

# Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program



**Local Plan**

2016-2019

**Cumberland County Schools**  
**Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan**  
**Effective 2016-2019**

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 10-MAY-16

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**Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on:** JUNE 10, 2016, 15:20:57

Cumberland County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

The NC AIG Program Standards encompass six principle standards with accompanying practices. These standards articulate the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs and relate to the categories related to NC's AIG legislation, Article 9B (N. C. G. S. 115C-150.5). These best practices help to clarify the standard, describe what an LEA should have in place, and guide LEAs to improve their programs.

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs and align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2016-2019. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

***For 2016-2019, Cumberland County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Cumberland County Schools Vision for local AIG program:** A Glimpse  
Cumberland County Schools

Circa 1730, the Highland Scots settled in the Upper Cape Fear Valley located in the Sandhills of North Carolina. The Cape Fear River quickly became a major transportation route, causing the surrounding area to grow at a rapid pace. This area, now known as Cumberland County, covers approximately 650 square miles and is currently the fifth most populous county in North Carolina. The 319,431 people who call Cumberland County home have a diverse make-up, so our school system also has many unique populations.

The county's commitment to education is evidenced by the many institutes of higher learning, including Fayetteville State University, Methodist University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, and Miller-Motte College. In addition, there are 87 public schools for kindergarten through twelfth grades, making Cumberland County the fifth largest school district in the state of North Carolina, with a total enrollment of 50,932. In the United States, Cumberland County Schools is the 91st largest school district (out of 13,515).

Cumberland County Schools' Academically/Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Program began in 1976 in response to the requirements of the North Carolina Creech Bill legislation. In 1994, because of its work in the identification of minority students, Cumberland County Schools served as one of nine pilot

sites in the state for developing innovations in identifying and serving gifted students. In its commitment to excellence and quality services for students, the AIG Program has continuously evolved to reflect current best practices in the identification, instruction, and support of gifted students. Cumberland County Schools' AIG Program has been and continues to be recognized in North Carolina for its innovative and visionary practices. Because of its commitment to serve all students who "perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment" (N.C.G.S. § 115C-150.5), we currently have identified 9.3% of this county's students as gifted.

In addition to upholding the State's gifted program, the AIG program here supports and expands on the Cumberland County School System's statement that it "is committed to empowering all students to collaborate, compete, and succeed in an increasingly interconnected world". The goals of Cumberland County are:

- Every student in Cumberland County Schools graduates from high school prepared for work and further education
- Every student has a personalized education
- Every student every day has excellent educators
- Every school district has up-to-date financial, business and technology systems to serve its students, parents and educators
- Every student is healthy, safe, and responsible

Our AIG Local Plan incorporates these goals and is dedicated to providing a quality education for all students across all cultural and economic strata. We continue to lead the charge to support our academically and intellectually gifted students.

**Sources of funding for local AIG program (as of 2016)**

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$3360816.00</b>	<b>\$105041.00</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**

Articulates and disseminates the procedures for AIG student identification, including screening, referral, and identification processes for all grade levels to school personnel, parents/families, students, and the community-at-large.

**District Response:** Cumberland County Schools AIG Program effectively communicates the screening, referral, and identification processes to all stakeholders through the following:

- Distribute informational pamphlets or brochures county-wide
- Share presentations to faculty at the beginning of school year
- Link the 2016-2019 CCS Local Plan to the CCS AIG website
- Link the CCS Local Plan to each school's website under student resources
- Utilize the stand-alone PowerSchool report to identify when transfer students enroll
- Host Parent Meetings to explain AIG processes
- Communicate with teachers, administrators, parents, and students through various means, i.e., newsletters, Edmodo, program update e-mails, etc.
- Share video on CCS University/CCS website to explain referral, screening, and identification processes to stakeholders

### **Practice B**

States and employs multiple criteria for AIG student identification. These criteria incorporate measures that reveal student aptitude, student achievement, or potential to achieve in order to develop a comprehensive profile for each student. These measures include both non-traditional and traditional measures that are based on current theory and research.

**District Response:** Cumberland County Schools adopts the North Carolina definition of giftedness to use in the identification of students and the provision of services. This definition describes giftedness as "having the ability or potential" for substantially high levels of accomplishment, as compared to other students of similar age and circumstance. Key to this definition is the acknowledgement that gifted students are present in all cultural groups, across all economic strata and in all human endeavors. In this definition, being identified gifted is tied directly to the provision of differentiated services. By adopting this definition, the school system commits to these conditions for identification and services.

The Identification Process

Cumberland County Schools will use some or all of the following indicators in various combinations to determine those students who are gifted and in need of differentiated educational services:

Gifted behavioral characteristics documented on acceptable checklists and scales, completed by reliable sources

Classroom performance recorded on progress reports, grade cards, and other official school documents

Classroom observations completed by trained school personnel

Documented recommendations from appropriate sources verifying exemplary academic achievement within and/or outside of school

Demonstrated performance through academic products, contests/competitions, and other opportunities for exemplary achievement

Standardized test scores: aptitude, achievement, intelligence and other tests

Anecdotal information appropriately documented and verified

### Screening

Screening creates a list of students who may be in need of differentiated services beyond those provided by the regular classroom. If there are students recommended for screening who do not fit into any of the referral criteria, the AIG Needs Determination Team still includes the student on the list and reviews student anecdotal data. This process ensures that a broad-based pool of students is screened for identification.

Although screening students requires time and discussion, it is an important step in the identification process, since it eventually determines who will be identified gifted at the school. The screening process is ongoing and should be addressed several times during the year, to include students who may have moved into the school since the beginning of the year. A Screening Pool should be established and maintained throughout the current school year. At the end of each school year, the Screening Pool Log is filed with the AIG records so that the AIG Needs Determination Team and AIG teacher can refer to the list as needed. At the beginning of each school year, the AIG teacher and AIG Needs Determination Team share the identification process with the school staff and discuss the definition of giftedness, the characteristics of gifted students, the performance indicators available for teachers to use in recommending students for identification, and the services available for gifted students. Shortly thereafter, the Team asks the teachers to recommend students to be screened for possible identification. Screening referrals may be submitted by school personnel, parents/guardians, students (self-nominations), and/or community members with academic knowledge of students.

Multiple screening information on referred students, grades 3–12, is collected from all appropriate sources. If the screening pool does not reflect the minority population of the school, care is given to collect the names of the highest achieving minority students in the school for screening. The screening process and periodic audits by the Oversight Review Committee ensure that equity and reliability exist system-wide.

Using the following criteria for referral, the AIG Team reviews those students who are included on the AIG Screening Pool Log and selects those who are high performers and those who have potential for high performance to continue in the identification process.

Test data must be current and not to exceed two years. Tests must have been administered within the past two years.

### Screening Criteria (K-12)

### Discovery Grades K-2

A nurturing program is in place to serve K-2 students that demonstrate academic potential. The AIG Program provides Discovery services at each Cumberland County elementary school. Students are selected using multiple criteria to participate in this challenging and nurturing program. Screening for identification will begin in 3rd grade; however, in instances where a K-2 student shows signs of highly gifted characteristics, a body of evidence will be collected over time using multiple criteria. Once sufficient data is collected, the Discovery teacher, the Needs Determination team and the AIG Coordinator will review the body of evidence. If testing is needed, the student will be referred to the school psychologist for individual aptitude testing.

### ACES (Accelerated Curriculum for Exceptional Students) Grades 3-5

1 year of a 90th percentile or higher on most recent EOG score or other achievement test OR 1 year of a 90th percentile or higher on an aptitude test (not to exceed 2 years) AND 3 year average of "A" or "B" in corresponding subject area

98th or 99th percentile on an aptitude or achievement test (not to exceed 2 years) Classroom performance/grades may not mirror this potential

Highest EOG score in student's ethnic group in the current classroom OR Highest grades in student's ethnic group in the current classroom

Achievement at a substantially high level of performance in ways other than through the classroom or standardized testing (demonstrated through products, contests, competitions, etc.)

High performance in the classroom, yet has language patterns, experiences, or cultural differences that might make it difficult to demonstrate potential through standardized testing

### GEMS (Gifted Education for Middle School) Grades 6 - 8

2 years of a 87th percentile or higher on most recent EOG score or other achievement test OR 1 year of a 87th percentile or higher on an aptitude test (not to exceed 2 years) AND 3 year average of "A" or "B" in corresponding subject area

98th or 99th percentile on an aptitude or achievement test (not to exceed 2 years) AND Classroom performance/grades may not mirror this potential

Highest EOG score in student's ethnic group in the current classroom OR Highest grades in student's ethnic group in the current classroom

Achievement at a substantially high level of performance in ways other than through the classroom or standardized testing (demonstrated through products, contests, competitions, etc.)

High performance in the classroom, yet has language patterns, experiences, or cultural differences that might make it difficult to demonstrate potential through standardized testing

### SAGES (Secondary Academically Gifted Exceptional Services) Grades 9-12

92nd percentile or higher on an acceptable achievement or aptitude test

Achievement at a substantially high level of performance in Honors or AP classes in ways other than through the classroom or standardized testing (demonstrated through products, contests, competitions, etc.)

High performance in the Honors or AP classroom, yet has language patterns, experiences, or cultural differences that might make it difficult to demonstrate potential through standardized testing

3 year A average in English and/or Math and willingness to take Honors or AP classes in subject match

Top 5% GPA/class rank

Identify as capable of scoring a "3" on an AP exam as indicated by their AP Potential

Has scored a combined 180+ index or a 120+ Reading and/or Math index on the PSAT, 1200+ on the

SAT or 27 on the ACT

#### Pathways To Identification and Placement

##### Grades K-2

If testing is needed, the student will be referred to the school psychologist for individual testing. Standardized achievement test score of 99th percentile in reading and/or math and an aptitude score of 99th percentile will be required for placement.

##### Grades 3-12

There are two pathways to identification. Students may be identified for services in reading and/or math in either pathway after meeting the screening criteria.

##### Pathway One ACES and GEMS (Grades 3-8)

Standardized achievement test score of 98th or 99th percentile in reading and/or math and an aptitude score of 80th percentile or higher OR Aptitude test score of 98th or 99th percentile and a standardized achievement score of 80th percentile or higher

"A" average in reading and/or math over past three years (average to include current grades) AND Achievement test score of 87th –97th percentile in subject match AND Aptitude score of 87th - 97th percentile

"B" average in reading and/or math over past three years (average to include current grades) AND Achievement test score of 90th – 97th percentile in subject match AND Aptitude test score of 90th – 97th percentile

##### (Grades 9-12)

"A" average in subject area over past three years AND Enrolled in Honors or AP course in subject area AND Achievement OR Aptitude test score of 92nd percentile or higher in subject match Has scored a 180+ on the PSAT, 1200+ on SAT (reading and mathematics), or 27 on ACT AND "A" average on core subject over past three years

##### Intellectually Gifted (IG) Grades 3-12

Has scored 98 or 99 percentile on an approved aptitude test (within 2 years)

Pathway Two (Grades 3-12) This pathway applies to those students in grades 3-12 whose standardized testing and/or classroom grades do not fit into any of the sets of criteria in Pathway One and who are achieving or have the potential to achieve at substantial levels of performance. In Pathway Two, professional judgment must be exercised in the identification process. In Pathway Two, the student has appropriate indicators in combination with his/her screening data and test scores. Students must meet the criteria outlined on the identification matrix. All selected indicators must be documented.

##### Grades 3-8 Anecdotal considerations:

Has scored within one to three points needed for identification on the standardized testing required in Pathway One

Has the highest test scores and/or grades in his/her class and has a history of outstanding academic performance when compared to others of his/her age, experience, or environment

Has the highest test scores and/or grades of his/her ethnic group in his/her current classroom and has a history of outstanding academic performance when compared to others of his/her age, experience, or environment

Has manifested many gifted behavioral characteristics as measured on gifted behavior checklists and performance scales



Grades 9-12 Anecdotal considerations:

Has maintained an "A" or "B" average for three or more years in Reading/Math and is willing to take Honors or AP courses in that area

Has scored within 1-3 points of identification

Has a record of outstanding achievement through exceptional performances in academic contests, competitions, and extracurricular activities

Has manifested many gifted behavioral characteristics as measured on gifted behavior checklists and performance scales

Has demonstrated at least a 90% probability to score a "3" on an AP English/Math exam as documented by AP Potential

Has scored a 180+ index or 120+ reading and math index on the PSAT, 1200+ on SAT (reading and mathematics), or 27 on ACT AND "A" average on core subject over past three years

Maintains a GPA which places the student in the top 5% of his/her class

### **Practice C**

Ensures AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures respond to traditionally 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:** Cumberland County Schools will use some or all of the following indicators in various combinations to determine those students who are gifted and in need of differentiated educational services:

Gifted behavioral characteristics documented on acceptable checklists and scales, completed by reliable sources

Classroom performance recorded on progress reports, grade cards, and other official school documents

Classroom observations completed by trained school personnel

Documented recommendations from appropriate sources verifying exemplary achievement within and/or outside of school

Demonstrated performance through academic products, contests/competitions, and other opportunities for exemplary achievement

Standardized test scores: aptitude, achievement, intelligence and other tests

Anecdotal information appropriately documented and verified

### Collection Of Information

Multiple screening criteria on referred students is collected from all appropriate sources. If the screening pool does not reflect the minority population of the school, care is given to collect the names of the highest achieving minority students in the school for screening. The screening process and periodic audits by the Oversight Review Committee ensure that equity and reliability exist system-wide. The English as a Second Language Program will assist with communicating the procedures in other languages.

The AIG Testing Program

The North Carolina End-of-Grade (grades 3-8) testing results are used in the screening portion of the identification process and are considered a part of the student's total profile. In grades 9-12, End-of-Course testing may be used in the identification of students. Once students have been screened and are determined to need further assessment, standardized testing, apart from the state testing, is used in the formal identification of students. AIG personnel (diagnosticians), trained in the administration of various tests, complete this portion of the identification process for students referred to them.

Once parental consent for testing is obtained, the diagnosticians will administer a battery of tests which may include:

Aptitude tests

Achievement tests

Assessment instruments reflect sensitivity to economic conditions, learning differences, and diversity of students so that equal opportunity is provided to all students. When testing is complete, results are returned to the school for consideration by the AIG Needs Determination Team. There are times when testing is required beyond that completed by the AIG diagnostician. For second language or ESL students, testing in their native language may be necessary, and school psychologists or ESL staff may assist with this testing. Students with disabilities may require testing to be completed by school psychologists. Still other students may be referred to the school psychologist for testing because of inconsistencies in student test scores. If testing by professionals other than an AIG Diagnostician is necessary, the AIG Needs Determination Team should invite the school psychologist or ESL staff to a team meeting to discuss the special testing needs of the student.

#### Documentation Collection

Although there is no set number of indicators needed to identify a student as gifted, the AIG teacher and Needs Determination Team should build a strong placement case with as many indicators as may apply.

Pathway One Indicators (See full description in Standard 1, b)

Test Data and Grade Performance

Pathway Two Indicators (See full description in Standard 1, b)

Highest test score/grades in class or in ethnic group and has a history of outstanding academic performance

Outstanding academic achievement in academic contests, competitions, other activities

Gifted characteristics and behaviors as indicated on an approved checklist

Potential to score "3" on AP Exam as evidenced on "AP Potential" (Grade 9th-12th)

Top 5% of class (Grade 9th-12th rank/GPA)

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Oversight Review Committee ensures equitability during the screening and identification process through the following:

Staff Development training for all Needs Determination Team members  
Implementation of an identification matrix for consistency across schools  
Availability of multimedia tools to explain screening, referral, and identification process to all staff

### **Practice E**

Maintains documentation that explains the identification process and service options for individual AIG students, which is reviewed annually with parents/families.

**District Response:** The Cumberland County AIG Program implements and maintains documentation that fully explains the identification process and service options. The AIG staff reviews annually the following documentation with parents:

Differentiated Education Plan  
AIG Student Portfolios  
Progress Reports  
Quarterly Performance Review

The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is developed to describe the service(s) in which the student will be involved, the learning environment where the service(s) will be offered, the content modifications that will occur for the student, and the array of special programs available to enhance the student's learning. The DEP is updated and reviewed with the parent annually or when Program changes are needed for the student. Curriculum developed according to the above guidelines is used in the services provided. An Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) may be designed if the DEP does not adequately reflect the student's program. A DEP or IDEP is developed for every student who is identified as needing differentiated services. The initial DEP is reviewed with the parent at the time the student is identified gifted and in need of differentiated instructional services. Thereafter, the parent is invited annually to review the DEP. At the DEP Annual Review, a list of curriculum activities for the year is explained and given to the parents. Parents may also review portfolio collections of the students' work, hear presentations from the students about their learning, receive information from regular classroom teachers and counselors, and learn about extra-curricular opportunities, the testing program, and post-secondary expectations.

### **AIG Student Portfolios**

All identified AIG students must submit exemplary work samples in their area(s) of identification. These work samples are maintained in student portfolios as documentation of performance and participation in AIG curriculum services.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Identification Matrix developed to ensure equity and consistency across the county particularly in underrepresented populations.  
Identification process established to meet the needs of highly gifted K-2 students.

Established criteria for identifying intellectually gifted students.

**Sources of Evidence:** County brochure

Accessible links

Transfer form and process for identifying out of county students

Documentation of parent meetings

Newsletters

Summary of Indicators form

Pathway II - Identification matrix

Screening Log form

Approved Tests and Checklists

"The Gifted Education Planner: Inventories and Data Collection Forms" by Karen B. Rogers, Ph.D.

"Gifted Rating Scales" by Pfeiffer and Jarosewich

Approved Tests

Needs Determination Team members roster

Oversight Review Committee checks and balances/audit

Multimedia presentation to explain screening, referral, and identification process for all staff

Differentiated Education Plan

AIG Progress Report

Quarterly Performance Review

## **Standard 2: 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 Cumberland County AIG Program curriculum is aligned with the NC Standard Course of Study. Enrichment, extension, and acceleration are an integral part of the Cumberland County curriculum; research in education strongly supports the use of this advanced, accelerated curricula with high ability learners. Studies confirm the greater effects of enrichment, in tandem with grouping gifted learners, as a best practice in providing rigorous, meaningful, and interesting challenges to these unique learners. The CCS AIG Program provides challenging and in-depth curriculum as well as 21st Century enrichment, extension, and acceleration to meet AIG students' academic and social emotional needs in an ever-changing global society.

Differentiate/tier curriculum to better address gifted students' varied academic needs  
Require all cluster teachers to complete the two local online AIG courses  
Cluster students in grade levels 3-8 in all schools and Honors English and math grades 9-12  
Purchase resources to equip and support AIG teachers and students for 21st century enrichment, acceleration, and extension

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** The Cumberland County AIG Program currently employs diverse and effective instructional practices to address a range of learning needs.

#### Grades K-2

In this service option, K-2 identified students will continue to participate in the Discovery Program. In addition, independent enrichment opportunities will be provided.

#### Grades 3-5

ACES (Accelerated Curriculum for Exceptional Students) Program

In this service option, AIG students, identified in reading and/or math, are appropriately clustered (see guidelines standard 2 practice e) for instruction with other academically capable students. The AIG

teacher may serve AIG students by going into the classroom to work with the cluster teacher with differentiation/planning of instructional units and by consulting with the teacher to prepare differentiated units. The cluster teachers, who have successfully completed the local requirement, plan and teach challenging enrichment and accelerated instructional activities. These teachers will receive guidance from the AIG licensed teacher.

AIG students will receive direct services a minimum of 1 hour per each day served by the licensed AIG teacher, up to 3 hours a week. Direct services provide AIG identified students with an opportunity to participate in AIG units of study, which extend the NC Standard Course of Study.

#### Grades 6-8

GEMS (Gifted Education for Middle School)

Sixth Grade Cluster Classes

(AIG Reading and AIG Math)

Seventh Grade Cluster Classes

(AIG Reading and Compacted Math)

Eighth Grade Cluster Classes

(AIG Reading and Math I)

In this service option, the identified AIG students are clustered for instruction in math and reading with other academically capable students (see guidelines standard 2 practice e). The cluster classes are enhanced by more rigorous reading and math activities that extend beyond the NC Standard Course of Study. Cluster classes are taught by the cluster classroom teacher, with guidance from the AIG licensed teacher. The school's AIG teacher teaches a maximum of two 60 minute cluster classes or one 75-90 minute blocked reading or math cluster class. The AIG teacher also supports the regular cluster classroom teachers by providing various AIG instructional materials, books, and activities. Compacted Math and Math I classes provide challenging math instruction for those students motivated and academically prepared to take the classes in middle school. These classes follow the Standard Course of Study and the Math I End-of-Course test is administered to students. Math I students receive high school credit.

#### GEMS Resource Class

In this service option, the identified AIG students are clustered for instruction in math and reading with other academically capable students (see guidelines standard 2 practice e). Students participate in activities with the AIG teacher in the areas of reading, math, critical and creative thinking, and writing. Research projects are completed and supplemental activities such as, Junior Great Books Reading Program are used to strengthen students' literacy and cognitive skills. AIG Resource at this level is typically offered in schools with low enrollments of AIG students.

#### GEMS Hybrid Service Option

In this hybrid service option, instead of serving as teacher of record for two classes, the AIG teacher works with all cluster teachers at each grade level to provide differentiated lessons and activities that will enhance classroom units. In this option, the AIG teacher may pull students out of the classroom for some differentiated activities, similar to that in the Resource service option, but spends most of the instructional time in cluster classrooms. In this service delivery model, the AIG teacher serves as an expert in the field, infusing rigorous differentiated curriculum and implementing best practices in gifted education. This option is for large AIG enrollment schools.

### Grades 9-12

#### SAGES (Secondary Academically Gifted Exceptional Services) Enrichment Sessions

Identified students participate in enrichment sessions designed and conducted by the AIG Consultant to enhance their high school academic experience. These sessions include, but are not limited to: guest lecturers, college tours/admission talks, college planning programs, and presentations in the academic and arts areas. Student interaction is encouraged and feedback is expected following each session.

#### SAGES Academic Counseling and Advisement

Identified students participate in group activities, as well as individual academic advisement with the AIG Consultant. Course selection, registration, SAT/ACT, college and career advisement, and scholarship searches are but some of the counseling opportunities provided the AIG students. Opportunities to tour colleges and universities and discussions with admissions officials are provided.

#### SAGES Newsletters

Newsletters are available on individual school websites and/or from the AIG Consultants detailing important test dates, college preparation advisement, student achievements/accolades, and other valuable information.

#### Advanced Curriculum Opportunities

The AIG Program expects identified AIG students to participate in the College Pathway Curriculum, taking as many challenging courses as possible. These include:

Honors Classes

Advanced Placement Courses

AP Teleconferencing Courses

College Connections Courses

NCVPS/Online courses

Beginning in 2004, the State Board of Education approved a framework for developing and implementing honors level courses in our state. Cumberland County Schools Curriculum and Instruction department provides support for the implementation of honors curriculum standards. The AIG Program provides ideas and strategies for appropriate differentiation for AIG students in reading and math.

Additionally, AIG students may participate in Schools of Choice opportunities, to include:

International Baccalaureate

Classical Studies

Global Studies

Early College High Schools

Other individual school Academies.

#### Differentiated Curricula/Instructional Practices

Any curriculum that is developed by the Cumberland County Schools AIG Program builds upon and extends the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The curriculum provides challenging learning experiences that match the service options and the students' learning needs. Any curriculum that is developed must:

Provide instruction reflective of the highest levels of selected educational taxonomies (i.e. Revised Bloom's, Marzano's, etc.)

Incorporate critical thinking skills, problem-solving and flexible thinking activities into the instruction

Utilize research-based educational models and strategies in the development of curriculum, projects, and products (i.e. STEM activities, interdisciplinary units, socratic seminars, etc.)

Incorporate appropriate content modifications into the curriculum as described on the Differentiated Education Plans

Integrate digital learning tools

AIG curriculum is evaluated annually by AIG certified staff for necessary updates and changes to better meet the needs of gifted students and to ensure that the curriculum reflects current best practices in gifted education.

Instructional Practices and Strategies Include:

Multiple Intelligences

Curriculum Compacting

Tiering

Shared Inquiry

Socratic Seminar

Real-World/Problem-Based Learning

Creative Problem Solving

Critical and Deductive Thinking

Creative Thinking

Higher-Order Questioning

Technology-Based Learning

21st-Century Skills

Advisement Procedures

In order to ensure that AIG students are working to their fullest potential, it is important for the AIG teacher to carefully monitor student progress. All AIG teachers check students' academic performance at the completion of each grading period. Students who are not maintaining requirements receive academic advisement. It is necessary to evaluate how well the student is performing within the AIG Program and if those services are meeting the needs of the student. The student's progress reports, report cards, standardized testing results, and portfolio of collected AIG products document the student's progress.

After reviewing the progress indicators, the AIG teacher decides if the student has satisfactorily completed AIG and regular education assignments, has participated in class, and continues to demonstrate a need for challenging, differentiated studies. Students who are not showing adequate progress receive academic advisement for a minimum of two grading periods. The AIG teacher serves as the advisor, working with the student and parents to formulate and implement the advisement plan.

Students not showing improvement will be referred to the Needs Determination Team who then reviews this information and makes a determination for appropriate services. In addition to active status, the student may continue on advisement or be placed on monitored status. Placement on monitored status does not mean the student is no longer gifted. However, by definition, a gifted student performs or has the potential to perform at substantially high levels of achievement and requires differentiated services. When the student does not achieve and/or does not participate in a challenging academic course of study, the student's needs can be met in the regular classroom and monitored status is indicated. An Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) is developed for all students on monitored status.



### **Practice C**

Selects and uses a variety of research-based supplemental resources that augment curriculum and instruction.

**District Response:** Data on curriculum and instructional practices with gifted learners clearly favors accelerative, research-based curriculum in the core subject areas. Research-based curricula should be organized around higher-order processes, conceptual reasoning that explores problems and issues, critical and creative thinking skills, analogous/metaphoric relationships, and inquiry/discovery.

Cumberland County Schools AIG Program will continually add and revise curriculum to support the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. CCS will purchase materials that extend and enrich the AIG curriculum and Standard Course of Study.

### **Practice D**

Fosters the development of 21st century content and skills an advanced level.

**District Response:** In order for AIG students to compete globally in the academic arena, they need access to 21st century curriculum content to develop advanced skills that may include collaboration, problem solving, innovation, leadership and critical thinking.

Collaborate with district and instructional leaders for training and implementation of 21st century curriculum and skills.

Promote advanced level content and real world experiences within the AIG program.

Provide training for the AIG staff and cluster teachers in current educational practices and the use of 21st century standards.

Apply the 21st century professional development to access and acquire resources needed in order to better ready students for global competition.

Review and purchase materials that promote 21st century learning and skills.

Integrate technology into our AIG units.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Ongoing assessments of student readiness, achievement and growth are essential components of a differentiated curriculum. AIG teachers use a variety of assessments in order to address the various needs and interests that exist among gifted students.

Utilize formative and summative assessments and district-adopted tools to evaluate the effectiveness

of implemented curricula and its impact on student achievement and growth  
Align differentiated curriculum units for the AIG classroom to address assessment results  
Work together with classroom teachers to analyze pre- and on-going assessment techniques and results  
Collaborate on differentiated instruction that responds to gifted learners' varying background knowledge, needs, and interests

### AIG CLUSTER CLASS GUIDELINES

AIG Cluster teachers (grades 3-8), High School Honors teachers and Advanced Placement teachers work collaboratively with the AIG teacher to ensure best practices are implemented for gifted students.

AIG students are scheduled in classes with like-ability learners and with teachers who have completed the local professional development requirement. Clustering is mandated for reading and math based on student area(s) of identification. Other subject areas may also be clustered.

School personnel follow these guidelines when developing AIG cluster classes:

All AIG identified students will be placed in one cluster class per grade level (not to exceed state guidelines). If the AIG population exceeds state guidelines for class size, then a second or third cluster class can be formed to accommodate the need. AIG students will be dispersed equally among the cluster classes. Cluster class size must be able to accommodate newly identified students.

If a school has a small population of AIG identified students (1-9 per grade level), cluster all AIG students together in one class by grade level.

“Research indicates that clustering gifted students together, with a trained teacher, increases teacher morale, student achievement, innovative teaching throughout the school.” (Gentry) In some cases, principals may opt to cluster students in no more than three cluster classes per grade level with a minimum of 5 AIG identified students in each cluster class.

### **Practice F**

Creates affective curricular and instructional practices which support the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

**District Response:** Gifted students have unique social and emotional needs that require support; otherwise, the student's learning capacity, interest, motivation and growth are inhibited. This affective support is critical to the academic growth of advanced students.

Increase affective support for AIG students

Nurture potential of K-2 students

Provide enrichment opportunities at low enrollment AIG schools for students not yet identified gifted

Train and provide professional development in the affective domain for teachers, counselors, and other professionals who work with AIG identified students

Continue advisement procedures for underachieving AIG students

Purchase and/or write curriculum that supports the affective domain (i.e. bibliotherapy)

Cluster AIG students to provide like-ability support

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** The Cumberland County Discovery Program serves students in grades K-2, in order to cultivate and develop academic potential of young students.

#### Discovery Program/ K-2 Nurturing Service Delivery

Young children grow and develop at different rates cognitively, physically, and socially. Some children enter school ready for tasks which require concentration and academic skill, while others enter school at a much lower readiness level. It is sometimes difficult to determine in the early years of school those students who are truly gifted. However, it is possible to recognize at a young age, those children who consistently reach the academic benchmarks sooner than their peers, and who, at this time in their cognitive and academic development, need educational experiences which go beyond those normally offered in primary classrooms. The Discovery Program recognizes and nurtures young children who demonstrate the potential for exceptional academic performance in kindergarten, first and second grades.

#### Discovery Goals:

To recognize and nurture the academic gifts of young students, K-2, from all cultural groups and across all economic strata who have the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment

To provide challenging instructional activities through higher order thinking skills to students in K-2 grades who demonstrate gifted potential

#### Discovery Activities:

The Discovery Program nurtures young students through the following:

Collaboration with the classroom teacher to provide extension and acceleration

Creative problem-solving exercises

Critical/creative thinking skill-building activities

Deductive logic and analytical thinking activities

Evaluative and reasoning challenges

Visual-spatial exercises

#### Discovery Methods:

In searching for potentially gifted students, the AIG Discovery teacher becomes familiar with the students in the primary classrooms through formal and informal achievement assessment levels, discussions with the teachers, and instructional activities with the students. The classroom teacher shares with the AIG Discovery teacher the students' progress in the general curriculum and performance on various K-2 assessments. After reviewing assessment information, the AIG Discovery teacher, in conjunction with the classroom teacher, selects students with whom to work in a small group for enrichment activities. At other times, the AIG Discovery Teacher provides materials to

assist classroom teachers in differentiating for these students. The AIG Discovery teacher observes students for the manifestation of gifted behaviors and the need for differentiated instruction. The Discovery teacher takes care to include minority, ESL, economically disadvantaged, and culturally diverse students in all Discovery activities.

### **Practice H**

Collaborates with AIG personnel and other professional staff, including regular education teachers, special education teachers, other instructional staff, and administrators, to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.

**District Response:** The Cumberland County AIG Program works diligently to ensure collaboration among AIG and other professional staff to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.

AIG teachers meet monthly with grade level AIG colleagues to plan and share curriculum ideas and strategies to be implemented in their school environments.

K-12 AIG teachers meet on system-wide Professional Development days to collaborate and discuss best practices in gifted education, focusing on differentiated curriculum and instruction.

Teachers teaching the AIG cluster classes on elementary and middle school levels and high school English and math honors must complete the local professional development requirement, consisting of the two courses “Differentiation by Design: Reaching and Teaching All Learners” and “Curriculum Strategies for the Gifted”.

AIG collaboration continues with the development and implementation of the curriculum. ACES, GEMS, and SAGES teachers consult with cluster, honors, and Advanced Placement teachers in the development and implementation of rigorous and differentiated curriculum.

### **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:** The Discovery (K- 2), ACES (3-5), GEMS (6-8), and SAGES (9-12) AIG Programs have clearly articulated plans of differentiated instruction that match the needs of all identified students, K- 12. The curriculum and strategies are reviewed annually to ensure effective programming, a continuum of services, and appropriate school transitions. The Differentiated Education Plans and IDEP, when needed, serve as documentation of compliance in service delivery.

The Discovery Program (K-2) employs researched-based curriculum, as well as teacher-made curriculum, that reflects best practices for nurturing young students with potential. Each Discovery teacher utilizes a myriad of materials during instruction.

The ACES Program (Accelerated Curriculum for Exceptional Students), grades 3-5, utilizes a Curriculum Matrix for direct services' curriculum. Consultative resources are available for the cluster class.

The GEMS Program (Gifted Education in Middle School), grades 6-8, academic guidelines are provided in the DEP and Addenda.

The SAGES Program (Secondary Academically Gifted Exceptional Services), grades 9-12, consists of Honors and Advanced Placement course offerings, in addition to enrichment activities, college planning/campus tours and academic advisement conferences.

#### Differentiated Curricula/Instructional Practices

Any curriculum that is developed by the Cumberland County Schools AIG Program builds upon and extends the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The curriculum provides challenging learning experiences that match the service options and the students' learning needs.

Any curriculum that is developed must:

Be based upon a grade level objective taken from the Standard Course of Study

Provide instruction reflective of the highest levels of selected educational taxonomies (i.e. Revised Bloom's, Marzano's, etc.)

Incorporate critical thinking skills, problem-solving and flexible thinking activities into the instruction

Utilize research-based educational models and strategies

Incorporate appropriate content modifications as described on the Differentiated Education Plans

Provide grading rubrics for assignments

AIG curriculum is evaluated annually by AIG certified staff for necessary updates and changes to better meet the needs of gifted students and to ensure that the curriculum reflects current best practices in gifted education.

#### Differentiated Education Plan:

The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is developed to describe the service(s) in which the student will be involved, the learning environment where the service(s) will be offered, the content modifications that will occur for the student, and the array of special programs available to enhance the student's learning. The DEP is updated and reviewed with the parent annually or when program changes are needed for the student. An Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) may be designed if the DEP does not adequately reflect the student's program. At the DEP Annual Review, a list of curriculum activities for the year is explained and given to the parents. Parents may also review portfolio collections of the students' work, hear presentations from the students about their learning, receive information from regular classroom teachers and counselors, and learn about extra-curricular opportunities, the testing program, and post-secondary expectations.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Cluster students grade levels 3-8 in all schools and Honors Reading and Math grades 9-12  
Require teachers to take local professional development courses  
Share curriculum ideas and strategies with stakeholders

**Sources of Evidence:** Curriculum matrix  
AIG local requirement database  
Principal cluster letter  
Document purchases  
Differentiated Education Plan  
Documentation of instructional materials/supplies purchased.  
AIG staff development agendas  
AIG consult logs and lesson plans  
AIG portfolios  
EOG and county data  
Document training and professional development sessions at each school or county-wide  
Advisement procedures revised and updated  
Document Professional Development in the affective domain  
Discovery Online/Teacher Resources  
ACES consultative resources  
GEMS addendum, curriculum matrix, and Curriculum Calendar  
SAGES differentiated resource bank  
Monthly AIG grade level agendas  
Advanced Placement Summer Bridge Brochure  
AP Syllabi, copyrighted  
SAGES Enrichment Schedule

### **Standard 3: Personnel and Professional Development**

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

#### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** The AIG Coordinator in Cumberland County Schools is required to have the following:

North Carolina teacher's license

Minimum of three years successful classroom teaching experience

Master's Degree in Education or Subject Area

North Carolina Licensure in Gifted Education

Minimum of three years' work experience in an AIG Program

The AIG Coordinator in Cumberland County is responsible for the following:

Ensures system-wide implementation of the Local Plan and accountability of the AIG Program

Chairs the AIG Steering Committee composed of principals, AIG teachers, parents and Central Services personnel

Communicates with schools, outside agencies, and others regarding AIG Program policies, procedures, and concerns

Serves as liaison between the AIG Program and Central Services

Represents the AIG Program at local, regional, state and/or national meetings and LEA functions to include online meetings

Attends state/national gifted conferences to stay abreast of best practices in gifted education

Initiates and oversees the development of the AIG curriculum

Maintains electronic and hard copy data on identified AIG students to include accurate Child Count data

Oversees the development of all AIG protocol, guidelines, and procedures

Oversees all AIG personnel

Conducts or oversees professional development for AIG staff and other personnel involved in the education of gifted students (i.e. local coursework requirement, AIG Professional Development, county-wide Professional Development days, etc.)

Chairs the AIG candidate pool interviews and coordinates with administrators and Human Resources in the hiring of AIG personnel

Chairs the Oversight Review Committee

Prepares AIG allotments for review and approval

Oversees the purchasing of all AIG equipment, curriculum materials, office supplies, etc.

Ensures that the AIG populations receive differentiated and appropriate services at school sites

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Cumberland County AIG licensed Specialists, Lead teachers, program teachers/consultants, and diagnosticians are engaged in tasks which explicitly address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of all gifted learners. Job descriptions, accountability measures, monthly logs, school visits and observations, etc. ensure that AIG personnel utilize state-allocated funds strictly for the education of identified students. In addition, AIG personnel work with potentially gifted students utilizing enrichment groups at schools with low AIG populations and in K-2 through the Discovery program.

AIG Program personnel have specific job descriptions that highlight the minimum tasks required. All personnel have a minimum of three years successful teaching experience, a B.S. or B.A. in a subject area or education, and hold a North Carolina licensure in Gifted Education.

#### AIG Specialists:

Oversee grade level AIG teachers

Oversee the development and implementation of differentiated curriculum

Conduct monthly professional development with teachers in order to disseminate, review, discuss and implement program information and curriculum

Conduct site visits and audits to ensure equity in services

Attend system-wide AIG activities

Attend state/national gifted conferences to stay abreast of best practices in gifted education

Order materials and supplies for AIG teachers

Assist teachers in scheduling, record-keeping, and implementing all aspects of the AIG Program

Oversee implementation of the AIG Local Plan in assigned grade level

Serve on the Oversight Review Committee

Conduct professional development, online meetings, or other professional development initiatives

Work cooperatively with AIG Program teachers to ensure that all curriculum/service delivery appropriately meets identified or Discovery students' academic and social/emotional needs

#### AIG Lead Teachers:

Serve as a Co-Lead of a specific grade level to oversee AIG teachers

Serve a school(s) as the AIG teacher

Oversee the development and implementation of differentiated curriculum

Conduct monthly professional development with teachers in order to disseminate, review, discuss and implement program information and curriculum

Attend system-wide AIG activities

Attend state/national gifted conferences to stay abreast of best practices in gifted education

Order materials and supplies for AIG teachers

Assist teachers in scheduling, record-keeping, and implementing all aspects of the AIG Program

Oversee implementation of the AIG Local Plan in assigned grade level

Serve on the Oversight Review Committee

Conduct professional development, online meetings, or other professional development initiatives

Work cooperatively with AIG Program teachers to ensure that all curriculum/service delivery



appropriately meets identified or Discovery students' academic and social/emotional needs

### **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:** With professional preparation, educators are more sensitive to the academic and affective needs of gifted students, have more strategies to meet these needs, and provide more avenues to success for these students. Local professional development opportunities are established through our online professional development office and include, but are not limited to:

"Differentiation by Design: Reaching and Teaching all Learners" and "Curriculum Strategies for the Gifted". These courses are required for cluster class teachers and are recommended to all other stakeholders.

Training videos and other multimedia presentations are available on a variety of topics including AIG screening and identification, nurturing bright young learners, underrepresented populations, clustering, gifted characteristics, etc.

### **Practice D**

Places AIG students in general education classrooms with teachers who have earned an AIG add-on license from an Institute of Higher Education (IHE) or who have met the LEAs professional development requirements for that position.

**District Response:** To reach their fullest potential, research indicates that gifted students require instructional time with like-ability learners and with teachers who have been trained in gifted education.

Our local professional development requirement consists of North Carolina AIG licensure and/or the completion of the following courses: "Differentiation by Design: Reaching and Teaching all Learners" and "Curriculum Strategies for the Gifted".

AIG students will be placed in cluster classes with teachers who have met these requirements. See Standard 2 practice E for clustering requirements.

The AIG Program supports Cumberland County Schools' requirement that Advanced Placement teachers complete a week- long training through CollegeBoard Institutes. CCS provides funding to properly train all Advanced Placement teachers.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Professional Development should always be designed to improve effectiveness of teachers in meeting the needs of students. The AIG Program in Cumberland County continually strives to align its professional development with AIG goals as well as district goals and initiatives. All district and AIG professional development consists of relevant and effective strategies, skills, and information that enhance and refine AIG teacher practices. This ongoing, systemic mechanism ensures academic growth for both staff and students. Numerous professional development opportunities are employed throughout the school year to include:

- AIG monthly professional development by grade level
- Required county-wide professional development days
- Cluster teacher meetings
- Curriculum development
- Technology training

AIG specialists, leads, and/or program teachers may present curriculum, social/emotional support strategies, advisement strategies, or other program components at these meetings. AIG Personnel as well as other stakeholders are highly encouraged to attend regional, state, and national conferences and professional development opportunities that promote and support gifted education.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** The Cumberland County AIG Program provides opportunities for AIG staff to collaborate with each other, in professional learning communities, with regular classroom teachers and with other stakeholders.

AIG coordinator, specialists and leads make regular school visits to mentor and assist AIG teachers with the implementation of new strategies, technology and best practices in gifted education.

Monthly AIG grade level professional developments provide opportunities to collaborate with other AIG teachers and reflect on best practices.

Grade level and vertical team professional learning communities develop standard-based curriculum. Information presented at the various professional development opportunities is shared with colleagues at the school level.

District-wide sharing of information and resources is enhanced through various technologies.

Professional development for AIG Program teachers facilitates the incorporation of technology and instructional practices.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Ensure all cluster teachers have received the local professional development requirement.

Recruit highly qualified personnel for the AIG Program.

Allocate time for AIG teachers to collaborate and grow professionally.

**Sources of Evidence:** Licensure Documentation on file at Cumberland County Schools' Human Resources office and the Department of Public Instruction

Oversight Review Committee database

Database of teachers who have met the local coursework requirement

AIG Professional Development letter and requirements

AIG Coordinator Job Description

Discovery Job Description

ACES Job Description

GEMS Job Description

SAGES Job Description

Diagnostic Job Description

Specialist Job Description

Documentation of Professional Development opportunities

Documentation of gifted courses relevant to administrators, regular education teachers, and other stakeholders

Multimedia list and CCS University

Database of all Advanced Placement teachers at Cumberland County high schools; document completion of and/or registration and funding to attend summer institutes prior to teaching

Rosters and agendas from professional developments and monthly meetings

Resources and materials inventories

## **Standard 4: 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 AIG programs and services which are comprehensive of the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners across all classroom environments, grade levels, and settings.

### **District Response:** Discovery (grades K-2) Nurturing Program

The AIG Program provides Discovery services at each Cumberland County elementary school. Students are selected using multiple criteria to participate in this challenging and nurturing program. Screening for identification will begin in 3rd grade; however, in instances where a K-2 student shows signs of highly gifted characteristics, at the discretion of the Discovery teacher, the Needs Determination Team and the AIG coordinator, a body of evidence may be considered for possible testing.

### ACES (grades 3-5)

AIG students, identified in reading and/or math, are appropriately clustered (see guidelines standard 2 practice e) for instruction with other academically capable students. The AIG teacher may serve AIG students by going into the classroom to work with the cluster teacher with differentiation/planning of instructional units and by consulting with the teacher to prepare differentiated units. The cluster teachers, who have successfully completed the local requirement, plan and teach challenging enrichment and accelerated instructional activities. These teachers will receive guidance from the AIG licensed teacher.

AIG students will receive direct services a minimum of 1 hour per each day served by the licensed AIG teacher, up to 3 hours a week. Direct services provide AIG identified students with an opportunity to participate in AIG units of study, which extend the NC Standard Course of Study.

### GEMS Cluster Classes (grades 6-8)

Sixth Grade Cluster Classes (AIG Reading and/or AIG Math)

Seventh Grade Cluster Classes (AIG Reading and/or Compacted Math)

Eighth Grade Cluster Classes (AIG Language Arts and/or Math I)

In this service option, the identified AIG students are clustered for instruction in math and reading with other academically capable students (see guidelines). The cluster classes are enhanced by more rigorous reading and math activities that extend beyond the NC Standard Course of Study. Cluster classes are taught by teachers who have successfully completed the local requirement. These teachers will receive guidance from the AIG licensed teacher. The school's AIG teacher teaches a maximum of two 60 minute cluster classes or one 75-90 minute blocked reading or math cluster class. The AIG teacher also supports the regular cluster classroom teachers by providing various AIG instructional materials, books, and instructional activities.

Though not only for identified gifted students, Compacted Math and Math I classes provide

challenging math instruction for those students motivated and prepared to take these classes at the middle school level. Compacted Math and Math I classes follow the Standard Course of Study and the Math I End-of-Course test is administered to students. Math I students receive high school credit.

#### GEMS Resource Classes

In this service option, the identified AIG students are clustered for instruction in math and reading with other academically capable students (see guidelines). Students participate in activities with the AIG teacher in the areas of reading, math, critical and creative thinking, and writing. Research projects are completed and supplemental activities such as, Junior Great Books Reading Program are used to strengthen students' literacy and cognitive skills. AIG Resource at this level is typically offered in schools with low enrollments of AIG students.

#### GEMS Hybrid Service Option

In this hybrid service option, instead of serving as teacher of record for two classes, the AIG teacher works with all cluster teachers at each grade level to provide differentiated lessons and activities that will enhance classroom units. In this option, the AIG teacher may pull students out of the classroom for some differentiated activities, similar to that in the Resource service option, but spends most of the instructional time in cluster classrooms. In this service delivery model, the AIG teacher serves as an expert in the field of infusing rigorous differentiated curriculum and implementing best practices in gifted education. This option is generally for large AIG enrollment schools.

#### SAGES (grades 9-12)

On the high school level, AIG consultants facilitate the following service options:

##### SAGES Enrichment Sessions

Identified students participate in enrichment sessions designed and conducted by the AIG consultant to enhance their high school academic experience. These sessions include, but are not limited to: college tours and admissions talks, college planning sessions, and presentations in the academic and arts areas. Student interaction is encouraged and feedback is expected following each session.

##### Academic Counseling and Advisement

Identified students participate in group, as well as individual, academic counseling activities with the AIG consultant. Course selection, registration, SAT/ACT Prep, college and career advisement, and scholarship searches are some of the counseling opportunities provided to the AIG students. College tours and discussions with college/university admissions officials are provided. AIG students receive newsletters from the AIG consultants detailing important test dates, college preparation advisement, student achievements/accolades, and other valuable information.

##### Advanced Curriculum Opportunities

The AIG Program expects identified AIG students to participate in the College Pathway Curriculum, taking as many challenging courses as possible. These include:

- Honors Classes
- Advanced Placement Courses
- AP teleconferencing courses
- College Connections Courses
- NCVPS/Online courses

Beginning in 2004, the State Board of Education approved a framework for developing and

implementing honors level courses in our state. Cumberland County Schools Curriculum and Instruction department provides support for the implementation of honors curriculum standards. The AIG Program provides ideas and strategies for appropriate differentiation for AIG students in reading and math.

Additionally, AIG students may participate in Schools of Choice opportunities, to include:

- International Baccalaureate
- Classical Studies
- Global Studies
- Early College High Schools
- Other individual school Academies

#### Differentiated Curricula/Instructional Practices

Any curriculum that is developed by the Cumberland County Schools AIG Program builds upon and extends the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The curriculum provides challenging learning experiences that match the service options and the students' learning needs. Any curriculum that is developed must:

Provide instruction reflective of the highest levels of selected educational taxonomies (i.e. Revised Bloom's, Marzano's, etc.)

Incorporate critical thinking skills, problem-solving and flexible thinking activities into the instruction

Utilize research-based educational models and strategies in the development of curriculum, projects, and products

Incorporate appropriate content modifications into the curriculum as described on the Differentiated Education Plans

AIG curriculum is evaluated annually by AIG certified staff for necessary updates and changes to better meet the needs of gifted students and to ensure that the curriculum reflects current best practices in gifted education.

#### The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)

The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is developed to describe the service(s) in which the student will be involved, the learning environment where the service(s) will be offered, the content modifications that will occur for the student, and the instructional strategies to enhance the student's learning. The DEP is updated and reviewed with the parent annually or when Program changes are needed for the student. Curriculum developed according to the above guidelines is used in the services provided. An Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) may be designed if the DEP does not adequately reflect the student's educational needs. A DEP is developed for every identified student needing differentiated services.

#### Review of Student Progress

Monitoring the student's progress in the AIG Program occurs on an ongoing basis. It is necessary to evaluate how well the student is performing within the AIG Program and if those services are meeting the student's needs. Student progress in the AIG Program is reviewed quarterly in order to determine if additional support is needed. The student's progress reports, report cards, standardized testing results, and portfolio of collected AIG products document the student's progress.

After reviewing the progress indicators, the AIG Needs Determination Team decides if the student continues to demonstrate a need for challenging, differentiated studies. Students who are not showing adequate progress receive academic advisement for a minimum of two grading periods. The AIG teacher serves as the advisor and works with the student and parents to formulate and carry out the advisement plan. The AIG Needs Determination Team then reviews this information and

recommends continued services, continued advisement, or a return to regular education on a monitored status. Placement on monitored status does not mean the student is no longer gifted. When the student does not achieve and/or does not participate in a challenging academic course of study, the student's needs can be met in the regular classroom and monitored status is indicated. An Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) is developed for all students on monitored status.

### **Practice B**

Aligns AIG programs and services with each area of AIG identification, goals of the program, and resources of the LEA.

**District Response:** The comprehensive goal of the Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program is to provide identified students with an appropriate and advanced differentiated education beyond that of the North Carolina Standard Course-of-Study.

Cumberland County Schools understands that the services of the AIG Program are a part of a gifted student's total education. The AIG Program, regular education program, and numerous extracurricular programs work collaboratively to recognize and celebrate the students' special gifts for learning and achievement by providing students with challenges and opportunities for academic growth. In Cumberland County, these programs converge and blend to teach students to be lifelong learners who are capable of thinking critically, acting creatively, and achieving excellence.

The AIG Program staff employs the district and schools' strategic improvement plans and goals. Resources of our LEA are taken into consideration as a means of fulfilling academic and social/emotional needs of our gifted students.

### **AIG Program Goals:**

To employ an identification system that is equitable and flexible in application which ensures representation among students from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds by utilizing identification procedures that incorporate the use of multiple criteria, which reduces the disparity that exists among traditionally underserved populations, while identifying any student in need of gifted services

To provide an array of service options and educational experiences that support individual growth at varying levels of ability, need, and interest, thus allowing students the opportunity to learn advanced material at an accelerated rate by implementing service delivery models that provide students with opportunities for challenging, rigorous, and interesting academic experiences

To prepare teachers to implement differentiation, rigor, and advanced learning strategies in order to meet the needs of gifted students and their unique learning styles by requiring all cluster and honor teachers to complete the local professional development requirement and obtaining additional funding to provide AIG staff members advanced training in the current and best gifted practices and strategies

To coordinate the education of gifted students with other system-wide initiatives in an effort to ensure that rigorous differentiated curricula and research-based instructional practices are implemented in each school by encouraging AIG teachers to serve on school and system-wide committees in order to provide input from a gifted education perspective.

### **AIG Cluster Class Guidelines**

AIG Cluster teachers (grades 3-8), High School Honors teachers and Advanced Placement teachers work collaboratively with the AIG teacher to ensure best practices are implemented for gifted students.

AIG students are scheduled in classes with like-ability learners and with teachers who have completed the local professional development requirement. Clustering is mandated for reading and math based on student area(s) of identification. Other subject areas may also be clustered.

School personnel follow these guidelines when developing AIG cluster classes:

All AIG identified students will be placed in one cluster class per grade level (not to exceed state guidelines). If the AIG population exceeds state guidelines for class size, then a second or third cluster class can be formed to accommodate the need. AIG students will be dispersed equally among the cluster classes. Cluster class size must be able to accommodate newly identified students.

If a school has a small population of AIG identified students (1-9 per grade level), cluster all AIG students together in one class by grade level.

“Research indicates that clustering gifted students together, with a trained teacher, increases teacher morale, student achievement, innovative teaching throughout the school.” (Gentry) In some cases, principals may opt to cluster students in no more than three cluster classes per grade level with a minimum of 5 AIG identified students in each cluster class.

### **Practice C**

Delivers AIG programs and services that are integral and connected to the total instructional program of the LEA in policy and practice.

**District Response:** The AIG Program in Cumberland County Schools is an active partner in initiatives, policies and procedures in order to support AIG students' needs. The AIG Program is committed to adhering to the comprehensive goals of our LEA.

Collaborate with all stakeholders to offer differentiated services that meet the social, emotional and intellectual needs of AIG students

Work with the Professional Development department to provide coursework in gifted education

Meet with the administrative team to discuss goals of the AIG Program, best practices and annual updates

Serve as AIG representatives on various county committees and teams to include but not limited to: school improvement teams, AP dialogue sessions, curriculum and instruction writing teams, mentorship program, correlate teams, superintendent round table

The AIG staff serves on a variety of committees and teams to ensure that the needs of AIG students are represented in all areas of our LEA.

### **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 Program strives to keep all stakeholders informed of differentiated services and AIG instruction by using various forms of communication to keep stakeholders informed about differentiated services.

Cumberland County AIG Local Plan is available on the CCS website and each school's website. AIG teacher/consultants collaborate with AIG cluster teachers on lesson planning, strategies, and differentiation for AIG students.

AIG staff meets with stakeholders to disseminate information regarding the AIG Local Plan. Needs Determination Team members are trained in screening and identification by the AIG teacher/consultant.

Multi-media presentations are available on CCS University.

Principals are provided with an AIG quick guide that highlights procedures and policies.

### **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:** AIG staff establish a vertical line of communication between teachers and schools through the following means:

Communicate with teachers, counseling staff, and administrators on the academic progress of AIG students.

Serve on his/her respective schools' SIT Teams as needed.

Discuss AIG expectations, requirements, content modifications, clustering, and program initiatives with all stakeholders at all grade levels.

Host meetings for AIG staff, cluster teachers, district vertical teams, and/or administrators to ensure a continuum of AIG services, especially at key transition points.

Provide opportunities for high school students to participate in Advanced Placement Summer Bridge program to be introduced to the rigor of a college course.

Share students' special needs for future accommodations, such as placement in cluster classes, dual identification, previous interventions, advisements, etc. between AIG staff and administration at key transition points.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Our school system and AIG Program staff fully recognize and appreciate the special social and emotional needs of gifted learners. In order for students to achieve academic

success, their social and emotional needs must also be addressed.

Collaborate with all stakeholders about the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Utilize AIG Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to share and create resources that support the social/emotional development of AIG students.

Conduct DEP meetings and/or parent nights at the school and county level, inviting key stakeholders to discuss the affective needs of gifted learners.

Promote social and emotional needs of gifted students at various departmental meetings such as Student Services Team and Exceptional Children's Department.

Provide stakeholders with resources to support the social and emotional needs of gifted learners through our AIG Lending Library.

### **Practice G**

Articulates and implements opportunities for acceleration, including compacted content, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, subject and/or grade acceleration when an appropriate body-of-evidence indicates the need.

### **District Response:** The Accelerated Service Option

Some students achieve remarkably well and may need subject or grade advancement, in addition to other differentiated services. For these students, a case study is prepared, using specific criteria for subject and grade advancement. This service option may be used at any grade level; however, students contemplating early high school graduation must meet the North Carolina graduation requirements. This option requires careful consideration and an Individual Differentiated Education Plan may be needed.

### Procedures for Requesting Grade/Subject Advancement

If an AIG student requires subject or grade acceleration or parents of an AIG student request acceleration, the AIG teacher and school must follow the procedure outlined in the Local Plan. If, however, the request is for a student not identified as AIG, the school may use the AIG procedure, but is not required to do so. Principals or school-based committees may have other procedures in place for such a request, but generally they seek advice from the AIG Program. Principals make the final decision regarding all subject/grade advancements. Transportation will not be provided by the school or the AIG Program to accommodate a grade or subject advancement.

### CRITERIA CHART

#### Subject Advancement

Maximum class performance in subject for more than one year

Written parent statement of interest Subject Advancement

Written statement of interest from student

Written principal recommendation

Written teacher recommendation

Written AIG Teacher recommendation

Approved Intellectual Assessment 97th percentile Full Scale Score (minimum)

Achievement Test Score indicating four years above grade level in reading and math

School psychologist statement concerning social/emotional development

#### Grade Advancement

Maximum class performance in all subjects for more than one year  
Written parent statement of interest for Subject/Grade Advancement  
Written student statement of interest from student  
Written principal recommendation  
Written teacher recommendation  
Written AIG teacher recommendation  
Approved Intellectual Assessment 97th percentile Full Scale Score (minimum)  
Achievement Test Score indicating four years above grade level in Reading and/or Math  
School psychologist statement concerning social/emotional development

#### Credit by Demonstrated Mastery

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is an option which allows students to demonstrate mastery of a course's content, receiving credit and a pass/fail grade for the course to include an assessment and an artifact. In 2013 the NC Dept. of Public Instruction instituted State Board Policy GCS-M-001-13: Transitioning away from seat time, in favor of a structure that creates flexibility, allows students to progress as they demonstrate mastery of academic content, regardless of time, place, or pace of learning.

Students in grades 9-12, who are able to show a deep understanding of the content without seat-time and classroom learning experience are eligible. It is also open to students in grades 6-8 , but only for certain high school courses offered at the school. Earning Credit by Demonstrated Mastery requires students to complete a multi-phase assessment process that includes an examination and an artifact. The Phase I assessment process focuses on the examination which establishes that a student has a strong foundational understanding of the course material. The Phase II process focuses on the artifact and establishes a student's ability to apply knowledge to show deep understanding.

A testing window is offered each fall and spring for high school students to provide an opportunity for students to use EOC tests or CTE Post- Assessments to earn credit by demonstrated mastery. For middle school students, a testing window is offered each spring. The applications for high school students are due in August and January with testing windows in September and February. The applications for middle school students are due in January with a testing window in February.

#### **Practice H**

Provides intentional programming for traditionally under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

**District Response:** The Cumberland County AIG Program recognizes that students from diverse backgrounds manifest giftedness. The LEA is committed to identifying the academic needs of students from all populations. The AIG Program seeks ways to identify and implement programming and specific nurturing initiatives to improve the representation, participation, and performance of underrepresented populations.

Offer K-2 nurturing program that has a focus on underrepresented populations

Implement enrichment groups consisting of non-identified students with AIG potential in order to cultivate and nurture their abilities  
Collect data on screening and placement of underrepresented populations  
Distribute data to individual AIG teachers  
Investigate potential curriculum extensions to support underrepresented populations  
Promote awareness of underrepresented populations

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** At each level of service, grades K-12, AIG teachers provide students and parents with information and assistance pertaining to extracurricular interests and activities that will enrich students' academic strengths. In many cases, the AIG teacher serves as the advisor or sponsor of the academic activity.

Discovery (grades K-2)  
Fascinate U Discovery Night  
Discovery Student Competition link  
Home enrichment resources  
Community resources link  
Summer enrichment calendars

ACES (grades 3- 5)  
Daughters of the American Revolution Essay Contest  
Science/Math Fairs  
Spelling Bee  
Modern Woodmen of America Speech Contest  
Battle of the Books  
Duke TIP Program  
ACES Summer Enrichment  
Science Olympiad  
Academic Clubs and Organizations

GEMS (grades 6-8)  
Forensics Program  
Modern Woodmen of America Speech Contest  
Science Olympiad  
Daughters of the American Revolution Essay Contest  
Math Counts  
Algebra and Geometry Competitive Teams  
Battle of the Books  
Spelling Bee

Young Author's Contest  
Duke TIP Program  
Methodist University STeM Camp Collaboration  
Academic Clubs and Organizations

SAGES (grades 9- 12)  
Forensics Program  
Math Competitions  
NC Governor's School  
NC School of Math and Science  
Volunteer organizations  
Performing Arts areas of study  
AP Summer Bridge Program  
Science Olympiad  
School Government  
Academic Clubs and Organizations  
Summer Ventures in Science and Math  
Mock Trials  
Princeton Model Congress

### **Practice J**

Utilizes intentional, flexible grouping practices to facilitate effective instruction and support the growth of AIG students.

**District Response:** AIG teachers and administrators collaborate to ensure all AIG students are placed in appropriate classes to meet their specific academic needs.

#### AIG Cluster Class Guidelines

AIG Cluster teachers (grades 3-8), High School Honors teachers and Advanced Placement teachers work collaboratively with the AIG teacher to ensure best practices are implemented for gifted students.

AIG students are scheduled in classes with like-ability learners and with teachers who have completed the local professional development requirement. Clustering is mandated for reading and math based on student area(s) of identification. Other subject areas may also be clustered.

School personnel follow these guidelines when developing AIG cluster classes:

All AIG identified students will be placed in one cluster class per grade level (not to exceed state guidelines). If the AIG population exceeds state guidelines for class size, then a second or third cluster class can be formed to accommodate the need. AIG students will be dispersed equally among the cluster classes. Cluster class size should be able to accommodate newly identified students.

If a school has a small population of AIG identified students (1-9 per grade level), cluster all AIG students together in one class by grade level.

“Research indicates that clustering gifted students together, with a trained teacher, increases teacher morale, student achievement, innovative teaching throughout the school.” (Gentry) In some cases, principals may opt to cluster students in no more than three cluster classes per grade level with a minimum of 5 AIG identified students in each cluster class.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Intentionally placing students in appropriate learning environments  
Enrichment groups to cultivate potential in underrepresented populations

**Sources of Evidence:** Advisement documents  
Differentiated Education Plan and addendum(middle grades)  
Archived confidential test and placement data  
Database of teachers who have completed local professional development requirement  
Database of Advanced Placement teachers who have completed AP CollegeBoard Summer Institute training  
AIG Local Plan Link  
AIG Webpage  
AIG At a Glance (quick reference guide for stakeholders)  
CCS university  
County wide transfer of records- Receipt of Transfer  
Documentation of communication (memorandums, letters, emails, presentations, etc.)  
Schools' School Improvement Team rosters  
K-2 Discovery lists  
Meeting agendas and minutes  
DEP/parent night presentation slides  
AIG Affective workshop/PD session  
Grade/Subject Acceleration protocol  
CDM brochure, flyer, FAQ document, application  
Shared files (lesson plans, links to resources)  
Pathway 2 identification protocol  
Screening/Identification profiles  
SAGES (9-12) Year End Progress Report  
ACES Summer Enrichment Brochure  
Methodist University STeM Camp Summer Enrichment Brochure  
Fascinate U flyer  
AP Summer Bridge Brochure  
Duke TIP Scholarship Cover and Application

## **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 and the community that are intentional and meaningful to support the following needs of AIG students:

- academic and intellectual
- social and emotional.

**District Response:** Cumberland County Schools AIG Program develops partnerships with parents, families and the community to intentionally and meaningfully support AIG students in the following ways:

Collaborate with local colleges and universities to establish and maintain programs for AIG students  
Fayetteville State University education department  
Methodist University- STEM camp  
Campbell University science department  
Fayetteville Technical Community College course offerings  
Work cooperatively with local organizations, businesses and governmental agencies to extend the educational opportunities beyond the classroom  
Guest speakers (judges, civic leaders, artists in residence, news agencies)  
Fascinate U Museum Math and Science night  
North Carolina Science Festival

Communicate with parents/families regarding opportunities within the community  
Partnership Expo  
Newsletters and website share information about local opportunities  
Special topics informational sessions for parents- social/emotional needs, transitional times such as 3rd, 5th and 8th grades

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

The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) describes the service(s) in which the student will be involved, the learning environment where the service(s) will be offered, the content modifications that will occur for the student, and the array of special programs available to enhance the student's learning. The initial DEP is reviewed with the parent at the time the student is identified as gifted and

in need of differentiated instructional services. Thereafter, the parent is invited annually to review and update the DEP. One copy of the DEP is maintained in the AIG placement record and one copy is given to the parent. An Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEPs) may be designed if the DEP does not adequately reflect the student's program. If a student requires Academic Advisement due to low performance, the parent and student are again invited to attend an individual conference to discuss and develop a plan of action. Parents are continually notified of advisement procedures and program changes.

#### Parent and Community Involvement

In order to communicate effectively with parents and the community, various strategies are employed.

They include, but are not limited to the following:

Meetings with parents to discuss Differentiated Education Plans

Meetings with parents to review student portfolios

PTA meetings

School-site activities

Parent-Teacher conferences

AIG Progress Reports

CCS AIG Program website/Individual school websites

Student/Parent advisement procedures

AIG Newsletters to parents/students

Newspaper articles, media interviews, and special program bulletins

Brochures designed to inform parents and the community about the service options and summer enrichment programs

Information disseminated in multiple languages (in cooperation with ESL Program.)

Informational letters, emails and phone calls

Reciprocal relationship with Methodist University, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, and UNC-Pembroke to include student academic programs, use of resources, staff development, and use of facilities

Students, parents, community members, and all school personnel are provided access to AIG brochures, newsletters and Internet information sites. Stakeholders are also made aware of summer enrichment programs that are available to AIG students.

Newsletters, direct mailings, emails, phone calls, portfolio reviews, advisory meetings, are a few of the ways in which stakeholders are notified and informed of program initiatives and meetings. The AIG Program strives to provide relevant information that is precise, clear, and accurate.

Cumberland County school personnel are kept informed through brief presentations, embedded professional development sessions, teacher newsletters, the AIG Handbook, and both the Internet and Intranet sites. Feedback and input from the local endorsement coursework and workshop sessions are valuable means of monitoring and adjusting the program components.

### **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:** Focus groups are one way in which stakeholders are involved in the development and monitoring of the AIG Program and plan.

AIG Steering Committee- comprised of parents, administrators, teachers and community members, guides the rewriting of each Local Plan.

Parent Advisory Group- includes at least one member from each attendance area who reads the local plan, responds to surveys, provides feedback on local initiatives, etc.

Oversight Review Committee- consists of AIG leads and specialists from each grade level and serves as a "checks and balances" mechanism, reviewing all cases submitted

Needs Determination Team- required at each school and made up of AIG teacher, faculty and staff.

This team discusses and evaluates students' placement needs. The team may also determine that an Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) and/or subject/grade acceleration is required. In these cases, parents, psychologists, administrators, Student Services Teams, and others may be involved. The Needs Determination Team is required to document and retain accurate minutes of each meeting.

#### **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 Cumberland County AIG Program recognizes the importance of maintaining communication with all parents.

Information is shared in the following ways:

County and school web-pages

CCS University

Flyers for various AIG opportunities

E-mails

Edmodo

Automated phone calls

AIG newsletters

AIG Brochure

Opportunities available for AIG students may include, but are not limited to:

AIG Summer Enrichments

Fascinate U Discovery night

Mentorships and Internships

Job Shadowing

Community outreach/ service learning opportunities

Duke TIP

The AIG Program has resources available to effectively communicate opportunities to all stakeholders in their native language.

Translations are available in numerous languages on the CCS website

Translators are available on an as-needed basis

The AIG Program collaborates with the ESL Department as needed.

### **Practice E**

Forms partnerships with institutions of higher education, local business and industry, and other stakeholders within the community to enhance and gain support for AIG programs and services.

**District Response:** The AIG program will form and extend partnerships across the community.

Enhance and continue partnerships with Fayetteville Technical Community College, Fayetteville State University, Methodist University, Campbell University, and UNC Pembroke

Establish a pool of partnership opportunities for mentoring, financial initiatives, and curriculum experiences (Chick-fil-a spirit, Fascinate U, Arts council, Daughters of the American Revolution, Woodmen of the World, etc.)

Partner with FSU education students

Participate in community activities such as the Reading Rocks Walk-a-thon

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Securing more partnerships

Partnership expo - bringing the community and families together for the growth of AIG students

**Sources of Evidence:** AIG Brochure

ACES Summer Enrichment brochure

AP Summer Bridge Program brochure

Advisement Plan of Action

Documentation of Advisement

AIG Progress Report

Discovery Principal/Parent/Teacher information letters

Discovery Website and Edmodo Page

Program Newsletters

Needs Determination Team Minutes form

Steering Committee minutes and rosters

ORC database

Parent feedback form

CCS Website "Select Language" link

Translator noted on AIG Documentation

Summer Enrichment brochures

Flyers from Fascinate U night

Duke TIP information

Documentation of an established pool of partnership opportunities

## **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 LEAs school board and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

**District Response:** Cumberland County was one of the first school systems in the state to design and implement a Local Plan for the gifted. Cumberland County Schools has now written six Local Plans since the 1996 passage of Article 9B legislation. The 2016-2019 Local Plan meets the legal requirements of Article 9B and includes current best practices in gifted education.

Cumberland County Schools remains in compliance in developing and implementing an AIG Local Plan in accordance with state legislation and policy. Each Local Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Cumberland County Board of Education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and 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:** Program Evaluation/Needs Assessment

The Cumberland County AIG Program evaluation process is ongoing, with continual formative and summative reviews in place to assess program strengths and opportunities for growth. AIG staff, licensed in gifted education, conduct program evaluations; parents, teachers, administrators, and central office personnel have input as well. A Steering Committee oversees the AIG Program needs assessment. Information is gathered from various sources to evaluate the program and to review and update the Local Plan. All program evaluation is based on current best practices and research in gifted education. The Cumberland County School system continuously collects and analyzes demographic data to evaluate the performance of all subgroups, including identified AIG students. Local, state, and national assessments and grade reports serve as part of the evaluation data to be collected, disseminated, and analyzed. AIG student academic growth is one evaluative tool in measuring AIG Program strengths and opportunities for growth. Data is available regarding AIG students' selection to summer enrichment programs, admission to colleges/universities, and receipt of scholarships.

The School AIG Needs Determination Team

Each school must have an AIG Needs Determination Team, charged with the responsibility of the identification of students and the development of the Differentiated Education Plan. A diverse team

reflects the demographics of the school and is approved by the principal. The team is comprised of at least four school-based personnel, representative of the various grade levels and subjects taught in the school. Administrators and counselors may also serve on the team. The AIG teacher assigned to the school chairs the team. Since the work of this team is extremely important, only those educators trained in the identification of gifted students and willing to spend the time necessary for appropriate identification of students should be selected by the principal for the team. The AIG Needs Determination Team identifies those students who perform or have the potential to perform at high levels of achievement and who need differentiated services beyond that provided by the regular classroom.

The team:

- requests referrals from appropriate sources
- requests testing, as needed based on student referral information
- reviews all the information collected to determine identification and services
- recommends services needed
- recommends change in services when needed

The Oversight Review Committee

The Oversight Review Committee (ORC) is appointed by the AIG Coordinator. ORC is comprised of AIG Instructional Specialists, licensed in gifted education and trained in the identification of gifted students. The primary purpose of ORC is to verify that schools have followed guidelines and procedures for the identification of gifted students and that the process used has been fair and equitable for all students. All school AIG Needs Determination Team decisions must be approved by ORC before the cases are complete and students begin receiving AIG services. ORC reviews and discusses the cases to ensure that data has been used appropriately, that parents have been involved as required and that a Differentiated Education Plan has been completed for each identified student. ORC may return cases to the schools for corrections, additional information, or for clarification. After a decision is approved by ORC, student data is entered into the AIG database maintained by the school system. The case is then returned to the school and services may begin. All AIG records are confidential and maintained at the school in a secured location.

### **Practice C**

Uses and monitors state funds allotted for the local AIG program according to state policy.

**District Response:** The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the Cumberland County School system recognize the importance of allocating funds for AIG Program services and expenditures. The AIG budget is one of the most critical components to support the efforts of gifted education programming. Budgets are prepared by the Cumberland County Finance Office in conjunction with the Exceptional Children's Finance Manager, Executive Director, and AIG Coordinator. All budget expenditures are allocated to accomplish the program's goals and objectives, reflecting integration with the total school curriculum. The budget aligns completely with the program's gifted services, and is monitored regularly for accuracy and accountability. Most of the state and local AIG monies are used for funding AIG certified teacher and staff positions.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Utilization of data provides important feedback for improving program components, to include identification, service delivery, and professional development. AIG students have important test data that provides insight into their particular strengths and academic needs.

Analyze AIG growth data annually

Utilize student information systems to establish areas to enhance needed rigor

Growth data available to AIG staff and school staff as a means of discerning student growth and needs

Data sources are accessible and utilized by AIG staff in determining curriculum and enrichment needs

Examine local dropout data yearly

Review screening and identification demographic profile

### **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:** The AIG Program monitors data and initiatives in the identification and retention of all underrepresented populations.

Utilize current database to screen for highest scores and/or grades in each ethnic group

Communicate with English as a Second Language staff to discern needs of underrepresented ESL students

Implement an AIG identification matrix

Monitor students' grades quarterly and provide support

Utilize available books, resources, training, etc. on cultural diversity and underrepresented populations

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** The Cumberland County Schools' AIG Program maintains and monitors current data regarding the credentials of all AIG personnel, cluster teachers, and Advanced Placement teachers as required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Collaboration between Cumberland County Schools' Human Resources Department, administrators, and the AIG Coordinator ensures fidelity in maintaining and monitoring the credentials of teachers instructing AIG students.

Cluster class local requirement completion data  
AIG licensed staff data - Human Resources Department  
Advanced Placement Summer Institute completion - AIG office  
Advanced Placement CollegeBoard Authorization - CollegeBoard database

### **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:** The Cumberland County AIG Program continually elicits and responds to feedback from students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the quality and effectiveness of the AIG Program components (i.e. identification, service delivery, best practices, communication, etc.) to ensure that the AIG Program standards remain relevant to the needs of the community. Cumberland County Schools and the AIG Program fully recognize that stakeholder feedback is an integral part of the program development cycle.

Summative and formative evaluations, such as surveys, focus groups, interviews, parent meetings, and online tools, are established and disseminated. The data collected from these evaluative measures are utilized in informational meetings as well as in making changes in specific program components.

A Cumberland County Steering Committee, composed of various stakeholders, serves as a fair and impartial group of evaluators, providing weight to all voices from diverse positions and roles. Stakeholders may include parents, gifted students, Central Office administrators, gifted facilitators, classroom teachers, building principals, and others in the community. The Steering Committee also analyzes and attributes data outcome to AIG Program services and procedures.

### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** The Cumberland County AIG Program employs evaluative procedures at various intervals to substantiate and/or modify program identification, curriculum, service delivery models,

and other program components. Through theoretical-based study, each program component has been planned, revised, evaluated, and monitored for effectiveness and impact on student academic performance and social/emotional growth. Based on the Cumberland County Schools' mission and philosophy, the AIG Program goals, policies, and procedures reflect best practices for gifted students. State and local assessments, grade performance, AIG performance, AIG administered tests, portfolio submissions, and numerous other indicators are collected and reviewed to assist with program improvement.

At the district level, the Oversight Review Committee serves as a "checks and balances" team. Monitoring and adjusting is often imperative at the district level. Testing and placement data are examined to ascertain trends in program placements and services. The AIG Leadership Team continuously reviews and revises the implementation of the AIG Program. To ensure a rigorous and relevant curriculum, research-based materials are utilized at each level of service. Cumberland County has purchased multiple research-based materials and maintains a lending library of supplementary resources for AIG and cluster class teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Collecting and evaluating data is an important component of strengthening the AIG Program. The AIG leadership team recognizes the necessity of disseminating the evaluation of the AIG Program regarding effectiveness to all stakeholders through sharing:

AIG test data  
AIG informational fact sheet  
Program feedback/survey data

Aspects of the AIG Program are discussed with the AIG Steering Committee and other stakeholders. The AIG teacher and principal(s) meet bi-annually to set goals and review program effectiveness.

### **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:** The Cumberland County AIG Program mirrors the state policies and procedures governing the administration of gifted programs and services. The Cumberland County Local Plan, approved by the local Board of Education and reviewed by the NC Department of Instruction, remains in compliance in all program components. Screening, testing, and identification procedures are



reviewed annually to ensure equity, consistency, and best practices.

The following committees serve as a "checks and balances" mechanism to protect the rights of all children who may qualify for screening, testing, and/or placement in the AIG Program. School-based AIG case decisions are decided and monitored by a Needs Determination Team at each school site. Team minutes are required of each Needs Determination Team meeting as a means of documenting discussions and decisions. On the district level, an Oversight Review Committee (ORC), comprised of AIG leadership members, meets one day each week to review all casework for final decisions, including transfers. Students identified gifted from another LEA must meet local criteria for placement. Identification documentation is requested from the previous LEA and reviewed by ORC to determine if placement or testing is warranted.

A consent for evaluation signed by parent/guardian is required prior to testing. After a placement decision is made, parent/guardian must sign agreement for services and the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). The DEP, reviewed annually and signed by parents, safeguards the implementation of services, at each grade level. Program and service provisions are outlined in the Local Plan and approved by the local Board of Education. Appropriate and sufficient service delivery to both identified and Discovery students is monitored, adjusted accordingly, and reviewed for modifications on an annual basis, or as needed. Students requiring an Individual DEP or Grade/Subject Acceleration receive modified or adjusted services accordingly. Special needs gifted students, including those who are highly gifted, twice exceptional, disabled, or socio/economically disadvantaged, receive services based on their appropriate needs. Other important AIG practices such as contact time for services, clustering guidelines, direct and consultative services, diagnostic assessment tools, curriculum extensions, enrichment opportunities, and social/emotional support are articulated in the Local Plan and/or AIG Handbook to provide oversight to the program and service delivery.

#### Procedures To Resolve Disagreements

According to Article 9B, governing the screening, identification and placement of students into services for the academically or intellectually gifted, a procedure for resolving disagreements between parents or legal custodians and the local school administrative unit shall be developed. A disagreement might arise when a child is not identified as an academically or intellectually gifted student or concerning the appropriateness of services offered to the academically or intellectually gifted student. The Cumberland County Schools procedures for settling such disagreements will follow these steps:

1. The parent should first attempt to reach accord at the school level. The parent should request an appointment with the AIG teacher to discuss the concerns. If this does not resolve the concerns, the parent may request an appointment to meet with the principal to discuss how the disagreement can be resolved.
2. If no resolution is possible at the school level, the Executive Director of Exceptional Children's Program and the Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program Coordinator review the disagreement. The parent or school may request this review.
3. If no agreement can be reached following step 2, the parent or school principal should request in writing a review of the case by the Associate Superintendent of Student Services. The written request should describe the reasons for the disagreement.
4. If agreement cannot be reached administratively, the disagreement may be reviewed by the local school board, following procedures set forth by the board and superintendent. If the parents/guardians and the local school system cannot reach agreement, the parent has the right to petition an Administrative Law Judge for a contested case hearing. The scope of the review shall be

limited to whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically or intellectually gifted student, or whether the Local Plan developed under the law 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. 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. Attorney's fees are not available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Disseminating data to the public

**Sources of Evidence:** Cumberland County Pilot Program Plan and subsequent AIG Local Plans are on file at DPI and/or in the AIG office. Electronic versions may be uploaded upon request.

Needs Determination Team Minutes

ORC Log

Monthly meeting agendas

Approved AIG Budget

Screening and identification demographic profile logs

List of resources available

Documentation of advisement plan of action

Cluster class local endorsement completion database

Advanced Placement Summer Institute completion database

Advanced Placement CollegeBoard Authorization - CollegeBoard database

AIG Surveys

AIG informational fact sheet

Grade level DEPs

Transfer forms

Consent for Evaluation

Procedures to Resolve Disagreement

**Glossary (optional):**

Cumberland County Schools  
Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program  
Glossary

ACES - Accelerated Curriculum for Exceptional Students (3-5)  
Discovery Kindergarten - 2nd Grade Nurturing Program (K-2)  
GEMS - Gifted Education for Middle School (6-8)  
SAGES - Secondary Academically Gifted Exceptional Services (9-12)  
NDT - Needs Determination Team  
ORC - Oversight Review Committee  
DEP - Differentiated Education Plan  
IDEP - Individualized Differentiation Education Plan

**Appendix (optional):**

AIG Matrix pdf.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
Approved Tests for AIG.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
Pathway II Summary of Indicators for Differentiated Services 9-12.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
Summary of Indicators for Differentiated Services (3-12).pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
Cluster Memo Elementary 2016-2017.doc (*Appendix - Standard 2*)  
Cluster Memo Middle 2016-2017.doc (*Appendix - Standard 2*)  
Differentiated Education Plan (3 - 8).pdf (*Appendix - Standard 2*)  
Differentiated Education Plan K-2.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 2*)  
Individualized Education Plan.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 2*)  
ACES Job Description Elementary (1).pdf (*Appendix - Standard 3*)  
AIG Diagnostic Job Description.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 3*)  
AIG Job Description HS.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 3*)  
AIG Middle Job Description.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 3*)  
Local Plan Steering Committee.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 5*)  
System Commitment 2016-2019.pdf (*Local Board Approval Document*)