



**HAYWOOD COUNTY  
SCHOOLS**

ACADEMICALLY  
AND/OR INTELLECTUALLY  
GIFTED PROGRAM

PARENT HANDBOOK

2019-2022

HAYWOOD COUNTY SCHOOLS  
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VISION STATEMENT

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.

## CURRICULA AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Although gifted students in K-8 have an opportunity to attend resource classes outside the regular classroom with an AIG specialist, differentiation of curriculum and instruction provides the overriding philosophical basis for the inclusion of gifted services into the regular classroom. Differentiated curriculum components are intended to bring about change in the depth and breadth of student learning. They include modifications in the NC State Standards, assessment, grouping practices, teaching strategies, learning activities, resources, and products. Teachers of gifted students are expected to possess knowledge and skills in the application of these curricular and instructional modifications. The AIG specialists provide support teachers in the implementation of differentiated curriculum and instruction based upon students' identified needs at each school.

The AIG specialists review all Differentiated Education Plans to ensure that the appropriate components are included each year. The central office will conduct a targeted analysis of growth as indicated by the annual results of achievement tests for reading and math for the AIG students.

A high school student identified as AIG will develop a comprehensive four-year plan with the AIG specialist to ensure an appropriate learning environment and content modification. This plan can be modified and updated as needed.

## PROGRAM SERVICES

The following chart outlines the program services for identified AIG students. **Services denoted with an asterisk are required unless there are special circumstances.**

### ELEMENTARY K-2

- Regular Classroom with Differentiation of Instruction\*
- Resource Sessions Outside the Classroom\*
- Grade Acceleration for Specific Content
- Grade Acceleration
- Individualized Services
- Additional Opportunities
- Nurturing

### ELEMENTARY 3-5

- Regular Classroom with Cluster Grouping and Differentiation\*
- Resource Sessions Outside the Classroom\*
- Grade Acceleration for Specific Content
- Grade Acceleration
- Individualized Services
- Additional Opportunities

### MIDDLE 6-8

- Regular Classroom with Cluster Grouping and Differentiation\*
- Interdisciplinary Course\*
- Advance Course
- Grade Acceleration for Specific Content
- Grade Acceleration
- Individualized Services
- AIG Encore Class
- Additional Opportunities

### HIGH 9-12

- Regular Classroom with Cluster Grouping and Differentiation
- Interdisciplinary Course
- Advanced Placement and Honors Courses
- Individualized Services
- Additional Opportunities
- Dual Enrollment
- Early College

## 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.

## PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A key element in any successful program for students is the continuing communication and mutual support among the schools, the families, the students, the administration, and the community. The Haywood County Schools AIG program is committed to promoting parent and community communication and involvement.

The following strategies help achieve communication among stakeholders:

- The AIG specialist at each school conducts informational meetings with school-based teams to ensure their understanding of the AIG plan
- The AIG specialists hold informational meetings with faculties and parents to ensure their understanding of the program.
- The AIG specialists discuss the program at individual school meetings and at community/parent meetings upon request. These may include PTO programs and School Improvement Team meetings.
- The HCS AIG program keeps an updated website containing information related to class activities, field trips, contests, student recognition, and parent links.
- The system-wide AIG website provides links to AIG specialist websites where specific items of interest are available to students, staff, and parents.
- Updated handbooks provide parents with written, accurate information about the AIG program.
- The AIG Program personnel provide accurate information to the local media.
- The system-wide AIG advisory committee discusses issues and provides input for continuous improvement of the AIG program.
- The AIG advisory committee meets at least twice each year to assist with improvements to the AIG plan.

## SCREENING/IDENTIFICATION FOR AIG SERVICES

Students may be referred for consideration for placement in the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted program through three means: screening, nomination, and transfer records.

Students in grades kindergarten through eight are routinely screened for evidence of demonstrated need for possible placement in the Academically and /or Intellectually Gifted program.

Individual students in grades K–12 may be nominated for screening by teachers, parents, other school personnel at any time during the school year.

Students whose transfer records document eligibility for placement in a gifted program in another school system will be considered for placement in the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted program in Haywood County. Assessments and data will be acquired as necessary.

Placement decisions will be based on criteria met for the levels of service offered by the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted program. Student Profile folders will include all of the data gathered on each student.

To be identified for the Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted program, a student consistently must demonstrate evidence of mastery of curriculum that is above grade level in reading, math, or both reading and math. Once a student has been identified as AIG, the services, not the status, may change to meet needs.

## DATA USED FOR REFERRAL, PLACEMENT

- Standardized aptitude or ability test
- Standardized achievement test scores in reading and/or math
- Behavioral rating instrument designed to assess gifted characteristics
- End-of-Grade Assessments
- Other assessments

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