

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

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 10-JUN-19

**LEA Superintendent's Name:** Bill Nolte

**LEA AIG Contact Name:** Belinda Marr

**Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on:**

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Haywood County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

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

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

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

**Haywood County Schools Vision for local AIG program:**

The mission statement for Haywood County Schools states that we:

- ~ Be passionate about our work to serve students.
- ~ Be the best in the world at promoting student success.
- ~ Be productive in our work to serve students.

The North Carolina Academically and Gifted Standards require all school districts to employ challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum to accommodate the academic, intellectual, and social/emotional needs of gifted learners.

In regards to gifted learners we believe:

- ~ Academically and/or intellectually gifted students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.
- ~ Academically and/or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas and/or specific academic fields.
- ~ Academically and/or intellectually gifted students require differentiated education services beyond

those ordinarily provided by the regular education program.

- ~ Academically and/or intellectually gifted characteristics are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human behavior.
- ~ Academically and/or intellectually gifted students need early and continuous opportunities to interact with gifted peers.
- ~ Academically and/or intellectually gifted students need services that support their social and emotional needs as well as their cognitive needs.

Haywood County Schools will address gifted education by:

- ~ Utilizing multiple criteria to identify academically and/or intellectually gifted students.
- ~ Differentiating the educational program for academically and/or intellectually gifted students.
- ~ Offering a variety of settings and learning opportunities to enhance the students' freedom to develop and to demonstrate gifted behaviors.
- ~ Promoting positive attitudes regarding gifted education through communication and collaboration among school staff, parents, and the community.
- ~ Engaging parental and community support for gifted education.
- ~ Providing and supporting student enrichment programs.
- ~ Providing ongoing staff development opportunities for teachers of academically/and/or intellectually gifted students.
- ~ Monitoring the effectiveness of gifted services.

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

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$390222.00</b>	<b>\$7500.00</b>	<b>\$ .00</b>	<b>\$ .00</b>

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## **Standard 1: Student Identification**

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

### **Practice A**

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

### **District Response:**

Haywood County has a countywide identification process in place and employs multi-faceted procedures to ensure that all stakeholders know, understand and implement the current process for screening, referral, and identification of gifted students. Our identification criteria includes:  
~ Intellectually Gifted criteria along with Academically Gifted Reading and Academically Gifted Math.

While the AIG plan for Haywood County Schools is clear in the procedures for AIG identification, it is not easily accessible to all stakeholders.

The 2019-2022 AIG plan can be found on the AIG page on the county website. It will be updated (in both English and Spanish) to include all pertinent information for student identification for all stakeholders.

A "Frequently Asked Questions"(FAQ) section will be included on the website.

An AIG Handbook, in both English and Spanish, that details the program is available for parents, personnel, students and the community. An AIG handbook is given to each parent when permission for testing is sent home.

A Parent Night is held at the beginning of the school year for elementary and middle school at a central location in our district. The AIG program is explained and a time for parents to ask questions is provided. The DEP is also discussed for each child individually at the meeting.

The AIG Specialists will communicate periodically to parents/families and other stakeholders about the lessons and activities that are taking place within their classrooms using 21st century systems.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:**

Haywood County Schools currently identifies students in the areas of Academic Reading(AR), Academic Math(AM), Academically Gifted(AG), Intellectually Gifted(IG),and Academically and Intellectually Gifted(AI).

Students can be combinations of these identifications. In order to identify in any of the previously mentioned areas, an array of student information is gathered. Student data will be collected in four areas: aptitude, achievement, state normed test data(such as EOG testing), and a Gifted Rating Scale(GRS) that demonstrates a student's potential to achieve in the regular classroom setting.

Aptitude testing generally involves the administration of a Cognitive Abilities Test(CogAT) that is appropriate for the child's grade/age. However, other acceptable aptitude tests include but are not limited to: Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test 2(NNAT2), Otis-Lennon School Ability Test(OLSAT) and Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children(WISC).

Our county has specifically chosen to use the CogAT as our primary source of aptitude testing due to the sub-components that the test produces. We are able to use the verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative data to determine more about student abilities. Because the sub-scores can be linked to cognitive strengths in the areas of reading, math, and spatial/nonverbal reasoning, we find that it is easier to determine a gifted student's area of strength and identify them in our gifted program accordingly.

In order to meet the county's requirements for aptitude, students must score at least a 92 percentile on one of the sub-scores(VQ, QN, or VN) or on the full scale composite(VQN). Each sub-score is linked with an academic area. VN is a sub-score associated with reading, QN is associated with math, and VQ is combination score of both reading and math skills. In order to be identified as Intellectually Gifted a student must score a minimum 96 percentile on the composite IQ portion as one of their testing components. If a 98 percentile or greater is scored on the full scale IQ portion the student will automatically be placed and identified in all areas. Cognitive/Aptitude scoring is considered valid for three consecutive years for all students.

For students in kindergarten through second grade a cognitive score of 92 percentile or greater is required for additional testing. If a 92 percentile is met, then the WIAT III test is administered in the identified area.

Achievement testing is completed in the areas of reading and mathematics. Students must score a 92 percentile in either subject area in order to qualify. This testing data must be a norm based achievement test that is administered by Haywood County Schools. Haywood County Schools uses WIAT III as the primary achievement test instrument. Other achievement tests may be used if deemed necessary by the AIG Director.

End of Grade Assessments are another indicator of student performance and potential mastery of content knowledge. EOG testing is screened yearly and students must score at least a 95 percentile to meet the AIG requirement.

Gifted Rating Scales are collected on students in order to determine how they rank in six distinct areas compared with same aged peers. Two T-scores of 60 or greater are required, one of which

must be in the area of academic or intellectual. Gifted rating scales are subjective and therefore cannot be independently used to deny a student placement in the AIG program. EL Teachers will be included in the referral process and will complete GRS forms for EL students. An administrative committee comprised of AIG Specialists and the AIG Coordinator will evaluate the data and make a final decision about student placement.

In grades K-12, all students must meet three of the four criteria in order to place in an AIG area.

### **Practice C**

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

### **District Response:**

Special attention is given to students who are potentially gifted and from underrepresented populations. Special populations are present at all levels of the Haywood County School system. However, more consistent efforts have been made at the elementary level and efforts need to extend to the middle and high school levels.

For grades K-12, we currently use a qualitative measure to refer students for screening and testing. Classroom teachers of record are given a referral sheet to provide teacher observations of students strengths and weaknesses as well as the most current assessment data.

In previous years, our school system has used different assessment measures in order to make placement fair to those individuals from underrepresented populations. Currently, our minority populations are assessed using the same CogAT testing as other populations. We pay particular attention to the sub-test scores, in order to determine areas of strength. However, these students are also given the opportunity to take alternate assessments that are more non-verbally focused, like the NNAT2.

We will collaborate with our school psychologists and EC teachers to gather needed data when it appears that an EC student is potentially twice-exceptional. Through faculty meetings at the beginning of the year, we will provide staff development on gifted traits for school staff.

We plan to offer an August Staff Development Session on identifying and serving gifted students in all populations. This session will be open to all Haywood County Schools Employees.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:**

Students may be referred to the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted Program for consideration of placement in one of the following ways:

- ~ Referral(teacher, parent, administrator, counselor, and other appropriate school personnel)
- ~ Third Grade Cognitive(IQ) Testing(92 percentile or greater)
- ~ Grades 3-12 End of Year Testing(95 percentile or greater)

Students whose transfer records document eligibility for placement in a gifted program in another school system will be considered for placement in the AIG program in Haywood County. Additional testing may be required. If no official records are available, full testing will be required for placement.

Teachers refer students for testing during our two yearly testing windows, one in the fall and the other in the spring. Before a referral form is completed, certain criteria such as a minimum of one year ahead in reading, above grade level math performance, and acceleration in academic and intellectual ability must be evident. All student referrals for AIG testing must be approved by a school administrator or lead teacher.

Under special circumstances and with AIG director approval, referrals may take place outside of the two testing windows.

Parents may also refer their child for testing. If a parent request is made, the student will be tested during the next testing window.

Student EOG scores are screened yearly for scores of 95 percentile or greater. Third grade IQ testing is also completed in the fall of each school year and screened for 92 percentile or greater scores. If students do score 92 percentile or higher on either of these tests they are entered into the referral process and more information is gathered.

After a student has been tested two times and has not qualified, approval by the AIG Director is needed for additional testing.

Haywood County Schools currently identifies students in the areas of Academic Reading(AR), Academic Math (AM), Academically Gifted(AG), both reading and math, Academically and Intellectually Gifted(AI), and Intellectually Gifted(IG) with a 96 percentile composite score on a CogAT. Students can be combinations of these identifications. In order to identify in any of the previously mentioned areas an array of student information is gathered. Student data will be collected in four areas: aptitude, achievement, state normed test data(such as EOG testing), and a Gifted Rating Scale(GRS) that demonstrates a student's potential to achieve in the regular classroom setting.

AR= Reading placement is determined by meeting three of the four following areas.

1.) Scores:

- ~ End of Grade Test Scores for grades 3-8
- ~ K-2 Reading Level, a minimum of one year advanced

- 2.) Achievement Testing: testing of knowledge acquired through instruction  
~ WIAT III score of 92 percentile or greater on the reading portion
- 3.) Cognitive Abilities Test(CogAT): testing of intellectual capabilities(IQ)  
~ 92 percentile in either the overall/composite IQ(VQN), the Verbal/Nonverbal(VN) sub-test or the Verbal/Quantitative(VQ) sub-test
- 4.) Gifted Rating Scale(GRS): teacher observation tool to document student potential and performance

\*K-2 students must have a qualifying Cognitive Abilities Test score for additional testing.

AM= Math placement is determined by meeting three of the four following areas.

- 1.) Scores:  
~ End of Grade Test Scores for grades 3-8
- 2.) Achievement Testing: testing of knowledge acquired through instruction  
~ WIAT III score of 92 percentile or greater on the math portion
- 3.) Cognitive Abilities Test(CogAT): testing of intellectual capabilities(IQ)  
~ 92 percentile in either the overall/composite IQ (VQN), the Quantitative/Nonverbal(QN) sub-test or the Verbal/Quantitative(VQ) sub-test
- 4.) Gifted Rating Scale(GRS): teacher observation tool to document student potential and performance

\*K-2 students must have a qualifying Cognitive Abilities Test score for additional testing.

\*Additional tests may be used if deemed necessary by the AIG Director.

AG= Meets qualifying criteria for both AR and AM.

IG= A 96 percentile on the overall/composite IQ score.

AI= Meets qualifying criteria for both AR and AM and has a 96 percentile on the overall/composite IQ score.

Regardless of the identification area, qualifying students receive integrated lessons that are comprised of reading, math, STEM, social emotional, and intellectual activities that encompasses the interest and needs of the gifted learner.

### **Practice E**

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

### **District Response:**

The AIG Program for Haywood County Schools maintains individual documentation for each referred student. These individual files may include an initial student referral form, a signed permission to

evaluate, testing materials, and student eligibility form outlining test results. A Differentiated Education Plan(DEP) is included for qualifying students.

A DEP for Math and/or Reading is written for each identified AIG student demonstrating a need for differentiation beyond what is normally provided by regular education. Each identified AIG student has a yearly Differentiated Education Plan(DEP) that outlines the specific modification and adaptations that are being made for that child during the course of the school year in the regular classroom setting. The DEP consists of four components: a school environment, regular classroom differentiation, gifted classroom differentiation, and county or extracurricular activities outside of the typical classroom setting.

DEPs are completed by regular classroom teachers and the gifted specialist at the beginning of each school year. Parents are presented with the new DEP information on a yearly basis and sign to say they are in agreement with the plan that has been set forth for their child's education for the school year. Parents will be provided with a copy of their child's DEP. All newly placed AIG students will have an initial conference in which the AIG specialists will meet with parents to discuss the plan of action, program requirements and expectations, and to complete the signing of the DEP.

At the high school level DEPs are handled on a four year basis. Parents sign their child's DEP at the end of their eighth grade school year and agree to the outlined plan for their child's education. This DEP will be used in conjunction with the child's four year plan. AIG specialists and/or current guidance counselors will meet with AIG students at least once yearly to discuss their progress and evaluate their current needs. Each semester, the core teacher in the area of identification signs the DEP acknowledging and implementing differentiation for the identified student. In essence, the DEP serves as a guide for courses and a four year plan at this point in the child's education.

### **Practice F**

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

### **District Response:**

Upon receiving teacher referrals or qualifying assessment scores, consent for testing is requested from the parent to conduct further evaluations. At this time, an AIG program parent handbook is sent home with consent for testing that explains the program and due process procedures.

Current classroom teachers are given the Gifted Rated Scale to complete as part of the qualifying criteria. Students must have a T-score of 60 and above in one of two areas, academic or intellectual along with one other qualifying area in creativity, motivation, or leadership.

In grades K-2, AIG teachers administer a CogAT aptitude assessment or other aptitude assessment if needed in which students must have a minimum of 92 percentile in at least one sub-test area (VQ, QN, VN, VQN) for additional testing. If a student has an overall composite score of 96 percentile, they

are identified as IG. If the students overall composite is 98 percentile, they are placed AIG in our program.

In grades K-2, if there is an identifying aptitude score of 92 percentile, the achievement test is given. We have chosen to use the WIAT III for assessing math and reading acceleration. Students must score a 92 percentile on broad reading and/or broad math.

In grades 3-12, if students have an EOG score of 95 percentile, AIG specialists administer the WIAT III to students in the area that matches the EOG score. Students must score a 92 percentile on broad reading and/or broad math. If students have not had a CogAT or aptitude score in the last two years, the CogAT is administered. If a student has an overall composite score of 96 percentile, they are identified as IG. If the students overall composite is 98 percentile, they are placed AIG in our program.

In grades K-12, students must have a minimum of 3 out of 4 criteria in order to place in the AIG program. Aptitude, Achievement, Gifted Rating Scales, and K-2 assessment or EOG scores. The GRS can be used to place a student, but can not be used to keep a student out of the program.

All scores from the students are documented on the eligibility report and shared with parents and other stakeholders. If students do not meet eligibility, a notice of non identification determination is conducted by a team consisting of the teacher, AIG specialists, and administrators. Parents receive notification either way and if identified, the parent is invited in for a conference to discuss the eligibility report results as well as sign their annual DEP.

#### **Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

- ~ The identification process will be readily available to all stakeholders in a user friendly format which will include a glossary, appendix, and clearly defined identification criteria
- ~ EL teachers will now complete Gifted Rating Scales for EL students
- ~ Referral forms must be approved by school administrators and/or lead teachers
- ~ Looking at more qualitative measures to identify AIG students such as a different teacher rating scale or portfolio requirements
- ~ Further professional development opportunities for differentiating instruction for AIG students
- ~ Support for our high school teachers/counselors on mentoring and assisting AIG students with college and career paths

#### **Sources of Evidence:**

- ~ DEP Form
- ~ Parent Handbook
- ~ AIG Plan on website

- ~ FAQ sections on website
- ~ Agendas from parent nights
- ~ Powerpoint used in Parent night
- ~ Referral form
- ~ High school DEPs

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## **Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community**

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

### **Practice A**

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

### **District Response:**

Our district provides a variety of services for gifted and potentially gifted students that modify, supplement, and build on academic skills and knowledge. These service options are designed to meet the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of the students through multiple options.

AIG Specialists provide pull-out services for students K-8 that encourage the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and other 21st century skills. With the development of vertical curricular units, our AIG specialists provide continuity and development of academic and intellectual skills in areas such as technology/coding, engineering, classical literature, and cultural/global awareness. For the 2019-2022 plan, our gifted program will focus on the "whole child" and incorporate the social and emotional needs of AIG students into our program more fully. In order to address these needs of our gifted learners, we will integrate social and emotional topics into each of our vertical units.

In grades K-2, we use a variety of integrated programs to meet our gifted learner needs such as: Thinking Stories, ArtsEdge, PETS, AIMS, OSMO, Lego Story Starters, Scratch Jr., Tynker Jr, and Bee Botz

In grades 3-5, we use a variety of integrated programs to meet our gifted learner needs such as: LearnZillion, Makey Makey Labz, Scratch and Code.org, Microsoft MakeCode, The PBL Project, IXL, and Khan Academy

In grades 6-8, units have been designed based on the state standards from core classes consisting of problem and project based learning objectives. Students must use collaboration, problem solving, creativity, etc. Some resources to develop these unit ideas come from: [teachengineering.com](http://teachengineering.com), [ArtsEdge.kennedy-center.org](http://ArtsEdge.kennedy-center.org), [mypblworks.org](http://mypblworks.org).

While efforts have been made to ensure a continuum of services in K-8, there is still work to do in grades 9-12. One district goal from our previous plan included strengthening the Advanced Placement program. This goal was met with the successful establishment of an AP Academy in a centralized location in our district to increase access of AP classes for all high school students. Also, AP teachers are now required to complete appropriate training and are proven highly effective

teachers. In the next three years, we plan to increase our AP offerings in order to offer more rigorous and advanced options for our high school students.

### **Practice B**

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

### **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 grade level classroom. The AIG Program, regular education program, and extracurricular programs work collaboratively to recognize the student's special gifts for learning and achievement by providing students with challenges and opportunities for academic and social/emotional growth. Our vision is to prepare students to be lifelong learners who are capable of thinking critically, acting creatively, and accomplishing excellence in all facets of life.

Elementary schools have direct AIG services with four AIG Specialists, one specialist per grade level 3-5, and one K-2 specialist, serving the eight schools. The middle schools offer AIG classes as electives taught by AIG specialists at each school. High schools offer Advanced Placement(AP) and honors courses which students self-select. It is recommended to principals that AIG students be clustered whenever possible.

The Haywood County AIG program is aligned with the Haywood County Schools vision of Passionate Work, Productive Work, Student Success and is essential to the total instructional program. AIG services meet vital educational needs of a specific group of students.

Haywood County Schools AIG program will align gifted curriculum resources with the LEA instructional program. We will work with all administrative teams to make sure the needs of the gifted learners are addressed at all levels.

### **Practice C**

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

### **District Response:**

Intentional grouping of AIG students is an area that can be strengthened in our district.

Through principal meetings, the AIG director will encourage administrators to examine AIG student data and place accordingly. When possible, all AIG students will be placed in a classroom together. Data will be analyzed to examine strengths and weaknesses of grouping practices.

Currently, we have been using flexible grouping among our K-1. In our 2019-2022 plan we will add flexible grouping in 2nd grade in order to continue our talent development pooling. A variety of lessons are taught to K-2nd grade students and talent development groups are changed according to student performance, ability, interest, and teacher input.

In grades 3-8, clustering is encouraged and recommended for AIG students and students who are level 5 in math. This provides the teacher more opportunities to differentiate instruction and promote growth in and among these students.

In grades 10-12, students are able to participate in advanced classes to meet both their intellectual and school requirements while preparing them for opportunities in higher education.

#### **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:**

We recognize that teachers, school administrators, and support staff have varying degrees of knowledge regarding the delivery of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students. It is essential for personnel at every school within the county to receive professional development regarding the delivery of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students.

AIG staff development opportunities are offered on a yearly basis for administrators, support staff, and classroom teachers.

To further assist classroom teachers with instruction of AIG students, we will develop a list of resources, books, and websites to further the instruction of gifted learners.

Beginning in the summer of 2019, beginning teachers in Haywood County will receive training in gifted education practices at the yearly Beginning Teacher Symposium. This training will provide new teachers with resources and strategies for differentiated instruction for AIG students as well as information about the diverse needs of gifted students.

The AIG Director meets monthly with all school administrators. These meetings occur at the elementary, middle, and high school level. These meetings maintain ongoing communication regarding the AIG program.

Haywood County Schools has a private donor who is currently paying for AIG certification for individual teachers. This is used to recruit and retain quality professionals in the AIG profession. Our plan is to open this opportunity to all classroom teachers willing to seek their certification. Our goal is to have at least one classroom teacher at all eight elementary schools and the three middle schools with their AIG Certification by the end of this three year plan cycle. By increasing AIG certification numbers, we will have more teachers aware of the diverse needs of AIG learners. Furthermore, when principals assign students to teachers, best practice would be to place AIG student clusters in these certified teachers' classrooms and this practice is encouraged by the AIG Director.

### **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:**

Communication and collaboration is essential to ensuring that a successful AIG program is in place at each school site.

Differentiated Education Plans(DEPs) are reviewed annually to ensure that services are appropriately delivered to meet students' needs.

Transition meetings will be held for rising 6th graders as they transition to middle school. AIG Specialists will meet with parents and students to share information regarding student transition and scheduling. Elementary and middle school AIG specialists will meet to review individual student academic information to ensure continuity of services.

Before 8th grade students transition to high school, specialists will provide students with a variety of opportunities to explore their high school options. Students will take a field trip to Haywood Early College and Haywood Community College to tour the campuses and meet with staff. This trip will provide information about the Early College option as well as dual enrollment through the community college. Eighth grade students will also meet with the traditional high school counselors to discuss their scheduling options for their upcoming ninth grade year.

Each spring, AIG specialists will host a transition meeting for current 8th graders and their parents to provide scheduling information and develop a four year DEP to guide students through high school.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:**

Addressing social and emotional needs of gifted students is an area that needs improvement in our district.

We are currently adding social and emotional concepts to our vertical curriculum units to provide support for the diverse needs of gifted learners.

To further develop the social and emotional aspects of our AIG students, AIG specialists will coordinate with school counselors to lead/facilitate lessons on social/emotional issues our students are facing.

In high school, counselors and classroom teachers are made aware of all AIG students and their areas of identification. Guidance personnel are available to AIG students for counseling as needed to address any social and emotional concerns as well as academic scheduling questions.

**Practice G**

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

**District Response:** When current AIG services are not appropriate, all stakeholders may meet to discuss other curriculum options for highly advanced students. Individual curriculum and placement decisions can be made based on student academic needs.

Early entrance into Kindergarten is possible when students meet Haywood County Schools and NC State requirements for early entrance.

Students who score a level 5 on the Math EOG that do not place AIG will receive differentiation and advanced placement in math classes.

Grade Acceleration is an option for students who demonstrate mastery of current grade level content. In middle school, high school courses can be taken to provide advanced learning opportunities.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is offered to students who would like to receive credit prior to taking courses.

**Practice H**

Implements intentional strategies to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities for under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged,

English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional. These strategies may include talent development efforts.

**District Response:**

In previous years our school system has used different assessment measures in order to make placement fair to those individuals from underrepresented populations.

Currently, our minority populations are assessed using the same CogAT testing as other populations. We pay particular attention to the sub-test scores in order to determine areas of strength. However, these students will also be given the opportunity to take alternate assessments that are more non-verbally focused, like the NNAT2 , WIDA and CTONI-4, and the other testing in collaboration with the EL teacher.

We will collaborate with our school psychologists and EC teachers to gather needed data when it appears that an EC student is potentially twice-exceptional. Through faculty meetings at the beginning of the year, we will provide staff development on gifted traits for school staff.

Through our grades K-2 talent development, we encourage and develop students from all backgrounds and populations and address the needs of underrepresented populations in our instructional groups. We will encourage classroom teachers to include appropriate underrepresented populations in their recommendations for talent development.

Any student scoring level 5 on the Math EOG in grades 3-8 as well as math AIG students(AM, IM, AG, IG) will receive differentiation in their math classes to ensure a rigorous and challenging experience to develop their abilities. Middle schools will offer advanced math classes for 6th and 7th grades and Math I for 8th grade for any student scoring a level 5 on the Math EOG.

**Practice I**

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

**District Response:**

AIG students need extensions of the curriculum and events to expand their learning. Extracurricular programs provide such opportunities that both enhance and further develop the needs and interest of AIG students.

AIG field trips have been instituted in each grade level 1-8 to provide students with opportunities to broaden their understanding of grade level curricular topics and create interest in a variety of topics.

A Haywood County AIG summer camp is offered for rising 4th-6th grade AIG students to enrich the curriculum and engage students in various STEM fields and activities.

Haywood Early College, in conjunction with the Instructional Technology Center and the AIG specialists, conduct a Robothon for AIG students, grades 4-7. The Robothon encourages students' interests in engineering and technology while developing skills such as communication, collaboration and leadership skills.

Extracurricular clubs and teams are available for AIG students including Battle of the Books, Science Olympiad, Robotics, Film Club, Jr. Beta Club, etc.

The following are goals to increase expansion of partnerships:

- ~ We will continue to strengthen our partnership with Haywood Early College through development of expanded Robothon days, 8th grade field trips, technology support, and other extracurricular activities.
- ~ The AP Academy for advanced classes in Haywood County is located on the Haywood Community College campus. Continue to foster this partnership and expand AP offerings for our students.
- ~ Utilize our active Haywood County Schools Foundation Board of Directors (community members) to elicit volunteers for after school sessions/trips/internships.
- ~ We currently offer an AIG Summer STEM camp for rising fourth through sixth grade students. Future plans include expanding the camp to other grade levels and partnering with Haywood Community College, so increased resources are provided.
- ~ High school AIG students will be provided the opportunity to tour state university campuses.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

- ~ Continue to strengthen transitions from elementary to middle school and middle to high school.
- ~ Our goal is to have at least one classroom teacher at all eight elementary schools with their AIG Certification by the end of this three year plan cycle with hopes of expanding into other grade levels in the coming years.
- ~ We will collaborate with counselors and other support staff to ensure the social and emotional needs of our AIG students are being addressed.
- ~ Provide resources and support for administrators, teachers, and families to better understand options to make informed decisions.
- ~ To identify and utilize alternative testing options for underrepresented populations.
- ~ Continue and expand AIG STEM Summer Camp
- ~ Continue to strengthen high school AIG services by coordinating plans and services among counselors and classroom teachers, adding more AP class options, and evaluating four year high school plans on a regular basis.
- ~ Partner with Haywood Community College to increase offerings for Summer STEM Camp.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- ~ Monthly Administrator Group Alike Meeting Agendas
- ~ Haywood County Community College dual enrollment data
- ~ Certification of additional AIG Specialists/Classroom teachers
- ~ Headcount data reflects an increase in underrepresented populations
- ~ Agenda from AIG STEM camp
- ~ Vertical Unit Outlines
- ~ Teacher Resource Guide

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### **Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction**

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

#### **Practice A**

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

#### **District Response:**

Our past plan focused on service plans for AIG students. We feel we have made great strides to increase our services for AIG students so they are served the maximum amount of time that resources allow. We currently have 4 full-time elementary AIG specialists.

County wide we have 6 full time specialists that serve 11 schools(elementary and middle).

Each elementary AIG specialist only serves the grade level they are assigned across the district. For example, one AIG specialist teaches all 4th grade students in the county. This has allowed for a deeper understanding of the Standard Course of Study for that grade. Therefore, differentiation, enrichment and extension activities are more rigorous because the teachers are responsible for teaching only one grade's standards. This has enabled our specialists to vertically align inter-disciplinary units that encompass all areas of the curriculum. We have also increased the resources and amount of STEM being used within our program.

In middle school, all AIG students are assigned AIG in their encore wheel. Each middle school has an assigned AIG specialist. Students in middle school are offered courses that are differentiated. English I and Math I are offered to 8th grade students in all middle schools. We are exploring a pilot where Earth and Environmental Sciences will be offered in 7th grade. Our AIG specialists create problem based and project based units rooted in the Standard Course of Study that encompasses all areas of the curriculum.

High School students are offered access to both Honors and Advanced Placement courses that follow the Standard Course of Study. We have created an AP Academy where all AP students can take AP classes in a central location in our district. In times of decreasing resources, this has provided more opportunities for our students by combining resources.

#### **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:**

All elementary and middle schools have designated AIG rooms. Resources are being purchased to enhance the AIG curriculum. Some of the new additions are Snap Circuits, Sphero, Kano computer programming, Codable Drones, Zoob Kits, Keva Building kits, Robotics kits, JIMU robot kits, Discovering STEM, and Engino kits.

Students in middle school are offered courses that are differentiated. English I and Math I are offered to 8th grade students in all middle schools. Students who score Level 5 on EOG's grades 3-12, must be enrolled in accelerated math class, unless parents opt out.

High School students are offered access to both Honors and Advanced Placement courses. We continue to explore and add more AP classes at our high schools. This year our AP teachers are attending summer institute training. AP teachers will be receiving content guides, formative assessments that can be taken by the students and monitored by administration, and additional resources to help with AP instruction next year. In addition, next year we will have an AP Instructional Coach that will monitor and assist AP teachers as needed.

Through stakeholder input, student interest and learning profiles, we realize the need to include units that address student creativity. Academic units have been planned to incorporate these disciplines.

The director works with the high school counselors to ensure continued effective instructional practices are being implemented each year. Teachers of students who are AIG must sign off on student's DEP's and show how classroom instruction is differentiated.

For the past 4 years, we have held a three day summer STEM camp for rising 5th graders and last year included rising 4th and 6th graders. Students rotate between four classroom settings each day, such as Geocaching, Circuitry, Forensics, Life Science, and Chemistry, in order to have hands on experience investigating complex science concepts.

**Practice C**

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

**District Response:**

AIG planning days will be provided/budgeted for four half days during the school year(one each 9 weeks). These days will be used to plan vertically aligned units. Our goal is to plan at least two units per year. At the end of the 2019-2022 plan cycle, our goal is to have a minimum of six vertically aligned units, grades 2-8.

To create our vertical aligned units, we use the following evidence-based resources: ArtsEdge,

teachengineering.com, pblworks.org, code.org, Scratch, Kahn Academy, and the Davidson Gifted data base.

In an effort to collaborate with all school employees, the AIG director and specialists will attend beginning of the year staff meetings to communicate AIG goals and standards for each grade level.

Our county holds a yearly mandatory staff development day. During this day, hundreds of sessions are offered across our county. Teachers can select workshops based on needs and interests so we will offer AIG focused topics and workshops led by leading experts in AIG related fields that will be required by our AIG specialists, as well as being offered to our regular education teachers.

We have consolidated resources to provide a centralized academy for AP instruction. Currently, at our two traditional high schools, some AP classes "do not make". By having them at a central location, the two high schools will not have to provide all offerings. Likewise, our current pass rates hover around 33%. We are committed to recruiting only proven, experienced educators to teach these classes.

Attend NCAGT and other professional conference/workshops to gather materials and new research based resources to support gifted programming.

#### **Practice D**

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

#### **District Response:**

Our District still receives a Golden Leaf grant through the Cherokee Preservation Association to support STEM instruction in our schools. Part of this grant money has been used for the implementation and now expansion of Science Olympiad teams. Our goal is to continue expansion of this initiative to include all schools participating in Science Olympiad activities. Stakeholder input stated a need for more extracurricular clubs/activities. Part of that grant is also used for STEM nights at schools and STEM professional development.

As previously mentioned, vertical curricular units have been and will continue to be developed to include lessons which tap into creative giftedness and other 21st century skills. ArtsEdge, through the Kennedy Center, provides great lessons which integrate all areas of the arts. Our units will strive to resemble these and other research-based programs like them.

A district definition of Depth of Knowledge has been established in our 2018-2020 District Improvement Plan. This definition will help create a consistent vision of depth of knowledge across our district. The impetus for this focus was based on classroom observations (K-12) conducted by the Curriculum and Instruction staff. EOG/EOC data showed our students were lacking in depth of knowledge. Through the Haywood County Schools Foundation, the Curriculum and Instructional team at Central Office has had intensive training of Norman Webb's Depth of Knowledge. Training on

Depth of Knowledge has taken place for all elementary and high school administrator and leadership teams, and middle school administrators and leadership teams will be trained this summer. In the fall of 2019, teachers will begin Depth of Knowledge training and implementation at all district-wide schools.

Our county holds a yearly mandatory staff development day. During this day, many sessions are offered across our county. Teachers can select workshops based on individual needs and interests. Some sessions are required by certain groups.

### **Practice E**

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

### **District Response:**

TE21 provides formative and summative assessments for our district. For grades 2-5 formative benchmark assessments are given at 18 and 27 weeks for grades 3-5. These assessments provide detailed data regarding student strengths and weaknesses. AIG data can be obtained from these tests and used to guide instruction. Once 18 week and 27 week test results are returned each school analyzes their data and uses planning time on how to modify and enrich instruction for end of grade testing. AIG specialists will be using data from 27 week to drive curricular decisions for these students. Further staff development for school based administrators will continue following the 27 week test and EOG testing. Some of our schools also use the NC Check Ins. The data is used in the same way as the TE 21 data. The goal is for schools to appropriately and equitably evaluate AIG data and to make appropriate changes to instruction. Teachers use the data to create small and large groups for differentiated instruction on areas they need. AIG students may be provided enrichment and acceleration opportunities during this time based on mastery of the assessments.

TE21 also provides an item bank of questions for formative assessments. Teachers in our district have been given a hard copy of all the "advanced" and "hard" questions in the item bank. Our goal is for AIG formative assessments to be differentiated in regards to the rigor of questions that are asked.

Our middle and high schools use Schoolnet for benchmark assessments. This year our middle schools have implemented TE21 for math grades 6-8 across all middle schools.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:**

Social and emotional needs of gifted students have been an overlooked area in the past in regards of serving our AIG students. Our new plan will reflect strategies for addressing these important needs. Elementary and middle will participate in a book study with their students that will address social/emotional aspects of being gifted. For example: 5 Traits of Competent Kids and/or 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens. In planning vertical curricular units, one unit will focus on social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Expansion of an AIG summer camp which currently is designed for rising 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. Camp is based on STEM activities and allows students to meet like-minded peers from across the district

**Practice G**

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

**District Response:**

AIG specialists will provide inclusion Talent Development in Kindergarten and 1st grade and pull-out Talent Development in 2nd grade. Lessons taught to the whole groups are designed to seek a variety of traits gifted students exhibit, for example: math, reading, creativity, and abstract thinking. These students are then pulled for several in-depth lessons. These groups are fluid from teacher recommendations from prior year and current grade level and can be used for Talent Development throughout the year. Through this program, we are able to identify students for AIG services early. In Haywood County, we test and identify gifted students and begin serving them in AIG as early as kindergarten.

**Practice H**

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

**District Response:**

High quality staff development has been a cornerstone of our academic success in Haywood County. Recommended curricular frameworks exist at the elementary schools in regards to reading and math instruction. Ongoing staff development is offered each year for all of the recommended frameworks. Middle and high school frameworks have been developed. AIG specialists attend these staff developments so they can integrate ideas into their classrooms and are able to collaborate with regular classroom teachers. This provides for cohesiveness in curriculum delivery.

AIG planning days will be provided/budgeted for 4 half days during the school year (one each 9 weeks). These days will be used to plan vertically aligned units which can then be differentiated to meet individual student needs.

Communication is always an area to strengthen between AIG specialists and stakeholders. Currently AIG specialists provide newsletters, email, collaboration with classroom teachers, "Remind" communication app, and Parent Nights. This year we added Transition Meetings for 5th and 8th grade parents to meet and discuss the differences in AIG services as students transition from elementary to middle, and middle to high school.

### **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 AIG program (elementary and middle school) for Haywood County Schools documents student service plans that describe the differentiated services they will receive. These DEP's are reviewed annually at the beginning of each school year at district-wide elementary and middle school parent meetings. At this meeting, details of the gifted program are provided along with curricular overviews for the year. Parents have an opportunity to review their child's DEP at this time and/or schedule an individual meeting with the AIG specialist.

A DEP form, which details the four year high school plan and is signed by parents at the end of the student's 8th grade year, has been developed.

A High School DEP consists of Honors and Advanced Placement courses and online advanced course options. DEP's at the high school are consistently reviewed and classroom teachers sign the DEP in the area of identification each semester. Counselors review and adjust the plan as needed.

### **Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

~ In elementary school, our new AIG service plan has one AIG specialist teaching one grade. It is imperative for vertical plans to be developed across grade levels to ensure continuity of instruction across academic disciplines. Our plan is to develop vertical units based on the standards/concepts as entry points of differentiation.

For example: Robotics/Coding

2nd grade - Bee Bot; Wonder Workshop Dash Robots

3rd grade - Robotis Pets; Itty Bitty Buggy Programmable Robots

4th grade - JIMU Robots; Little Bits R2D2; Cozmo programming  
5th grade - Lego Mindstorms; Spheros

~ Likewise in middle school, our specialists teach grades 6-8 and have created units which build vertically upon skills acquired prior to middle school and/or in previous grades. Our two middle school specialists plan together, using the Common Core curriculum standards in the ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies fields to direct and guide all unit development. These conceptual units include units based on art/music, creative problem solving, historical application, STEM, outdoor learning activities, and more.

~ We will actively investigate the AP Capstone course pathway for high school students and plan for implementation to begin in 2020-2021.

~ Addition of high school counseling adapted specifically for AIG students. This position could meet with high school students periodically to make sure they are on-track with their four year high school plan. They could offer college and career planning geared toward AIG students. We are also planning on taking 9th grade students on a road trip to various college/university campuses.

~ Participation of AIG specialists with PLC's at their assigned grade levels (in elementary schools) or at various grade levels in middle school.

~ Mentoring programs connecting students with experts in the community in areas of student interest.

~ AIG Specialists will provide general classroom teachers with differentiation strategies.

~ AIG Specialists are included in all assessment training(EVAAS, PowerSchool, etc) and meet with county data coaches to dis-aggregate data applicable to AIG students. Specialists access individual growth projections for students in order to identify students who need remediation and/or small group support.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- ~ Interdisciplinary vertical units that are concept based 2-8.
- ~ AP Academy in place for advanced learning at a centralized location.
- ~ Increase in AP pass rates
- ~ Continue to increase advanced offerings at middle and high school.

At the K-8 level, Haywood County Schools offer AIG students:

- ~ Early entry in Kindergarten
- ~ CASE 21 advanced formative assessments
- ~ STEM activities (3-D printing, robotics, maker-spaces)
- ~ Summer STEM camp for rising 4th, 5th, and 6th graders
- ~ Battle of the Books
- ~ Science Olympiad

## **Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development**

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

### **Practice A**

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

### **District Response:**

The AIG Coordinator in Haywood County Schools is required to have the minimum certification or additional expertise:

- ~ North Carolina teacher's license
- ~ Minimum of five years classroom teaching experience
- ~ Master's Degree in School Administration
- ~ NC Licensure in Gifted Education or significant work experience in gifted education field

The AIG Coordinator in Haywood County has the minimum responsibilities:

- ~ Oversees the Elementary and Middle School AIG Lead Teachers
- ~ Ensures system-wide implementation of the Local Plan and accountability of the AIG Program.
- ~ Leads AIG team meetings and sets agenda for each meeting
- ~ Purchases and Secures AIG testing materials
- ~ Communicates with schools, outside agencies, and others regarding AIG policies, procedures, and concerns.
- ~ Represents the AIG Program at local, regional, state, and/or national meetings
- ~ Initiates and oversees the development of the AIG curriculum
- ~ Maintains electronic and hard copy data on identified AIG students to include accurate headcount data
- ~ Guides the development of all AIG guidelines and procedures
- ~ Helps plan and facilitate professional development for AIG staff and other personnel involved in gifted education (i.e. county-wide Professional Development days, etc.)
- ~ Coordinates with administrators and Human Resources in the hiring of AIG personnel
- ~ Manages AIG state and local budgets
- ~ Approves the purchasing of all AIG equipment, curriculum materials, office supplies, etc.
- ~ Evaluates AIG Specialists
- ~ Meets with elementary and middle lead teachers as necessary to carry out initiatives and complete tasks required by the AIG program
- ~ Plan and coordinate efforts for Governor's School.

Currently, our AIG director does not hold an AIG certification, therefore has hired an elementary and middle school lead teacher to assist in the AIG program. These lead teachers have their certification

as well as several years experience in gifted education. They also teach AIG students and serve at our schools.

### **Practice B**

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

### **District Response:**

All AIG Specialists in Haywood County Schools must hold a valid AIG Certification, or be currently enrolled in an AIG licensure program. We currently employ four full-time specialists at the elementary level. Elementary specialists serve all eight elementary schools at a specific grade level. There are two middle AIG specialists. One specialist is split between two middle schools. Another AIG specialist is assigned to a third middle school.

AIG Specialists responsibilities includes:

- ~ Scheduling students
- ~ Selecting materials
- ~ Creating and modifying units
- ~ Developing and implementing daily lesson plans to meet the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.
- ~ Implementation of the AIG local plan
- ~ Responsible for screening, identifying, and placing gifted students
- ~ Scheduling and conducting parent DEP meetings.
- ~ Participating in appropriate professional development and conferences which promote best practices in gifted education.
- ~ AIG specialists pursue and respond to ongoing feedback from teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders.
- ~ Facilitates transitions from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school
- ~ Planning and execution of extra-curricular field trips and activities such as Robothon and Summer STEM Camp.
- ~ Vertical planning to generate and update units.

### **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:**

At the beginning of each year, an overview of AIG requirements and strategies for AIG students are provided to administrators and new teachers prior to school beginning. Within the first couple of months of school, AIG specialists attend each schools staff meetings to provide an overview of the AIG program, requirements, and answer any questions.

Our county offers a system wide staff development day in the fall. All teachers are required to take two sessions. Classes for differentiation are offered yearly. Previous class offerings include Makey Makey and implementing new technology instructional tools. We offer general information sessions on gifted education, differentiated instruction, and how to meet the social and emotional needs of students.

Our district AIG program is continually looking for new ways to implement problem based learning, new educational technology, and a challenging STEM environment. As a result, a variety of STEAM/educational tech related materials have been acquired, through program funds and grant-writing. Staff development will be required for implementation of these new materials and processes.

AIG staff attend yearly gifted education conferences, and local workshops provided by neighboring universities for professional development. Conferences address and promote growth in focused areas of gifted education. We hope to acquire new gifted education texts from conferences to grow professional knowledge in gifted education. As an AIG staff, we are looking to grow through additional online professional development offerings, including webinars, online professional development offered by DPI, following gifted education blogs, and networking with other gifted education specialists.

#### **Practice D**

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

#### **District Response:**

Haywood County Schools has a private donor who is currently paying for AIG Certification for two individual teachers per year. This donor has also helped with providing updated technology for our STEM projects and student research. Current staff have obtained AIG add-on through college coursework or through Praxis examination. Our goal is to have a fifth grade teacher at all eight elementary schools with their AIG licensure within the three year period of this plan. We hope the opportunity to take the Praxis will attract more teachers to obtain their certification.

We will recommend clustering AIG students in the regular education classroom. We will provide additional support and training for teachers serving these gifted clusters. If there is a regular education teacher with AIG certification, it will be recommended that they will serve these gifted students.

Regular education teachers should refer to state standards as well as students' differentiated education plan when planning coursework for AIG students. Instruction should be connected to

interests, ability and developmental levels, and areas of giftedness.

### **Practice E**

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

### **District Response:**

The AIG Coordinator participates in planning yearly staff development sessions with the district curriculum and instruction team. This ensures courses are offered that are relevant and beneficial to the AIG program. Our county offers a system wide staff development day in the fall. All teachers are required to take two sessions. Classes for differentiation are offered yearly.

We plan to offer general information sessions on gifted education, differentiated instruction, and how to meet the social and emotional needs of students. These sessions are offered at the beginning of the year and on an as needed basis.

We also would like to lead trainings in implementing STEM technology, robotics, and computer coding in the regular education classroom.

One final area of focus is the identification and serving gifted students from underrepresented populations.

Our district has recently written a district improvement plan for 2018-2020 that includes implementation of district-wide depth of knowledge training. Professional development opportunities will continue to focus on depth of knowledge.

Our district is taking steps to make available new AP offerings each year. As a result, professional development to strengthen the AP program will be offered to high school educators. The College Board is rolling out additional resources and instructional tools for AP teachers this summer. Several AP teachers are attending the Summer Institute for additional training.

Our district AIG program has shifted to a problem-based learning and STEM environment. We continue to purchase and utilize new STEM materials with resources tied to standards in reading, math, science, and social studies. AIG staff development for implementation of these STEM materials and processes will be ongoing.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:**

AIG Specialists need dedicated time to collaborate and plan. This collaboration is best achieved when specialists can meet in planning groups. Specialists are also given appropriate time to plan individual units each week.

For the 2019-2022 plan cycle, AIG Specialists will have four half-day team planning sessions per year. As a result of changes in the elementary schedule, elementary AIG specialists are provided more opportunities to meet together.

Time will be used to review, alter, and create unit plans. AIG specialists will plan vertical alignment of units to ensure consistency of instruction throughout grade levels. Efforts will be made to collaborate with regular classroom teachers regarding units of instruction. Specialists will develop vertically aligned curriculum units which will address social, emotional, academic and intellectual needs.

AIG specialists communicate and plan with other teachers through informal and formal conversations before and after school, emails, newsletters, and the use of the pacing guides that the teachers are using.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

- ~ Furthering networks and contacts to secure needed funding for STEAM resources and technology through grant-writing
- ~ Lead trainings in new STEAM technology and apps for developing student creativity and advanced studies.
- ~ Provide incentives to regular education teachers to pursue AIG add-on license through preparation for the praxis.
- ~ AIG staff will select one book on gifted education each school year to journal and hold online discussion boards or meet in-person to document new learning on research, methods, trends, and best practice in gifted education.
- ~ Expand teacher AIG certification at both the elementary and middle school level.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- ~ Staff Development for new STEM resources
- ~ My Learning Plan district catalog
- ~ Professional Development certificates or session rosters
- ~ Lesson Plans
- ~ District list of AIG Certified teachers
- ~ AIG student class assignments/class rosters

- ~ District Improvement Plan
- ~ School Improvement Plans
- ~ Curriculum Units
- ~ Agenda for Planning Days

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## **Standard 5: Partnerships**

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

### **Practice A**

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

- \* academic and intellectual
- \* social and emotional

### **District Response:**

Our school system and AIG program offer a wealth of enrichment opportunities for students to take advantage of at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Community partnerships including Battle of the Books, Science Olympiad, Duke Tip, and summer STEM camps are available to our elementary and middle school populations. Furthermore, our middle schools have also initiated STEM-E clubs to incorporate technology innovation standards into our extracurricular program offerings. The county has instituted a district-wide "Smart Tank" competition at the elementary, middle, and high school level as of the 2018-2019 school year, giving students the opportunity to brainstorm, finance, and upon selection, even create inventions that accomplish or assist with practical, everyday tasks to a heightened degree.

At the high school level, both Tuscola High and Pisgah High offer advanced Math Clubs that participate in local and regional competitions at Western Carolina University, Furman University, and College of Charleston. Moreover, high school students grades 10-12 have the opportunity to apply to the NC School of Science and Math, or to take courses through NCSSM online. NCSSM also offers the Summer Ventures program to students in grades 10-12. Additionally, the statewide NC Virtual School enables students to take specific courses online that can't be funded on the local level, allowing students access to subject matter beyond the basic high school curriculum. Lastly, rising seniors have the opportunity to apply for and be chosen to attend Governor's School for six weeks during the summer, specializing in their chosen subject area. Many secondary students pursue the Honors and AP track in their high school tenures, and they are immensely supported in these endeavors by our school and community partnerships.

### **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:**

The District AIG plan, general program information, and guiding policies are shared with school personnel and stakeholders at beginning of the year meetings in all eight of our elementary schools. A goal for the 2019-2022 plan cycle will be to expand these meetings to the middle schools as well, and to continue having them once annually during staff meetings. We accomplished this goal with our parents/families by hosting AIG Parent Night meetings at the Haywood Community College Auditorium, one for elementary AIG students and one for middle school AIG students each fall.

The following are steps we will take to improve vital communication regarding our program:

- ~ Introduce "transition meetings" for our rising 6th and rising 9th grade students to address critical information regarding AIG offerings and services at the next educational level. We will host these meetings in the spring each school year before student registration.
- ~ Update/redesign website to reflect current practices and plan.
- ~ AIG specialists will continue using the automated text system "Remind" to distribute pertinent information to parents.
- ~ Utilize Twitter account set up for Haywood County Schools AIG Program and encourage parents to follow.
- ~ Hold a minimum of two parent advisory meetings a year.
- ~ Communicate curricular plans to all stakeholders.
- ~ Create a collaborative Google Classroom page that can be edited by AIG coordinator and all AIG specialists to post dates, attachments, flyers, and other important AIG documents for parents/families to peruse.

**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:**

Haywood County Schools will continue to involve stakeholders reflecting diverse populations in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the local AIG program and plan through the organization and implementation of the AIG Parent Advisory Group. The Parent Advisory group is made up of counselors, administrators, parents, members of the business community, teachers, Central Office administrators, and AIG specialists from the elementary, middle, and high school level.

The Parent Advisory Group will meet a minimum of two times a year. The Advisory group duties and responsibilities will include the following:

- ~ To review the local plan for the education of gifted students and make revisions when appropriate.
- ~ Encourage a collaborative and transparent relationship between school personnel, central office personnel, and the community.
- ~ To become knowledgeable about current programs, research and best practices in gifted education, and its relationship with general education.

~ Ideas and suggestions for improving the educational services for gifted students.

#### **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:**

Haywood County Schools employs four EL teachers. These positions are also available to translate documents and forms. Translated forms are being made available on our AIG website and the internal AIG moodle which teachers can access. Currently, forms are translated on an as-needed basis. We are working to improve consistency in translating documents and also providing translation services at face-to-face meetings when appropriate.

When sending "Remind" notifications, we translate the information into Spanish for our EL population. Any field trips or other pertinent information that is sent home is translated.

#### **Practice E**

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

#### **District Response:**

The following are goals to expand partnerships between community stakeholders and our AIG department:

- ~ Partner with Haywood Community College for student dual enrollment opportunities during high school years.
- ~ The AP Academy for AP classes in Haywood County are up and running on the Haywood Community College campus. We will continue to foster this partnership and expand AP offerings for our students.
- ~ Coordinate visits between local businesses and students by hosting in-house career days, career lessons, and guest speakers at our elementary and middle schools.
- ~ Collaborate with students and faculty from Haywood Early College to hold Robothon STEM experiences for upper elementary and middle school AIG students, once annually per age group.
- ~ Coordinate campus tours for eighth grade AIG students of Haywood Early College and Haywood Community College to allow for exploration of secondary alternatives to Tuscola High and/or Pisgah High. This will take place every fall semester.
- ~ Take advantage of science partnerships across Haywood County, including Kids in the Creek, Envirothon and Science Olympiad clubs, and the annual Soil & Water Conservation speech contests.
- ~ Cultivate positive social and emotional health in our AIG population by exposing them to the

D.A.R.E and Drugs in our Midst awareness programs in 5th and 8th grade.

~ Encourage students to take advantage of extracurricular/summer opportunities such as the Lego Robotics camp at Western Carolina University, the Rocket to Creativity Camp at Western Carolina University, and the Duke TIP program offered through Duke University.

**Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

~ Continue community partnerships with Battle of the Books, Science Olympiad, and summer STEM camps for our elementary and middle school populations.

~ Expand STEM-E clubs, Smart Tank competitions, and HEC STEM/Robothon experiences to incorporate technology innovation standards into our extracurricular program offerings.

~ Continue to offer advanced mathematics competition opportunities at Tuscola High and Pisgah High.

~ Encourage more students to consider applying to NC School of Science and Math, or to take courses through NCSSM online. Also promote NCSSM's Summer Ventures program to students in grades 10-12.

~ Promote the statewide NC Virtual School that enables students to take specific courses online which can't be funded on the local level, allowing students access to subject matter beyond the basic high school curriculum.

~ Better inform rising seniors about the opportunity they have to apply for NC Governor's School.

~ Continue to share updates and changes to AIG policies and programming with school personnel and stakeholders at beginning of the year meetings in all eight of our elementary schools, and all three of our middle schools.

~ Introduce "transition meetings" for our rising 6th and rising 9th grade students to address critical information regarding AIG offerings and services at the next educational level. We will host these meetings in the spring each school year before student registration.

~ Update/redesign website to reflect current practices and plan.

~ AIG specialists will continue using the automated text system "Remind" to distribute pertinent information to parents.

~ Do a better job of encouraging students to take advantage of extracurricular/summer opportunities such as the Lego Robotics camp at Western Carolina University, the Rocket to Creativity camp at WCU, and the Duke TIP program offered through Duke University.

**Sources of Evidence:**

~ Pictures from events

- ~ Newspaper articles
- ~ Awards
- ~ Parent Meeting PowerPoint
- ~ Newsletters
- ~ Stakeholder Meeting Agenda
- ~ Translated AIG documents

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## **Standard 6: Program Accountability**

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

### **Practice A**

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

### **District Response:**

Haywood County Schools currently has a written plan describing the local AIG program, in accordance with state legislation and policy. This plan has been approved by our Board of Education and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment. The Plan for Gifted Education in Haywood County has been written by stakeholders in accordance with the 6 NC Standards. The AIG Director and AIG lead teacher attended regional meetings for technical assistance with the AIG plan development process. Webinars conducted by DPI staff were very informative and helpful in this process. Surveys will be sent to parents, teachers and students in elementary and middle schools. High School AIG students will complete surveys digitally. Stakeholder groups were divided into teams to tackle individual standards. Self-Assessment data was collected from all stakeholders. Model programs were researched across the state and their plans were shared with stakeholders. After data collection and many meetings, stakeholders identified several best practices our District would be working on in the 2019-2022 plan cycle. Stakeholders included: District AIG Specialists, AIG Director, Parents, Teachers, Principals, Guidance Counselors, Curriculum & Instruction Team(Central Office), Administrators, and community business leaders at all grade levels.

### **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:**

The Director of AIG in Haywood County Schools is also the Federal Programs Director for Haywood County Schools. This is a dual role with combined responsibilities with 30% allocated to the Director of AIG and 70% to the Federal Programs position. The AIG Director and AIG lead teachers in conjunction with AIG specialists will monitor the implementation of the District AIG plan. Four half-day planning days for specialists will be scheduled, one for each nine-week period. Elementary is able to meet more often due to the schedule. These planning days will also be used to monitor the fidelity of

plan implementation. Data such as EOG test results, K-2 assessments, head count, and surveys will be collected as evidence to support the AIG program. Program updates are shared with the District Curriculum Instruction team and at the principal meetings once a month.

### **Practice C**

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

### **District Response:**

According to Article 9B (115C-150.5) of the North Carolina General Assembly, all funds allocated to local LEA's for gifted education must be used for the direct services of the local AIG program. AIG budget is updated monthly through LBASS programs and reviewed with the AIG Director. Haywood County is fortunate to also receive local money to supplement the state AIG allocation. AIG funding supports the following areas:

- Personnel- 6 full-time AIG specialists
- Instructional/Curriculum Resources
- Special Innovative Programs-Summer STEM camp, AP District "hub"
- Academic Competitions
- Professional Development
- Additional duties pay for lead teachers

### **Practice D**

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

### **District Response:**

AIG data is discussed with principals and lead teachers at Elementary, Middle and High School Group Alikes. AIG Director currently disaggregates 18 and 27 week elementary test data by % of AIG students in our county who missed certain questions. This has brought awareness to the types of questions that students find difficult. Several elementary schools are now preparing this type of data on their own which is very exciting! AIG data is being disaggregated in teacher led PLC's. High school also disaggregates core subject data in AP classes.

All three of our middle schools give the TE 21 benchmark assessments. This makes it easy to see patterns across the district. When common assessments are given, the AIG Director can disaggregate data at the district level.

In an attempt to continue equitable access to High School AP courses, we will continue to offer county-wide centralized AP offerings across our county. Therefore, we will continue to have an AP academy for some AP classes. This is a centralized location in our county where all three high schools can send students to take AP classes. This academy is important for several reasons:

- ~ We need to consolidate resources and equalize opportunities for our students no matter which high school they attend. As an example one high school may not offer AP Biology because they do not have enough students to sign up, while across the county a student centralized-approach would streamline instruction for all our county's students.
- ~ Teaching positions have been cut dramatically in our district. This consolidation of courses will help to maximize class sizes and hopefully increase course offerings for our students.
- ~ To increase AP scores, we will recruit and retain only proven, effective educators to teach these classes. The EVAAS score of a teacher will be heavily considered. We plan to pay these teachers a stipend to teach these classes.

The AIG director will continue to monitor AIG students drop-out numbers through PowerSchool and discuss with high school principals, counselors, and teachers strategies to support student retention.

### **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 Haywood County AIG Program believes that gifted behaviors can be nurtured and that we can increase the number of students served from under-represented populations. Our District tests students for eligibility for the AIG program two times each year. 2016 data shows 34 students were referred for testing in the Spring. 2019 data shows 69 students were referred! These are very encouraging numbers and we believe it speaks to the dedication of stakeholders in regards to AIG and the increasing caliber/rigor of our program. We made adjustments to our testing by changing to an updated test, the WIAT III, because we felt the former Woodcock Johnson may have been limiting access to our program. PowerSchool organizes and collects data which reflects the representation and retention of underrepresented students. Currently, for Spring 2018-19, we have a total of 932 AIG students district-wide. 32 Hispanic, 11 Asian, 3 African-American, 9 American Indian, 17 Multi-Racial, and 860 Caucasians. We also have 10 students who are twice exceptional. Although this data already exists, a goal for our district will be to monitor these trends during our scheduled planning days and continue to find ways to best meet our underrepresented populations.

We continue to monitor the identification and retention of our underrepresented populations. This consists of alternative testing, EL input and recommendations, EL Specialist will complete a GRS sheet, and translations and communication with our underrepresented populations.

### **Practice F**

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

### **District Response:**

The Human Resource Department of Haywood County Schools maintains updated files on the credentials of all Haywood County personnel, including personnel serving AIG students. Professional development hours accrued through opportunities that address gifted education are maintained and monitored in an electronic database called My Learning Plan. This data will be monitored by the AIG Director.

The AIG lead teachers meet with the AIG director periodically for additional support and dissemination of information. They are given a stipend for additional duties assigned with this position.

### **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:**

Haywood County AIG will conduct a variety of surveys to teachers, students, parents, and community leaders focusing on ideas to strengthen educational services for students. These surveys will also provide supportive data for areas of improvement and strengths of the program.

AIG specialists will conduct an exit survey at the end of each year with current students to gather feedback of quality and effectiveness of the AIG program.

With the updating of the AIG website, parents will have increased access to information concerning the AIG program and resources that are available. Parents will have access to email concerns or questions to the AIG director. There will be a Fact and Questions sheet for parents.

### **Practice H**

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

### **District Response:**

Haywood County Schools encourages feedback from all stakeholders regarding the quality of the AIG program. Opportunities for students, parents, and teachers to provide feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the local AIG program is imperative to the continued improvement of AIG initiatives. Survey results will be compiled and shared at Advisory Group meetings and beginning of the year parent meetings. AIG website will be updated.

### **Practice I**

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

### **District Response:**

Program evaluation data will be posted on the updated AIG website along with the current AIG District plan. The county employs a marketing specialist who can cover the story of the new AIG plan for 2019-2022 and include talking points for all media outlets. AIG specialists use "Remind" as a way to communicate with parents. This account can post timely information and up-to-date photos of daily activities in AIG classrooms. The marketing specialist and local television station also covers events such as the Robothon and Summer Stem Camp and publishes articles and pictures in our local newspaper as well as runs stories on the local television station.

### **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:**

In accordance with state law, the Haywood County School System employs policies, procedures, and practices that safeguard the rights of AIG students. Written policies guide all aspects of the process for identification, referral, placement, and service options.

Clear procedures are outlined to protect the rights of AIG students who transfer into our system. If a student transfers into our system, we contact the previous school to gather information about their qualifying test scores. If additional testing is needed, we administer those tests. Once we have these items, eligibility is determined. Parents are then notified of placement decision, and if eligible for placement, a conference is scheduled.

Each parent of a child being tested for AIG services receives a parent handbook. A student AIG folder is started and includes signed permission to evaluate. The due process procedure is outlined in this handbook and will be available on the updated website. If a student indicates the need for

reassessment based on additional strengths, the procedures for evaluation and nomination will be followed to allow for placement in identified area.

## PROCEDURES TO RESOLVE DISAGREEMENT

**Level I – School Review** If parent/guardian has a concern or question about AIG identification and /or services, the parent/guardian should contact the classroom teacher and the AIG specialist at the school. If, after conferring with the teacher/AIG specialist, the parent/guardian has a disagreement concerning screening, nomination, identification, or services, he/she shall request in writing a meeting with the school's Academically/Intellectually Gifted Leadership Committee which includes the lead teacher and principal. The meeting will occur within ten school days of receipt of the written request.

**Level II – Administrative Review** If the disagreement is not resolved at the school level, the parent/guardian may appeal in writing within 10 days of the school level decision to the Associate Superintendent and the county's AIG coordinator. The disagreement will be reviewed and a response will be issued to the parent/guardian in writing within 10 days of the appeal.

**Level III – School Board Review** If an agreement cannot be reached administratively, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Board of Education in writing within 10 days of receiving the response from the administrative review. The Board will offer a written decision to the parent/guardian within 30 days.

**Level IV – State Level Hearing** The parent/guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. This must be done within 30 calendar days of the school board's decision. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will make a decision based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law. The decision of the administrative law judge becomes final, is binding on all parties, and is not subject to further review. Attorney fees are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

### **Ideas to Strengthen the Standard:**

- ~ Form an active advisory group of parents, AIG teachers, community members and other professional staff who meet regularly to review all aspects of the local AIG program and make recommendations for program improvement.
- ~ Update AIG Program Handbook to include new 2019-2022 AIG plan.
- ~ Translate AIG Program Handbook into Spanish and provide copies/include on County's webpage.
- ~ Utilize various testing data to ensure underrepresented populations are referred, tested, and are receiving appropriate services.
- ~ Offer appropriate professional development for AIG teachers during county-wide professional development days.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- ~ 2019-2022 AIG Plan
- ~ AIG planning day agendas
- ~ Advisory meeting agendas
- ~ Current handbook to updated during 2019-2022 plan cycle
- ~ Spanish translations of all AIG documents
- ~ Staff Development Course Registration
- ~ Twitter account
- ~ My Learning Plan Staff Development Records

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**Glossary (optional):**

**Appendix (optional):**

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