout rate is determined and analyzed at this time. Contributing factors and trends are discussed. Data is shared through the AIG Advisory Council and subcommittees focused on student growth. Conclusions will be drawn and included in the AIG plan to guide program improvement.

AIG performance growth data and AIG dropout data is shared at school staff development meetings, and at other district meetings, such as: Administrators, Directors, AIG PLCs, District Leads, Curriculum and Instruction, and Counselors.

The AIG Coordinator and AIG District Lead Specialist provide training to AIG Teams, AIG Specialists, AIG Lead Teachers, and administrators to ensure an understanding of how to interpret and analyze data and make programming changes that promote student growth.

The evaluation of AIG student growth through various types of data will inform the direction of the program. Decisions such as staff development efforts, the purchase of materials, communication with parents, student schedules, and targeted areas for monitoring, to name a few, will consider conclusions

from the data.

### **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:** Throughout the year, AIG personnel disaggregate AIG student subgroup data from PowerSchool to evaluate the representation of under-represented populations in the gifted program. Lee County Schools and the AIG department monitor the various subgroups represented within the gifted education program to determine participation rate in advanced classes and opportunities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

The Monitoring Process of Under-represented Populations in the Gifted Program:

- \*All of our elementary schools in Lee County are Title I schools.
- \*Examine data gathered through K-2 Teacher Observations of Potential (TOPS) portfolios: Which students are captured by this instrument? Who is being left out?
- \*Maintain and analyze a K-3 Nurture Headcount (students served in smaller enrichment groups).
- \*Analyze the Data Collection Spreadsheet for the number of underrepresented students referred, identified and served.
- \*Analyze achievement data for proficiency and growth of under-represented populations: EOG, EOC, AP, IB, SAT, ACT.
- \*Analyze aptitude data by under-represented populations: CogAT or other aptitude assessment.
- \*Analyze Advanced, Honors, AP, IB, enrollment data for participation rates.
- \*Analyze drop-out, graduation, college acceptance data.

The AIG Coordinator and the District AIG Lead Specialist:

- \*Assist teachers in examining data from their individual schools to compare the enrollment of diverse learners within rigorous courses of study.
- \*Provide data reports to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction on the representation of diverse gifted students in the AIG program based on information from PowerSchool and the K-3 Nurture Headcount from the AIG department.

Through a collaborative effort with counselors and the Director of Student Resources, the gifted education staff monitors gifted students who may choose not to enroll in a rigorous course of study in middle school and/or high school or who choose to drop out. This includes any student who shows the potential to achieve.

Identification criteria and procedures are examined frequently to ensure that under-represented populations are not being excluded or limited from qualifying for the gifted program. A conscious effort



is made to ensure multiple criteria are being considered for all populations of students. The identification criteria have been revised to include a pathway which considers quantitative and qualitative data.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Lee County Schools maintains current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students through the Department of Human Resources. At the beginning of each school year, the AIG Coordinator requests from the Human Resources department, and keeps on file, a copy of district personnel who currently hold an AIG state license and a list of teachers who have completed the coursework to obtain a local professional certificate to teach gifted students.

The AIG department offers a hybrid face-to-face/online 35-hour course in curriculum differentiation for the gifted. Participating teachers earn 3.5 CEUs and a professional certificate of completion.

The AIG Coordinator shares a list of AIG state licensed teachers and the list of teachers with the local AIG professional certificate with principals to facilitate the placement of qualified teachers to better serve gifted learners.

AIG Specialists must hold an AIG state license.

### **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:** Lee County Schools and the AIG department seek feedback from students, parents/families, teachers and other stakeholders regarding the AIG program. Parents, students and educators are given a comprehensive survey when the plan is in a cycle of revision to provide input into the process. The district is working to develop a plan to analyze data that is deliberate and consistent so results can be more methodically studied over time.

The AIG department administers the gifted program survey to provide feedback regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the AIG program. There are surveys for parents, students, and educators. The AIG Coordinator oversees the analysis of survey data. Conclusions from the surveys are used to inform the AIG plan revision process. Results of all surveys are shared with School AIG Teams, the AIG Advisory Council, principals and directors.

Feedback from parents and students is gathered at AIG Parent nights, AIG parent conferences, and

district Parent Information Nights.

Feedback is gathered at Principals' meetings, Curriculum and Instruction meetings, and from AIG Specialist/Lead Teacher PLCs.

### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** In order to review and revise the Lee County Schools' AIG Plan during the comprehensive program evaluation year, the AIG department uses multiple sources of data.

Sources of data used for feedback and suggestions to improve:

- \*Analysis of student, parent, and educator surveys for major trends
- \*AIG program self-assessment
- \*NCDPI feedback on previous AIG plan evaluation
- \*Advisory Council meetings
- \*District leadership meetings, including Board of Education members
- \*AIG Specialist / AIG Lead Teacher meetings
- \*Focus group of teachers for plan writing
- \*EVAAS scores to study the growth of the AIG subgroup
- \*Achievement scores and aptitude scores to determine local norms for identification
- \*Parent and community readers of the AIG Plan standards to ensure clarity

In the writing of the 2019-2022 AIG Plan, a continued emphasis has been placed on incorporating the language of the vision statement throughout the screening and identification processes and within the services available to gifted students. The big ideas of "recognizing potential" and "talent development" are the themes of the 2019-2022 AIG Plan.

As part of the feedback process during the writing/revising of the AIG Plan, drafts of the revised Standards are shared with a representative group of stakeholders, including parents and educators. As they are revised, drafts are sent to the "readers" requesting feedback as to the clarity and effectiveness of the practices in the Standard.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** The AIG Program of Lee County Schools shares AIG program evaluation data

from several sources with the public. Evaluation data used in the revision process of the AIG Plan consists of feedback from student, parent, and educator surveys. Other formal sources of feedback came from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and an AIG program self-assessment document provided by NCDPI.

AIG Program feedback and evaluation results are a regular part of school level presentations, Advisory Council agendas, AIG PLC agendas, Curriculum and Instruction meetings and Directors' meetings. These opportunities to share evaluation data occur with varying frequencies but occur regularly throughout the year.

Survey trends, evaluation data and areas targeted for revision have been shared with district leadership, teachers and administrators, school counselors, Board of Education members, parents and community. Methods of communication include various handouts directed at specific audiences. For example, three hand-outs of AIG "Targets," each customized for a different level (elementary school, middle school, and high school), are shared at the respective Curriculum and Instruction meetings and with other stakeholders, as needed.

Program updates are shared with students, parents and educators on the AIG Facebook page: LCS Kaleidoscope.

Goals for the AIG Plan cycle 2019-2022:

- \*The AIG program will share AIG updates and/or relevant information with parents and community at Parent Information Nights.
- \*Survey results and evaluation data will also be posted on the AIG web page at the Lee County Schools website and on the AIG Facebook page: LCS Kaleidoscope.

### **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:** Lee County Schools protects the rights of all AIG students through established policies, procedures and practices as set forth in the Lee County Schools AIG Plan. Due process within the Lee County Schools gifted education program ensures parents and guardians of their rights during the identification and service option match processes. The "Parents' Rights in the AIG Program" document is available in English and Spanish on the AIG web page at the Lee County Schools' website.

During the AIG referral process, when a school AIG Team makes the determination that additional testing is needed, a Consent for Evaluation document is sent home to obtain parental consent. If a student is in the AIG referral process, and a Summary of Student Eligibility document is completed on

the student, a parent conference must be held to inform the parent of the AIG Team decision and obtain a parent signature. If the student meets the AIG criteria, the parent signature must be obtained before the student can be entered into PowerSchool as an AIG student, or served by an AIG Specialist. Parents are given a copy of the "Parents' Rights in the AIG Program" document at this conference. Parents are informed and signatures of consent obtained anytime a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP), or an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP), is completed on a student.

Gifted personnel work to resolve complaints from parents of AIG students related to the rights of their child both informally and through a formal appeal process if that avenue is used. Parent complaints that come to the AIG Coordinator are investigated and handled expediently by contacting all parties involved at the school and consulting with the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction if necessary. The parent is contacted periodically and informed of the status of the situation if it is not able to be resolved quickly. When a parent chooses to lodge a formal complaint or appeal, the AIG Coordinator shares a copy of the "Parents' Rights in the AIG Program" document and explains the process below.

### **LEE COUNTY SCHOOLS DUE PROCESS: PARENTS' RIGHTS IN THE AIG PROGRAM: Revised April 2019**

All academically and intellectually gifted students, ages 5 to 20, must be provided a free, appropriate public education. This means that differentiated services will be provided for the academically/intellectually gifted student:

1. At no expense to the parent,
2. According to the guidelines of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and Lee County Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program, and
3. According to the student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP).

### **YOUR RIGHTS AS A PARENT**

#### **Referral:**

When a parent or community member thinks that a child is intellectually and academically gifted and may need differentiated educational services, that person should tell school personnel in writing the reason(s) for referring that child. The referral should include information about the student's characteristics and strengths that require differentiated services. If the student is enrolled in public school, the referral should be given to that student's teacher or principal.

#### **Screening and Evaluation:**

After a child has been referred to determine his/her need for differentiated services in the academically/intellectually gifted program, an evaluation process must be followed:

1. The parent must give written permission before any individual evaluation is to begin.
2. Testing and evaluation materials must be selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally biased.
3. Selected tests include those that measure educational achievement and aptitude.
4. Student eligibility for differentiated services will be determined using multiple criteria by a school site team trained to select appropriate options for the individual student.

5. One test or procedure cannot exclude a student from differentiated services in school's academically/intellectually gifted program.

If the parent (guardian) does not agree with the school site's decision concerning eligibility, he/she has the right to submit the results of an independent educational and intellectual evaluation. This evaluation must be given by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the education agency responsible for the student's education. Measures of intellectual aptitude and achievement are two of the criteria used in determining eligibility, and additional measures do not necessarily guarantee placement in the academically/intellectually gifted program, although those results will definitely be considered.

#### THE SCHOOL SYSTEM DOES NOT PAY FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL EVALUATIONS.

The parent has the right to ask to meet with the School AIG Team to review the decision. For students identified as academically or intellectually gifted, a differentiated education plan (DEP) must be written. Such a plan will include student strengths and the options considered by the school-site team as appropriate to the student's educational needs.

Placement is the end result of referral, evaluation, consideration of all criteria involved in giftedness, and the development of the DEP. The school system must ensure that placement is based on multiple indicators of giftedness and that options chosen are based on the needs of the student. Student progress will be reviewed annually. Major reviews of programming options will be conducted at the end of third, fifth and eighth grades. Recommendations for differentiated options for the next grade levels will be made at those times. Service to student will be based on the individual student need for differentiated education. Emphasis will be placed on providing the appropriate student service options match so that the student will experience and demonstrate growth in academic subjects and/or intellectually.

#### **APPEALS PROCESS:**

According to Chapter 115c, Article 9B of the General Statutes of North Carolina, if a parent disagrees with any decisions of the School AIG Team regarding identification of a student for differentiated services in the school's AIG Program, or appropriate services for the student, the parent has the right to appeal that decision. The Parent must follow the procedure described below:

If the student was referred but was not identified as needing differentiated services by the School AIG Team, to inform the parent or guardian of this decision, the School AIG Team will send or give the parent or guardian the following:

1. Copy of the Parents' Rights in the AIG Program document
2. Copy of the student's AIG Summary of Student Eligibility

If the student was identified by the School AIG Team as needing a Differentiated Education Plan, then, to inform parent or guardian of this decision, the parent or guardian will be invited to a conference and be given the following:

1. Copy of the Parents' Rights in the AIG Program document
2. Copy of the student's AIG Summary of Student Eligibility

3. Copy of the student's Differentiated Education Plan for the elementary grades, middle grades, or high school.

**If the parent or guardian disagrees with the decision the following steps will be followed:**

**STEP 1: Parent or Guardian**

The parent or guardian may make a written request for a conference with the School AIG Team to discuss the concerns about the decision(s).

The request should be addressed to the Chairperson of the School AIG Team.

If the disagreement is not resolved at the conference, then proceed to STEP 2.

**STEP 2: Principal Conference**

1. The parent may make a written request within 30 days for a conference with the principal.
2. The principal reviews the concern with the School AIG Team Chairperson.
3. The principal grants the conference within 10 school days of the request and responds in writing within 10 days of the conference.

If the grievance is not resolved at STEP 2, the parent (guardian) may appeal to the AIG Coordinator and/or Assistant Supt. of Curriculum and Instruction.

**STEP 3: AIG Coordinator and/or Assistant Supt. of Curriculum and Instruction**

1. The parent may appeal the principal's decision to the AIG Coordinator and/or Assistant Supt. of Curriculum and Instruction within 10 days of receiving the principal's response.
2. The AIG Coordinator and/or Assistant Supt. of Curriculum and Instruction reviews the concern within 10 days of receipt of the appeal.
3. The AIG Coordinator and/or Assistant Supt. of Curriculum and Instruction responds in writing to the parent and principal within 10 days concerning the outcome of the review.

If the disagreement is not resolved at STEP 3, the parent (guardian) may appeal to the Board of Education.

**STEP 4: The Board of Education**

1. The parent (guardian) may appeal to the Board of Education in writing within 10 school days following the written response from the AIG Coordinator and/or Assistant Supt. of Curriculum and Instruction.
2. The Board of Education shall offer a final written decision within 30 days after receiving the appeal.

If the appeal to the Board of Education fails to resolve the disagreement, then:

The parent (guardian) may file a petition for a hearing under Article 3, Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. This final step in the appeals process for unresolved disagreements is stated in statute as follows.

**§ 115C-150.8. Review of Disagreements:**

In the event that the procedure developed under G.S. 115C-150.7(b)(7) fails to resolve a disagreement, the parent or guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of review shall be limited to (i) whether the local school

administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically or intellectually gifted student, or (ii) whether the local plan developed under G.S. 115C-150.7 has been implemented appropriately with regard to the child. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains findings of fact and conclusions of law. Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, the decision of the administrative law judge becomes final, is binding on the parties, and is not subject to further review under Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. (1996, 2nd Ex. Sess., c. 18, s. 18.24(f).)

\*\*\* Attorney fees are the responsibility of the parent.

NOTE: Due process Parents' Rights in the AIG Program contains ideas based on the policies of the Lee County Board of Education and policies governing Exceptional Children Programs.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:** \*Interview AIG drop-outs to determine contributing factors and implement prevention strategies.

\*Create a partnership with the Director of Testing and Accountability to analyze AIG student data K-12.

\*Regularly analyze the data of subgroup populations to gauge the representation, performance and retention of under-represented populations in the AIG program.

**Sources of Evidence:** \*Survey results and AIG Program Self-assessment

\*AIG Advisory Council meetings, agendas and minutes

\*AIG Subcommittee meetings, agendas and minutes

\*Curriculum and Instruction Committee, agendas and minutes

\*Emails sent to stakeholders requesting feedback on drafts of the AIG Plan

\*Calendar of stakeholder meeting dates for AIG plan revision

\*Revised AIG plan

\*Calendar of Regional AIG Coordinator meetings and Webinar participation

\*Board agenda

\*Documentation of Board approval

\*Summary of findings for individual schools

\*Monthly AIG PLCs with district AIG personnel

\*Patterns reflected through in-house monitoring

\*AIG Plan notebook for each AIG Specialist, AIG Lead Teacher and principal

\*Interim Report for NCDPI

\*AIG budget plan based on the planning allotment submitted yearly

\*Budget amendments and adjustments

\*Lee County Schools finance records for PRC 034

\*Full-time administrative assistant in the AIG department

\*AIG data from EOGs/EOCs, AP, IB, ACT, SAT and AIG dropout data

\*Minutes from data analysis meetings documenting data conclusions.

\*Plan of action based on the data derived

\*Presentations to parents and staff which include information about AIG student growth

- \*Headcount reports from PowerSchool
- \*Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS) portfolios and K-3 Nurture Headcount
- \*Percentage of under-represented middle school AIG students enrolled in advanced classes
- \*Percentage of under-represented high school AIG students enrolled in Honors, AP, and IB courses
- \*AIG 11 Data Collection Spreadsheet
- \*AIG cohort lists for teachers completing the local professional certificate
- \*AIG list of educators with AIG state licensure
- \*Human Resources records
- \*Job description for an AIG Specialist
- \*Analysis and conclusions from survey data--written results
- \*Longitudinal data from multiple surveys collected
- \*AIG Parent Nights, conferences, Parent Information Nights, district meetings
- \*Recorded feedback from all sources listed
- \*EVAAS and student achievement/aptitude scores and new identification criteria
- \*Revised AIG plan
- \*Handouts of "AIG Targets"
- \*Revised AIG brochure
- \*AIG newsletters
- \*Postings on AIG webpage and LCS Kaleidoscope FaceBook page
- \*Consent for Evaluation document
- \*Summary of Eligibility document
- \*Differentiated Education Plan
- \*Individualized Differentiated Education Plan
- \* Annual Review
- \*PARENTS' RIGHTS IN THE AIG PROGRAM document



## **Glossary (optional):**

**AIG Program** - Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted services offered by Lee County Schools.

- \* AR Academically gifted in reading
- \* AM Academically gifted in math
- \* AG Academically gifted in reading and math
- \* IG Intellectually gifted
- \* AI Academically gifted in reading, math, and intellectually

**2e** - The term twice exceptional, often abbreviated as 2e, has only recently entered educators' lexicon and refers to intellectually gifted children who have some form of disability. These children are considered exceptional both because of their intellectual gifts and because of their special needs.

### **Achievement Tests**

Tests designed to measure what students have already learned, mostly in specific content areas. An example of an achievement test is the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS).

**AP:** Advanced Placement

Refers to college-level courses and exams students may take in high school.

### **Aptitude Test**

A test predicting a student's future performance in a particular domain.

**C & I:** Curriculum and Instruction Committee

**CTE:** Career and Technical Education

High school courses offered to prepare students for a career immediately after high school or provide introductory knowledge of careers requiring a college degree.

### **CogAT**

Cognitive Abilities Test The purpose of this test is to assess students abilities in reasoning and problem solving using verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal (visual-spatial) systems.

**DEP:** Differentiated Education Plan

Teachers complete a DEP on AIG student at the beginning of the school year. The DEP outlines the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student.

### **Differentiation**

Modifying curriculum and instruction according to learning environment, content, process, and product to meet unique student needs in the classroom. Modifications take into consideration the students ability, readiness, interests, and learning profile.

### **Dual Enrollment**

Most often refers to high school students taking college courses, often for college credit.

### **English as a Second Language (ESL)**

Refers to the educational department serving students learning English as an additional language. Special consideration should be taken to identify these students properly for gifted programming.

### **Flexible Grouping**

An instructional strategy where students are grouped together to receive appropriately challenging instruction. True flexible grouping permits students to move in and out of various grouping patterns, depending on the course content. Grouping can be determined by ability, size, and/or interest.

### **IDEP**

Individualized Differentiated Education Plan. An education plan used when a student has a need for an individual plan for gifted services which is developed by the teacher, parent and student.

### **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

An IEP is a document that delineates special education services for special-needs students. The IEP includes any modifications that are required in the regular classroom and any additional special programs or services.

### **Intelligence Quotient (IQ)**

A numerical representation of intelligence. An average IQ is considered to be 100.

### **International Baccalaureate (IB) Program**

A demanding pre-university program that students can complete to earn college credit. IB emphasizes critical thinking and understanding of other cultures or points of view.

### **Lee Early College**

Partners with Central Carolina Community College and is an academically advanced public high school. Students who apply, and are accepted, have the opportunity to complete an Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), or Applied Associate of Science (AAS) degree by the time they graduate from high school.

### **PBL: Problem-Based Learning**

A curriculum and instruction model that asks students to solve real-world, complex, or open-ended problems by using research, decision-making, creative and critical thinking, and other 21st-century skills.

### **PETS: (Primary Education Thinking Skills)**

A curriculum promoting higher level thinking skills for students in kindergarten through third grade.

### **PLC**

Professional Learning Communities – a group of educators planning instruction together.

### **STEM**

An acronym for the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, providing STEM curriculum is encouraged as a way to grow students' interests and potentials in these areas. Some researchers combine "the arts" (STEAM) into this category of instruction as well.

### **Talent Development**

Programs, curricula, and services for students that can best meet their needs, promote their achievements in life, and contribute to the enhancement of our society when schools identify students' specific strengths and focus educational services on these talents.

### **TOPS (Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students)**

A teacher observation folder listing nine categories of behaviors that indicate outstanding potential in young children (ages 5-9).

### **National Association for Gifted Children Glossary**

<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/glossary-terms>

### **Appendix (optional):**

Parents' Rights in English June 2019.pub (*Appendix*)

Parents' Rights in Spanish June 2019.docx (*Appendix*)

BOE Minutes Approving AIG Plan -6-11-2019.docx (*Local Board Approval Document*)