

Gaston County Schools
Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan
Effective 2013-2016

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

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

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs to align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2013-2016. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

For 2010-2013, Gaston County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

Gaston County Schools Vision for local AIG program: It is the belief of Gaston County Schools that many students, including those from culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, exhibit outstanding academic abilities. Students who demonstrate exceptional academic and/or intellectual potential are recognized, challenged and nurtured through differentiated services that enrich and accelerate the regular educational program.

Gaston County Schools provides educational alternatives that offer relevant and rigorous opportunities which challenge and expand the gifted students' knowledge base beyond the expectations of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. This is accomplished through collaborative efforts with general education and through the provision of differentiated services that match each student's needs.

Educators continually address the unique needs of Gaston County Schools' gifted learners in order to prepare them to be globally competitive in an ever-changing society.

Sources of funding for local AIG program (as of 2013)

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
\$1525301.00	\$15068.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools believes it is imperative that we articulate and disseminate our screening, referral, and identification processes for all grade levels to all of our stakeholders. Our procedures help to ensure that all school personnel, parents, students and the community at large are informed of the identification criteria to assist them in initiating a referral for any student who could possibly be identified as academically and/or intellectually gifted. Our surveys indicate that we continue to be successful with this endeavor; therefore, it is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools uses a variety of ways to articulate and disseminate the AIG plan and procedures to all stakeholders.

- Offer professional development at all school sites
- Schedule AIG committee meetings and parental meetings at all school sites
- Post plan on Gaston County Schools' Website
- Link the Gaston County's website to the individual school's AIG website
- Facilitate AIG advisory group meetings
- Present the AIG plan at principals' meetings
- Place copies of the AIG plan in the professional library and the principal's office at each school site

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Gaston County Schools' Website

AIG Plan

Survey results

Agendas and presentations at various stakeholders' meetings

AIG Informational Brochure

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

To ensure all students have equitable opportunities for placement, the AIG department uses multiple criteria and non-traditional and traditional measures to determine a student's eligibility for placement in the gifted program of Gaston County Schools. This is a maintained practice since our most recent surveys indicate our stakeholders agree that we are using appropriate testing measures to ensure students have equitable access for identification and AIG service delivery.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools' Academically or Intellectually Gifted Program formally identifies students for AIG services in grades kindergarten through twelve. To be identified and receive AIG services, a student must consistently demonstrate evidence of mastery of the curriculum that is well above grade level in reading and/or math.

The following criteria must be met for identification and eligibility to receive AIG services:

Grades K-1:

Each item score is converted into a composite score and must equal a minimum of 107 points to qualify in reading and/or math. (See Appendix A)

1. 93rd percentile or higher on a nationally-normed, standardized aptitude or ability test
2. 93rd percentile or higher on a nationally-normed, standardized achievement test in reading and/or math
3. Student grades
4. Teacher checklist that indicates gifted characteristics in learning, leadership, motivation, and creativity

Grades 2nd-12th:

Each item score is converted into a composite score and the overall total must equal a minimum of 90 points to qualify in reading and/or math. (See Appendix B)

1. 80th percentile or higher on a nationally-normed, standardized aptitude or ability test
2. 80th percentile or higher on a nationally-normed, standardized achievement test in reading and/or math
3. Student grades
4. Teacher checklist that indicates gifted characteristics in learning, leadership, motivation, and creativity

Gaston County Schools accepts the following standardized measures administered by LEA or a

licensed psychologist to determine student eligibility for placement:

- The Otis-Lennon Ability Test (OLSAT)
- The InView Aptitude Test
- The Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- The Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive Test
- The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)
- The Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Test
- The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
- The Stanford Achievement Test
- Other nationally-normed, standardized tests as approved by GCS

Gaston County Schools has a nurturing program for identifying potentially gifted students. Annually, each second grader in all of our Title I schools is assessed during the initial pre-assessment phase. Students who demonstrate potential in one of three areas – linguistic, logical/mathematical, or spatial – are given a formal researched-based alternate assessment to determine eligibility for our nurturing program. Students who meet the criteria for placement receive Composer services for the remainder of their elementary school years unless they meet the criteria for formal AIG placement. Those students who have not met the eligibility requirements for AIG placement before transitioning to middle school are served consultatively in grades 6-8.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG Team Review minutes
Student AIG folders
AIG Plan
Survey results
AIG Informational Brochure

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools is cognizant of the need to address and initiate the screening, referral, and identification process for traditionally under-represented populations. While we have made a concerted effort to address this issue, we feel we need to continue to be more diligent in seeking ways to ensure that we identify all students who need AIG services or show the potential for needing AIG services.

Goals:

- Communicate the AIG referral process to the Exceptional Children (EC) and the English as a Second Language (ESL) Departments
- Work with the EC and ESL teachers to discuss student referrals
- Encourage classroom teachers to refer students who are from economically disadvantaged homes who demonstrate gifted potential
- Encourage teachers to refer culturally/ethnically diverse students who may have strong math skills but demonstrate weak linguistic skills
- Continue to improve parent communication by making program information easily accessible
- Continue to identify students for our nurturing program at all Title I schools

Description:

Gaston County Schools is committed to addressing the academic needs of all students regardless of their social, economic, or cultural background. We have always been extremely aware of the need to be non-discriminatory in our identification procedures. To ensure that we continue to address the needs of the traditionally under-represented populations, we will:

- Use non-traditional standardized measures for AIG identification
- Work collaboratively with the EC and ESL Departments to discuss possible AIG referrals
- Offer program information at our low socio-economic schools on the referral, screening, identification, and service delivery procedures
- Encourage teachers to refer students who demonstrate strong mathematical skills
- Use the verbal or non-verbal subtest scores on standardized aptitude/ability tests
- Use multiple criteria for placement (Refer to Appendix A and B for Gaston County Schools K-12 criteria for gifted placement)
- Continue to identify and serve under-represented students through our nurturing program
- Continue to provide services for K-12 students who meet the criteria for gifted placement

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG headcount
Student AIG folders indicating testing instruments used for placement
AIG Team Review minutes
Testing calendar and administered instruments list
Screening, referral, and identification procedures
Screening pools
Documented testing accommodations
Composer alternative testing procedures
Composer testing data
AIG Plan
Survey results

Other Comments:

Practice D

Ensures consistency in implementation of screening, referral, and identification processes within the LEA.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools implements consistent screening, referral, and identification processes to ensure equitable opportunities for placement. We believe it is imperative that we follow the same procedures and offer the same AIG service delivery options at every school within our system. Clearly articulated guidelines lead all areas of the identification process in GCS. Our self-assessment data indicates this is done effectively; as a result, this is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

All AIG teachers follow consistent guidelines for screening, referral, and identification processes in Gaston County Schools. Each student must meet the stated criteria for identification. The AIG teachers meet frequently to discuss the identification process and to ensure that all procedures are clearly communicated and adhered to for all students regardless of grade level or school. We employ the following measures to ensure consistency:

- Teacher work sessions to review processes and completed paperwork
- Partner system to verify test results and paperwork completion
- Checklist of procedures to ensure accuracy and consistency
- New teacher mentors
- Minutes from AIG teachers' meetings
- End-of-year paperwork and AIG folder reviews
- Check of AIG school-based teams' notebooks and screening pools

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG Plan
AIG Informational Brochure
Calendar of opportunities for referral/testing
AIG Team Review minutes
Agendas and minutes from stakeholders' meetings
DEP's, IDEP's
Student AIG folders
Survey results

Other Comments:

Practice E

Establishes written policies that safeguard the rights of AIG students and their parents/families,

including informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

In accordance with state law, Gaston County Schools establishes and adheres to written policies that safeguard the rights of AIG students and their parents/families. Written policies are in place that detail student and parental rights including consent to evaluate, sharing of evaluation results, meeting invitations and agendas, and sharing of procedures for resolving disagreements. The results from the past three years along with the self-assessment rating, determined this practice should be maintained.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Each time a student is assessed for the AIG program, the parent must give written permission by signing a Consent for Evaluation Form. When aptitude and/or achievement assessments are completed, parents are notified. A variety of options are available to parents to discuss the testing results with the AIG teacher. If the student meets the criteria for AIG placement, the parent is invited to attend a conference and asked to sign a Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP) to be housed in the student's AIG folder. Each year parents of AIG identified students are invited to conference with the AIG teacher to discuss the student's progress and to evaluate the need for continued services. A new DEP must be signed annually. At the time of each parent conference, the parent is given a copy of Gaston County Schools Procedures to Resolve Disagreements.

Please refer to Appendix C - Gaston County Schools Procedures to Resolve Disagreements

The following forms are used to safeguard the students' rights:

- AIG 1 & AIG 1A – Student Referral Forms – these forms record student data and indicate whether or not the student meets the criteria for placement
- AIG 3 – Consent for Evaluation Form – the parent signs this form giving the AIG teacher permission to administer testing to determine AIG placement
- AIG 4 – Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP) – the parent signs this form giving permission for his/her child to receive AIG services
- AIG 5 – Individual Differentiated Educational Plan – this form is used if a student has special issues that must be addressed individually. We often use this form if a student has dual exceptionalities or any type of modifications that must be considered.
- AIG 6 – Invitation to Conference Form – this form invites the parents to come for a conference to either sign the initial DEP or to attend an annual review
- AIG 8 – Student Exit Form – parents must sign this form to exit their child from the AIG

program

- AIG 9 – AIG Team Review Minutes Form – this form records the placement decisions for all students who have been referred for AIG placement
- AIG 10 – K-2 Screening Profile – this form is used by regular classroom teachers to refer K-2 students for placement consideration
- AIG 11 – Transfer or Exit Form – this form is used when a student transfers to another school within Gaston County or when a student exits the program because he/she has moved out of county

Written policies and procedures are also in place for students who transfer from school to school within the county, from other LEAs within the state, or from other states.

Transfers from schools outside the system:

- Elementary students
 - Students will be placed in appropriate grade-level classrooms.
 - If a student transfers during the school year, school personnel will notify the AIG teacher assigned to that school and appropriate placement will be determined after reviewing the student's most current testing data and classroom performance.
 - Additional testing will be administered if warranted.
 - AIG Team will take appropriate action.
- Middle school students
 - Summer testing is offered if student records show need for AIG identification.
 - If a student transfers during the school year, school personnel will notify the AIG department and appropriate placement will be determined after reviewing the student's most current testing data and classroom performance.
 - Additional testing will be administered if warranted.
 - AIG Middle School Support Team will notify the student's school to ensure appropriate class placement.
- High school students
 - Students may self-select classes using criteria for honors and advanced placement course offerings.

Transfers from schools within the system

- Elementary AIG students
 - AIG teacher uses the AIG 11 to notify the AIG Director and transfer school.
 - AIG folder is hand-delivered to transfer school.

- Middle school students
 - AIG contact person and/or counselor use the AIG 11 to notify the AIG Director and the transfer school.
 - AIG folder is hand-delivered to transfer school.
- High school students
 - AIG contact person and/or the PowerSchool facilitator use the AIG 11 to notify the AIG Director and the transfer school.
 - AIG folder is hand-delivered to transfer school.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Copy of Gaston County Schools Procedures to Resolve Disagreements
AIG Informational Brochure
Student AIG folders
Survey results
AIG Plan
Documented student transfer policy
Records of parent communication

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department maintains documentation to ensure that students are properly placed and served in their area(s) of identification. Parents/guardians are invited to a conference annually to discuss the most appropriate service delivery options for their child and to sign the yearly Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP) or the Individual Educational Plan (IDEP). Self-assessment data suggests that this practice should be maintained.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

- An AIG committee, composed of the AIG teacher, an administrator and at least two classroom teachers, meets as often as needed to review each student's profile on the AIG Referral form and determine which students warrant further testing.
- Once testing is completed, the committee reconvenes to review the results of the tests along with all other criteria data.
- If the criteria are met, then the committee signs for the student to be placed into the gifted program.

- The AIG Referral Form is copied and the original is placed in the student's AIG folder.
- A copy of the AIG Referral Form and the student's individual service delivery options are listed in the team minutes of the AIG Notebook. This notebook houses all committee decisions and is documentation of the testing and placement of AIG students. This notebook is kept in a secured file cabinet at the school site.
- Parents are then invited to attend a conference. Assessment scores are shared and the Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP) is signed for students who qualify for AIG services. The DEP is placed in the student's AIG folder.
- The parents are invited annually to review and sign their child's DEP for the upcoming school year.
- Each student's AIG folder contains all necessary testing and placement data as well as service delivery options. The folder is housed in a secured file cabinet at the school site.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Student AIG folders
Copies of DEP's and IDEP's
Documentation of parents' annual review meetings
AIG Plan
Survey results

Other Comments:

Standard 2: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

To better meet the needs of our gifted learners, Gaston County Schools' AIG Department adapts the North Carolina Standard Course of Study based on identified student abilities, readiness, interests, and learning profiles. Differentiated curriculum designed to enrich and extend the NCSCOS is developed by the AIG Department in order to meet the diverse needs of gifted learners. Our self-assessment indicates we have been successful in this area and we will maintain this practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The Gaston County Schools' AIG program utilizes various service deliveries in adapting the NCSCOS according to students' academic ability:

- Flexible grouping in math and language arts (Grades 3-5)
- Weekly pullouts in both reading and math (Grades K-5)
- Daily advanced language arts and advanced math classes (Grades 6-8)
- Self-selected courses (Grades 9-12)

In order to better serve our students we may utilize the following:

- Lessons based on Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (linguistic, musical, spatial, mathematical, kinesthetic)
- Brainstorming and graphic organizers (KWL charts, webbing, etc.) to determine student readiness
- Student interest survey to prepare resources for curriculum differentiation (independent studies or learning contracts for curriculum compacting)
- College of William and Mary Curriculum in grades 5-8
- Singapore Math in elementary and middle schools
- Curriculum units of instruction in grades K-5
- Honors classes in high schools
- Advanced placement (AP) courses in high schools
- Programs to capitalize on students' interests such as Chess Club, Math Masters, Math Elite, Battle of the Books, High Q, Moot Court, etc.

The middle school advanced curriculum is aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. However, the lessons are accelerated and compacted to address the needs of our gifted learners. All 8th grade AIG math identified students are placed in Math I.

The high school honors and AP curriculums are also aligned with the NCSCOS. The teachers of the honors classes utilize the guidelines provided by DPI. The AP teachers follow College Board approved syllabi.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Specific curricular units, lessons and activities designed for gifted students
Evidences of service delivery for gifted students
Student work samples
DEP's/IDEP's
Supplementary instructional resources
Pacing guides
Observation data
Assessment examples
AIG Plan
Survey results

Other Comments:

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.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

All AIG students do not learn at the same rate or in the same way. As a result, the curriculum must be enriched, extended, and accelerated to accommodate a wide range of ability levels. As an AIG team, our teachers seek ways to differentiate the curriculum to maximize learning opportunities. Working closely with all stakeholders is critical to ensure we provide the appropriate academic challenge for all of our students. Our self-assessment shows evidence that this should continue to be a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Through collaboration with classroom teachers, we are able to extend, enrich and accelerate the NCSCOS and provide additional curricular resources to better meet students' needs. Accommodations for gifted learners in math and language arts may be met through AIG resource classes, flexible grouping, and/or curriculum compacting. Each elementary school has an AIG itinerant teacher assigned to the school to provide student services and assist classroom teachers

with differentiation in the regular classroom. Elementary AIG teachers work collaboratively to design curricular units that are aligned with, but also extend and enrich, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The scope and sequence of these units are vertically aligned and are inclusive of research-based best practices. Careful consideration is given to the modification of content, process, products, and learning environment as they relate to differentiated gifted instruction.

Gifted middle school students are assigned to AIG licensed teachers for advanced reading and/or advanced math. These teachers have been trained in gifted best practices and network with one another as curriculum is being implemented. In order to provide relevant and rigorous educational alternatives which challenge and expand the gifted students' knowledge base beyond the expectations of the basic curriculum, the AIG middle school support teachers, along with a committee of regular classroom teachers who have gifted licensure, have developed an advanced curriculum based on NCSOS that incorporates multi-stepped problem-solving skills, creative/critical thinking skills, and technology based instruction. The middle school AIG support teachers work collaboratively with the AIG licensed classroom teachers, offering support by providing resources, team teaching, and/or facilitating model lessons.

In high school, differentiation to meet the needs of gifted students is provided by classroom teachers through self-selected honors, advanced placement preparatory, advanced placement courses, or through courses offered by North Carolina Virtual Public School, Early College High School, or Dual Enrollment at our local Community College. Many high school teachers have obtained gifted licensure. Others have received advanced placement training. Because it is imperative that the Advanced Placement teachers receive training, Gaston County Schools has made a commitment to provide funding for teachers to attend a week-long summer institute in their content area and subsequent one day updates.

In order to address a diverse range of learning needs, our delivery options include:

- In-Class Flexible Grouping for reading and/or math
- Cluster Grouping within the Regular Class for reading and/or math
- Cluster Grouping within a Grade Level
- Content/Subject Acceleration in reading and/or math
- Curriculum Compacting
- Grade Acceleration
- Early Entrance to Kindergarten
- AIG resource services for students who demonstrate a need for content differentiation

The AIG teachers utilize instructional practices and/or programs such as:

- Manipulatives: VersaTiles, Hands-on-Equations, Tangrams, Pentominoes, Marcy Cook Tiles, LiveCube, Logic Links, etc.
- William and Mary Curriculum Units
- Singapore Math
- Literature Circles
- Problem-Based Learning
- Cooperative Learning

- Tiered Assignments/ Differentiated lessons
- Technology-based Instruction: Academic Jeopardy, interactive academic software, interactive Smart Board lessons, Power Point, voice threads, video maker, etc.
- Active Engagement Strategies for Success (Pair-Share, Fan N Pick, etc.)
- Drama and Role playing
- Curriculum Compacting
- Research programs such as Independent Investigative Model (IIM)
- Extended vocabulary programs such as Word within a Word, Greek & Latin Roots, and Wordly Wise
- Extended Grammar Programs such as Michael Thompson's Caesar's English and Magic Lens
- Independent studies/Learning Contracts
- Learning Centers
- Simulations
- Inquiry-based Learning/Scientific Investigation
- Research projects
- Academic competitions/initiatives
- Marzano's Levels of Thinking
- Creative Problem Solving
- Jr. Great Books
- Tanglers
- Interact Units such as Math Quest

This is not an exhaustive list of the materials, programs and/or approaches used by Gaston County Schools. The system is proactive in seeking and implementing research-based programs and practices to enhance the learning environment of the gifted learners.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Inventory of differentiation materials
Agendas/Meeting Minutes from stakeholder meetings
AP Training registration log

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department utilizes various research-based supplemental curricular resources to differentiate the learning experiences of our gifted learners. Selected materials help to enrich, extend, and accelerate the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Our self-assessment

indicates we are being successful with this practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The curriculum for the AIG program includes the following research-based resources:

- William and Mary Problem-Based Learning Units
- Singapore Math
- Independent Investigative Model (IIM) by Nottage & Morse
- Wordly Wise
- Greek and Latin Roots
- Jr. Great Books
- Marcy Cook Manipulatives
- Math Quest
- Gardner's Multiple Intelligences units
- Units based on Revised Bloom's Taxonomy
- Creativity lessons (Paul Torrence)
- Learning Contracts for Curriculum Compacting (Joseph Renzulli)
- Building Thinking Skills by Sandra Parks & Howard Black
- Primary Educational Thinking Skills by Nichols, Wolfe & Merritt (uses Bloom's Taxonomy & Renzulli's Triad Model)

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Inventory of resources and materials
Examples of utilized curriculum products
Composer Program curriculum
Elementary AIG curriculum
Middle School Advanced Curriculum

Other Comments:

Practice D

Fosters the development of 21st century content and skills by infusing the following at an advanced level: high-level content for global awareness, civic and economic literacies, and health awareness; critical thinking and problem solving; high-level communication and collaboration; applied information and media literacy, including concepts, systems, and operations in challenging research contexts; creativity and innovation; real-world learning in local, regional, and global contexts; and applied life skills for leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, productivity, responsibility, people skills, self-direction, and social responsibility.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department implements 21st century content so that AIG students can transfer school-based learning into real world experiences. It is our goal to provide students with the learning experiences they need to be globally competitive for work, post-secondary education, and life in the 21st century. While technology is a factor in this goal, we do realize that a deliberate focus should be placed on providing real world opportunities and materials for our students to develop the critical thinking and collaboration skills they will need as adults in our constantly changing world. Based on our self-assessment, this is a focused practice.

Goals:

- Identify content and skills that will allow AIG teachers to infuse these 21st century skills into the curriculum at an advanced level
- Find and/or create curriculum materials to assist with instruction
- Develop relationships with various community organizations/companies to bring awareness of needed skills into the classroom through real world application and possible service learning opportunities

Description:

The following 21st century tools and resources are used within the Gaston County AIG program:

- Technology Devices: SmartBoard, Avermedia, digital microscope, student computers, Doxie portable scanner, navigation devices, digital projector, digital camera, camcorder, microphone, laptop
- Technology Programs: Excel, PowerPoint, Word, interactive software, online research/websites, online storybook
- Biz Town (selected schools)
- Current Event Curricular Units (elections, Olympics, local/state/national government)
- Problem-Based Learning
- Newspaper in Education (NIE)
- Stock Market unit
- Critical Thinking (Logic Matrix, Chess, Stories with Holes)
- Inventioning
- AIG websites
- Interact Units (simulations): Math Quest
- Literature used to encourage making connections to self, text and world

Smart Boards have been purchased for all AIG sites; therefore, staff development continues to be provided for this interactive tool. As funds become available new technology will be purchased. We visualize the expansion of Blackboard Collaborate being used to facilitate communication between schools, students, and experts.

Monitored online sites will continue to be used for student communication between schools as a way to practice for competitions, participate in book studies, etc.

Highland School of Technology is our magnet high school. Students who are selected by lottery to attend that school are afforded many opportunities to explore and develop 21st century skills.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Student work samples
Assignments and project rubrics
Technology-based instructional tools
Middle school alternative learning opportunities such as NC Virtual School
Documentation of extra-curricular student participation
Course offerings at Highland School of Technology

Other Comments:

Practice E

Uses on-going assessment to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department incorporates a variety of on-going assessments to differentiate classroom instruction. These formative assessments help to gauge student progress as well as assist us in reshaping our curriculum to meet student needs. The implementation of Common Core has allowed the perfect opportunity for AIG teachers to work collaboratively with classroom teachers with the implementation of initial and ongoing assessments in order to compact and accelerate instruction when possible. As a result, this practice was determined to be a focused practice.

Goals:

- AIG teachers will work together with classroom teachers to analyze pre and on-going assessments and results, then collaborate on differentiated instruction that responds to gifted learners' varying knowledge and needs.

Description:

On-going assessments foster understanding. They inform students and teachers about what students currently understand and how to proceed with subsequent teaching and learning. Gaston County Schools recognizes how important this feedback is for students' success and supports the use of the following formative and summative assessment tools to differentiate classroom instruction:

- Rubrics
- Compacting (pretest/post-test)
- County-wide benchmark
- Standardized tests
- Portfolios
- Reflection Journals
- Response Journals
- AIG Progress reports
- Identification assessment for Composer students

- Accelerated Reader (AR) literacy assessments
- Senteos/Palm assessments
- STAR reading
- STAR math
- End of lesson/unit assessments
- Student/Teacher conferences

This data provides AIG teachers and classroom teachers the information needed to determine what differentiation strategies and instructional modifications need to be implemented in order to maximize learning opportunities.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- Examples of pre and post assessments
- Examples of formative assessments
- Use of flexible grouping
- Use of curriculum compacting
- Documentation of readiness and diagnostic assessments

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools encourages an environment that is conducive to learning, creative thinking, and collaborative learning with peers. Gaston County Schools' AIG Department strives to ensure that instructional practices support the social and emotional needs of gifted learners at all grade levels. Current self-assessment results indicate that this is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

- Continue to expand teacher/parent resource library addressing social and emotional needs of AIG students
- Continue to expand student library on social and emotional needs
- Provide staff development for classroom teachers on the characteristics of gifted children and their social/emotional needs
- Provide mentors for AIG students when needed
- Offer student classes facilitated by guidance counselors for AIG students on social, organization, and/or study skills
- Cluster AIG students together in regular classroom (elementary)

Teacher resources and student books on social and emotional needs of AIG students are available. Books have been purchased on topics related to issues and feelings gifted students experience. Titles are also available for assistance with bibliotherapy. AIG teachers, parents and school counselors continue to work together to meet the social and emotional needs of the AIG students.

AIG students often have social and emotional needs not understood by others; therefore, we hope to offer staff development to classroom teachers in this area. AIG students may need guidance opportunities that focus on their specific social and emotional needs. Mentors can provide these students with support, encouragement, and motivation. Clustering AIG students in the regular classroom promotes interaction among peers and provides students with opportunities to work with others who have similar needs.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

List of teacher/counselor/student resources

Curriculum units that address the affective domain

Survey results

Agendas, minutes from meetings and presentations that address the social/emotional needs of gifted students

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Young students (K-3) may need nurturing to develop their gifted potential. The Gaston County Schools' AIG Department addresses this need through consultative services, AIG identification, and/or the Gaston County Schools' Composer Program.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG teacher works collaboratively with the regular classroom teacher to provide resources for the advanced K-3 students. Students who are at least two grade levels above in reading and/or math are referred for possible AIG placement. Identified AIG K-3 students receive pull-out AIG services and differentiated services in the regular classroom.

The Gaston County Schools' Composer Program nurtures the gifted potential of students in grades 2-5. Because alternative assessments are used to identify Composer students, these students include members of low socio-economic or culturally diverse populations who are not typically identified through standardized testing. With the support of the Gaston County School Board, this program has expanded from one pilot school to all seventeen Title I schools. A county-wide interdisciplinary

curriculum has been developed to promote the affective and cognitive growth of Composer students in grades 2-5. Composer students are served consultatively in grades 6-8.

Refer to Appendix D - Gaston County Schools Nurturing Program Document

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Composer Program curriculum
Composer Program Data
K-3 AIG headcount
AIG and Composer student folders
Examples of differentiated lessons and resources
Documentation of AIG and regular classroom teachers' meetings

Other Comments:

Practice H

Ensures collaboration among AIG personnel and other professional staff, including exceptional children's personnel and others related to AIG students, to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

The Gaston County Schools' AIG Department collaborates with other professional personnel to provide AIG students appropriate differentiated instruction. By sharing knowledge and expertise, we are better able to provide our gifted students the educational experiences they deserve.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County AIG personnel works collaboratively with the following professional staff:

- Exceptional Children's Teacher (dual exceptionalities)
- Art, Music, PE (PTA programs, curriculum projects, health and physical fitness)
- Media (Battle of the Books, research, career unit, curriculum resources)
- Guidance Counselor (social/emotional needs, Asperger's Syndrome/ADHD students, testing modifications)
- Computer Lab Instructor (research, technology)
- Classroom teachers (flexible grouping, collaboration, differentiated resources)
- ESL Teacher (AIG ESL students and parents, communication)
- Speech-Language Pathologist (Autistic/Speech AIG students)
- School psychologist (dual exceptionality data)

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Planning notes, agendas, minutes from school and district meetings
Interviews with stakeholders
Samples of differentiated resources and materials
Samples of differentiated lessons and units of study
Documentation of collaboration among all stakeholders

Other Comments:

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 students, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/families to ensure effective programming, a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department ensures that K-12 AIG students' identified needs are documented and reviewed annually utilizing a Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP). Individual Differentiated Educational Plans (IDEP's) are created when needed and may be reviewed at any time.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

There is ongoing communication between AIG teachers and parents through AIG progress reports, newsletters, and websites. Parents are invited annually to conference with the AIG teachers to review the Differentiated Educational Plan/Individualized Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP/IDEP) for each student. If the AIG student is progressing satisfactorily in his/her classes, no changes in placement or service delivery are made. If it is determined that changes need to be made, the parent and the AIG teacher collaborate and make educational decisions that are in the best interest of the student.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Copies of DEP's and IDEP's
Student AIG folders
Notifications and documentation of annual parent meetings
Examples of communications to various stakeholders

Other Comments:

Standard 3: Personnel and Professional Development

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools employs a full time AIG-licensed educator (AIG Director) to oversee the AIG Program.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools employs a full-time AIG Director to oversee the entire K-12 AIG program. The Director's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing guidance to AIG teachers through monthly meetings and frequent contacts by email or phone
- Overseeing the development and implementation of accelerated curriculum for both the AIG and Composer Programs
- Overseeing the educational delivery of AIG program goals at each individual school. Using the NCSCOS and materials provided, teachers deliver differentiated curriculum instruction based on students' abilities and interest
- Analyzing and disseminating growth data for the AIG, Composer, and Advanced Placement (AP) Programs
- Monitoring, overseeing, and evaluating the local AIG plan annually and making necessary revisions
- Overseeing the plan revision process every three years as required by DPI and resubmitting the plan to the local board of education as well as DPI for approval
- Conducting surveys to elicit feedback from all stakeholders during the plan revision process
- Monitoring the entire program through teacher observations, open forum discussions, parent conferences, principal contacts, and analysis of statistical/testing data
- Overseeing the collection and compilation of headcount data for the AIG and nurturing programs, forwarding the appropriate reports to DPI
- Overseeing AIG budget, using state and local allocated funds according to state and local policies
- Communicating with other Central Office personnel and with the administrators at each school level to ensure consistent and equitable identification procedures and service delivery models in all grade levels
- Working with all other departments within the school system to ensure consistency in aligning AIG

goals with other county programs and initiatives

- Overseeing AP teacher training
- Working collaboratively with high school honors and AP teachers to provide necessary support and materials
- Assisting high school counselors with the AP exam process. Offers countywide AP review sessions for students prior to exams
- Coordinating the North Carolina Governor's School application process
- Organizing and supporting the following district wide competitions and programs: Math Masters, Math Elite, Elementary Battle of the Books, Poetry and Prose Celebration

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Director's job description
AIG teachers' qualifications/certifications

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

The GCS AIG Director, working closely with the AIG teachers, merges all programs, strategies and resources to ensure that the total child is challenged and enriched. Our self assessment shows much growth in this area; consequently, this is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG teachers assigned to our schools are AIG-licensed educators whose duties include:

- Overseeing the referral, testing and placement process at each of our schools
- Conducting parent meetings to discuss the results of student testing
- Completing all paperwork as it relates to AIG student placement
- Serving the AIG students in one or more of the following ways:
 - Pull-out services
 - Inclusion
 - Flexible groups
 - Daily advanced reading and/or advanced math instruction
 - Consultative services

- Working collaboratively with the other AIG teachers and/or classroom teachers to plan, develop and implement accelerated curriculum
- Utilizing researched-based resources and materials to enrich and extend the North Carolina Standard Course of Study
- Providing the classroom teachers with resources/materials to use on a daily basis to ensure appropriate learning environments for all identified students including resources/practices to assist with social and emotional issues of gifted students.

The AIG Director ensures that AIG teachers are engaged in tasks that address the various needs of the gifted learner. The academic and intellectual needs of our students are addressed through a wide range of differentiated services which are discussed in Standard 2 of this plan. However, the AIG teachers are also keenly aware of the need to address the social and emotional needs of the gifted students. We have addressed these needs through:

- Activities and lessons that promote self-awareness
- Project-based learning
- Interest surveys which are used to direct students' learning opportunities, such as independent studies or learning contracts

We continue to develop our partnership with the individual school counselors to foster ongoing counseling services to help gifted learners with social and emotional issues associated with giftedness. Resource materials will be provided for the counseling staff to assist them in addressing the individual and group needs of our students. The AIG Director and the Director of Counseling are developing a list of resources and plan to offer staff development for the counselors.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG Teachers' School Assignments and Daily Schedules
Surveys with related personnel and stakeholders
List of student/teacher resources

Other Comments:

Practice C

Establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, exceptional children's personnel, counselors, and school administrators.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department recognizes that the total educational team must be included in ongoing professional development. While we are making progress in this area, it is our goal to provide professional development to all personnel involved in educating our gifted learners.

Goals:

- Include more stakeholders in the planning, development and delivery of appropriate professional learning opportunities for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services.
- Create document detailing current requirements and making revisions as necessary.

Description:

The AIG Director establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services through:

- Providing opportunities to attend local, state, and national conferences and workshops to promote rigorous and relevant instruction for the gifted learner
- Providing staff development about understanding the gifted student, differentiation, and meeting the needs of gifted learners
- Encouraging on-site collaboration with classroom teachers to promote differentiated strategies for classroom use
- Encouraging participation in IEP conferences for students with dual exceptionalities and collaboration with counselors to support gifted students
- Notifying school administrators when new AIG students are identified and assisting administrators in placing each student in the most appropriate learning environment
- Educating school administrators about the benefits of various options of instructional delivery such as flexible grouping, inclusion, and cluster grouping for specific academic areas
- Working collaboratively with the Director of Counseling to provide staff development for all counselors

To ensure that all stakeholders understand the unique educational, social and emotional needs of gifted learners, the AIG Director will meet with other department directors to plan ways to support more collaboration among departments. Also, representatives from the other departments will be asked to serve on the AIG Advisory Board beginning in the 2013-2014 school year.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Documentation of professional learning opportunities
Attendance rosters for professional learning
Documentation of Teachers' Continuing Education Units (CEU's)

Other Comments:

Practice D

Places AIG students in general education classrooms with teachers who have met the LEA's professional development requirements for that position or have earned an AIG add-on license.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department believes it is advantageous for all gifted students to be taught by regular classroom teachers who are either AIG licensed or have met local professional development requirements. At this time, this is a focused practice based on our plan to create professional development opportunities for classroom teachers that would relate specifically to educating gifted students and best practices for success.

Goals:

- To develop and offer local AIG courses for regular classroom teachers who are responsible for teaching AIG students.

Description:

All AIG teachers are required to have or be actively pursuing AIG certification. However, in our elementary schools no state or locally-offered AIG professional development is required for regular classroom teachers who teach our gifted students on a daily basis. We assist these regular classroom teachers in offering differentiated services for our gifted students through:

- Meeting with them to discuss and plan differentiated learning opportunities
- Providing resources and materials for the regular classroom teachers to motivate students and accelerate the learning environment
- Meeting jointly with the parents and teacher(s) to discuss learning alternatives and extra-curricular opportunities

Please refer to Standard 2 for a list of possible ways we differentiate the curriculum for gifted learners.

In the middle schools, the AIG students are served daily in their area of identification. The teachers who teach these advanced classes are either AIG certified or are actively pursuing certification. We have AIG Middle School Support Teachers who work collaboratively with the AIG middle school teachers to ensure that the advanced language arts and advanced math curricula are taught. These support teachers also provide the classroom teachers with resources and materials.

In the high schools, all Advanced Placement (AP) teachers must attend a week-long summer institute in their respective disciplines and must also attend a one-day update every five years. Many of these teachers are also AIG certified. However, presently, that certification is not required.

Since our AIG service delivery model for elementary is primarily a pull-out program, our goal, over the next three years, is to develop at least two professional learning courses that would be offered for elementary school teachers who have AIG students in their regular classrooms or for any middle or high school teachers who are interested in learning more about giftedness. We envision a course to cover the academic and intellectual aspects of giftedness by addressing ways to differentiate/accelerate the curriculum for the identified students. The other course will address the social and emotional development of gifted learners.

Initially, these courses would be optional. However, in future years, we would like to make these courses mandatory for those teachers who are responsible for teaching gifted students in their regular classrooms.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Documented roles and responsibilities for AIG personnel and other related teachers
District list of AIG certified personnel
Documentation of participation in professional learning opportunities
Documentation of AIG class assignments/class rosters
Student DEP's or IDEP's

Other Comments:

Practice E

Aligns professional development with local AIG program goals and other district initiatives.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

For AIG teachers to be an integral part of Gaston County Schools, they must be involved in the professional development and implementation of local program goals and district initiatives. Therefore, collaboration is encouraged through joint meetings of all areas of curriculum and instruction. Based on self-assessment results, this remains a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG Director works collaboratively with other members of Gaston County Schools' curriculum and instruction team to align professional development with local AIG program goals and other district initiatives.

Professional learning opportunities include:

- Common Core Implementation Training
- Classworks Training
- SmartBoard Training
- Best Teaching Practices
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)
- Character Development and Prevention of Bullying
- New Teacher Evaluation Training
- District-wide Leadership Training Teams
- Integrating Comprehension Strategies
 1. Connections
 2. Asking Questions

3. Synthesis

- For the Advancement of Teaching
 1. Respectful Environment
 2. Know the Content
 3. Facilitate Learning
 4. Reflect on Practice

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Schedules, agendas and attendance rosters of professional learning opportunities aligned with AIG program goals

Documented evidence of county's professional growth plan reflecting needs of gifted learners

Personnel professional development needs assessment

Other Comments:

Practice F

Aligns professional development opportunities with state and/or national teaching standards and best practices in gifted education, including 21st century skills and content at advanced levels.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department believes that in order for AIG teachers to meet state and national standards consistently, they must be proficient in the use of current technology and advanced content area learning, in addition to analyzing student performance to adapt teaching, and successfully incorporating global awareness into student lessons.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools is committed to preparing our students to be globally competitive in the 21st century. In order to consistently achieve this goal, we must continue to provide professional development opportunities which will equip our teachers, administrators and appropriate support staff with the necessary skills to facilitate the learning experiences of our students. We are presently offering professional development opportunities that are aligned with state and national teaching standards. To address the 21st century skills and advanced-leveled content, we are providing training in the following areas:

- 21st century classrooms that promote the use of AVERmedias, Smartboards, computer microscopes, voice thread, digital cameras, digital story telling, laptops, LCD projectors, GPS units, multimedia presentations, video conferencing, group work
- Advanced elementary and middle school curricula based on units developed by the College of William and Mary's Gifted Center
- Advanced elementary and middle school math curricula that involve compacting the curriculum,

adding depth to the Standard Course of Study and infusing Singapore Math

- Advanced content opportunities on all three levels that utilize project-based learning, simulations that mirror real world experiences, learning contracts, independent studies, compacting, content acceleration and grade acceleration
- Advanced level content through AP coursework, online learning, distance learning and virtual classrooms

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Documented alignment with NC teaching standards and NC AIG licensure standards
Documentation of professional learning opportunities

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

AIG teachers benefit from collaboration with one another as well as with the regular classroom teachers. Opportunities to meet together on a consistent basis strengthen and refine the overall gifted program. Our commitment to providing teachers these opportunities allows us to keep this as a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools and the AIG Director provide opportunities for AIG teachers and other teachers to plan and refine applications of their professional development learning through:

- Facilitating regularly scheduled planning meetings
- Developing, sharing, and implementing differentiated AIG/Composer curriculum
- Sharing materials, resources, ideas and/or accelerated lessons through courier, email and/or personal contacts
- Attending NCAAGT and other workshops/conferences on both county and state levels
- Purchasing resources/materials to ensure implementation of new strategies
- Utilizing Train the Trainer Models

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Examples of resources produced through collaboration
Documented meeting notes and agendas
AIG vision aligned with Gaston County Schools' vision

Other Comments:

Standard 4: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

Practice A

Delivers AIG programs and services which are comprehensive of the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners across all grade levels and settings.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

All AIG students must be given the opportunity to reach their maximum potential. In order to accomplish this task, we must offer strong K-12 programs and services that address the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of our gifted learners. Based on the comprehensive programs we have in place and our self-assessment results, this continues to be a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

We have programs and services that address the academic and affective needs of gifted learners in grades K-12. There are AIG certified teachers in every Gaston County School. They deliver direct and consultative services to qualified students. Those programs and services may include:

- Pull-out services
- Inclusion
- Flexible grouping
- Nurturing program (Composers)
- Enrichment groups
- Daily reading/math blocks
- Deliberate lessons and special programs to address social and emotional issues
- Extra-curricular school and county-wide initiatives and competitions including but not limited to:
 - Math Masters
 - Math Elite
 - Battle of the Books
 - Poetry and Prose Celebration
 - High Q
 - Moot Court
 - Chess Clubs

While many of the educational opportunities available to our gifted students are academically and intellectually stimulating, effort is given to address the affective domain of gifted students as well. The AIG teachers have received training on how to address the social and emotional needs of their

students and engage these students in activities that promote self-awareness. The teachers also utilize interest surveys, contracts, project-based learning, real world simulation learning experiences, and student-choice assignments to stimulate these students and to help them feel more comfortable as individuals as well as a collective group. We will continue to make a concerted effort to seek ways to better address the total students' needs as they continue their educational journey.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Gaston County Schools' Website

AIG Informational Brochure

AIG Curriculum

Meeting agendas and minutes from faculty meetings, parental meetings, principals' meetings, school board meetings, AIG Advisory Board meetings

AIG Plan and survey results

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

In order for the AIG program to be successful, the goals of the program must be kept in the forefront. Resources must be assessed for appropriateness and adequacy, and the identification areas of AIG students must be addressed through appropriate instruction. Our self-assessment indicates that our program and services are aligned and we will maintain this practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG Department delivers a continuum of programs and services throughout the Gaston County School System. Elementary AIG teachers are assigned to schools based on the number of identified students at each school. However, the program offerings and service delivery models are consistent. At the middle school level, the students are served daily in their area(s) of identification. Teachers of these advanced classes are AIG certified and have been trained to use the advanced reading and advanced math curricula and pacing guides to direct instruction. They also meet together quarterly to collaborate with one another. If students transfer from one school to another, there should be no disruption in the opportunities these students are afforded. Through our comprehensive programs and services, we strive to meet the needs of the total child.

AIG personnel attend conferences and workshops to stay abreast of new technology and research-based resources and materials. The knowledge gained is then shared with other teachers and administrators to ensure consistent enrichment of programs and service delivery across the county.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Student AIG folders
School-based Review Team meeting minutes
AIG Plan and survey results

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Correlation of the AIG program within Gaston County Schools' total instructional program creates a vertically seamless path of learning for AIG students. The AIG Department is included in county-wide instructional decisions and is integrated with the total instructional program. Self-assessment results indicate this is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

We consistently deliver services that are integral and connected to classroom instruction throughout our county by:

- Developing units of study which are correlated to the NCSCOS
- Participating in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) at the school and county level
- Collaborating with classroom teachers
- Attending in-county trainings and workshops that support the vision of our school system

County initiated diagnostic/prescriptive software is used to determine changes in instructional delivery based on the growth/needs of our identified students using data collected from:

- EVAAS
- Classworks
- EOG Results
- Standardized Achievement Test Results
- Standardized Aptitude Test Results

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Student AIG folders
Testing calendar and administered instruments list
AIG Plan

Other Comments:

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.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

A partnership is established when teachers, school administrators and support staff are knowledgeable about all of the components of the AIG program. This partnership can better support AIG students and their parents as well as assist AIG students in reaching their full potential. In our program evaluation, our efforts in this area prove to be effective; therefore, this is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

We regularly communicate with teachers, administrators and support staff to keep them informed of AIG program components by:

- Posting information on our county-wide comprehensive website which is dedicated to informing the public and Gaston County employees about the AIG program
- Participating in PLC meetings during grade level planning sessions and sharing information regarding the AIG plan and instructional delivery
- Meeting with the AIG school-based committee at each school to determine new or continued placement of AIG students
- Presenting AIG information at each school during school staff meetings
- Housing copies of the county AIG plan in the principal's office as well as the professional library at each school site
- Facilitating school and community meetings to share information about the AIG program and to field questions from the participants
- Seeking yearly evaluative feedback from teachers, students, administrators and support staff regarding the effectiveness of the AIG program

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Examples of referrals from teachers and parents
List of non-traditional testing instruments
Screening pools
AIG headcount
Composer Placement Data
Documented testing accommodations
AIG Plan
Survey results

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

A consistent and effective delivery of services for AIG students can only occur when there are procedures in place for cooperation and communication among teachers at key transition points. Improvements have been made in this area, however, we feel with continuing focus on this practice we ensure that we can provide smooth transitions that will lead to effective continuation of services for our students.

Goals:

- Establish guidelines which ensure open communication among teachers at key transition points to provide for a continuum of services.

Description:

We will work toward ensuring an effective continuation of AIG services from elementary to middle school and from middle school to high school by:

- Completing the identification process before students transition to the next level
- Providing tours for students entering middle school or high school
- Working with administrators and guidance counselors to schedule AIG students in the most appropriate classes
- Offering counseling services for students and their parents as they transition from elementary to middle and middle to high schools
- Facilitating meetings between elementary AIG teachers and middle school AIG teachers of advanced language arts and math classes
- Facilitating meetings between the 8th grade advanced language arts and Math I teachers and the high school 9th grade honors/Pre AP teachers

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Agendas and meeting notes from stakeholders' meetings
Documentation of student and parent communications and meetings at key transition points
Documentation of consistent AIG services among all Gaston County Schools

Other Comments:

Practice F

Ensures collaboration and involvement among regular education teachers, exceptional children's teachers, other specialists, instructional staff, parents/families, and administrators to provide differentiated programming and services.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

In order to assure that differentiated programs and services are delivered continually and effectively to AIG students, collaboration and involvement among the school staff, parents, and students must occur. Self-assessment results indicate this should continue to be a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG Department will continue to encourage collaboration and involvement among all stakeholders to provide differentiated programs and services by:

- Sharing with other school staff members at Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings
- Conferencing with parents during county-wide Parent Conference Days to discuss programs and services, to evaluate student progress and to plan any extensions or interventions that may be deemed necessary
- Scheduling AIG placement conferences with parents
- Sending progress reports each semester and requesting parent feedback
- Meeting with EC teachers to discuss students who have dual exceptionalities and plan strategies to address the needs of these students to maximize their learning opportunities
- Encouraging regular classroom teachers to differentiate the curriculum to meet the needs of gifted learners
- Providing the classroom teachers differentiated research-based resources and materials
- Inviting parents to be active participants in their children's educational pursuits

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Agendas, notes and communication documentation from meetings with related personnel

Survey results

DEP's/IDEP's

Evidence of parent/school partnerships

Gaston County Schools' Website

AIG Plan

Documentation of parent conferences

Other Comments:

Practice G

Ensures that school counseling personnel, regular education teachers, AIG specialists, parents/families, and others collaborate to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

In order for our gifted students to fully realize their academic potential, it is imperative that we address their social and emotional needs. Often it is assumed that these students are survivors and do not need interventions. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The AIG Department must work collaboratively with other school personnel to ensure that the affective domain of these students is effectively addressed.

Goals:

- Ensure all school personnel work collaboratively to address the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Description:

We will collaborate with counselors, regular education teachers, and families to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students by:

- Referring students to school counselors who have been trained to address the unique social and emotional needs of gifted students
- Providing school and community mentors
- Beginning each academic year with activities that promote discussions about the challenges of being gifted
- Encouraging regular classroom teachers to be cognizant of social and emotional issues that may be present in their students and to refer these students to school counselors when appropriate
- Offering parent workshops/meetings on the social and emotional issues facing gifted students
- Providing resources for teachers and parents to help them better understand the social and emotional issues facing gifted learners

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Documented professional learning opportunities for stakeholders
Intentional student programs and instruction as they relate to the affective domain
Documentation of parent workshops/meetings
Surveys

Other Comments:

Practice H

Articulates and implements a process for accelerative instructional and placement options when an appropriate body-of-evidence indicates that such a practice is warranted for an individual gifted learner.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department has specific procedures in place to address the needs of highly gifted students in need of accelerative instructional placement. This is a maintained practice based on our self-assessment results.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG department has instructional and placement procedures that are implemented when an appropriate body of evidence indicates that acceleration is needed. Specific criteria must be met in order for students to be considered for the following placement options:

- Early Admission to Kindergarten – State guidelines are clearly stated with specific criteria for student consideration.
- Content Acceleration – Students must be working significantly above grade level and must meet specific guidelines.
- Grade Acceleration – This option requires observation, extensive testing, AIG team recommendation and site-based administrative decision for the student to be considered for grade acceleration.
- Early Graduation – This option is available for students who have received enough credits to graduate early.
- Dual Enrollment – This option is for high school students who wish to take college level courses while still in high school.
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery - This option is for students in grades 6-12 who can show deep mastery of course content through testing and artifacts without actual course seat time.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG placement criteria
AIG Informational Brochure
AIG Plan
Minutes and agendas from related meetings

Other Comments:

Practice I

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department provides programs, services, and classroom support to develop and discover potential in all students, even those who may not overtly demonstrate academic or intellectual abilities. Our self-assessment indicates we are presently providing intentional programming for these students and consequently, this is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools has intentional programming in place for this group of students.

The Composer Program, our nurturing program, provides instructional services for traditionally under-represented AIG populations, especially culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged learners, and English language learners. The plan also provides accelerated curriculum and content or grade acceleration for the highly gifted. Some measures we now have in place are:

- Providing enrichment classes for non-identified students at some schools
- Using multiple criteria for placement consideration
- Collaborating with EC and ESL teachers when appropriate
- Using multi-cultural literature to promote awareness

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Intentional programming documentation and related service delivery options
Composer Program identification process
Composer Program curriculum and growth data
DEP's/IDEP's/NDEP's
AIG headcount
Composer headcount

Other Comments:

Practice J

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

AIG students have interests and needs that must be addressed outside the classroom setting. It is important for us to seek ways to afford our students opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities. The AIG Department has either initiated or assisted in the sponsorship of a number of these activities and will continue to maintain this practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG Department of Gaston County Schools will continue to sponsor or support extra-curricular programs and events that support the interests and academic pursuits of gifted students.

- AIG sponsored events such as Math Masters, Math Elite, Battle of the Books, Poetry and Prose Celebration, Biz Town, Math Olympiad, etc.
- Opportunities such as Governor's School, Gaston County Commissioners' School of Excellence, Summer Ventures, Boys' and Girls' State, Moot Court, High Q, etc.
- Duke TIPS program
- People to People Leadership Development Program

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Documentation of student participation in extra-curricular activities
Evidence of opportunities shared with students, teachers and parents
Survey results

Other Comments:

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

Practice A

Develops partnerships with parents/families and the community that are intentional and meaningful to support the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of AIG students.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools is committed to establishing strong partnerships with all stakeholders as we strive to promote initiatives that foster support of gifted students. Our survey results indicate this is an area of needed growth; therefore, we will continue to seek additional ways to partner with our parents, families, and the community at large.

Goals:

- Improve communication with both families and community
- Encourage participation in AIG Advisory board
- Encourage parent attendance at county-wide competitions and initiatives

Description:

The AIG Director and AIG teachers ensure that services for AIG students are shared with all stakeholders in these ways:

- Parent conferences for initial placement and annual reviews
- Phone or e-mail contacts with parents and families
- AIG Webpage
- AIG Informational Brochure
- Newsletters and report cards
- Surveys
- AIG Advisory Board
- Connect Ed (Gaston County Schools phone messaging system)
- Distribution of information from Community support groups (Gifted, ADHD, ODD, OCD, Depression, Perfectionism, etc.)

The AIG department implements initiatives to intentionally involve parents, families and the community in supporting gifted education through activities such as:

- Teacher and/or student-led conferences
- Battle of the Books
- Math Masters

- Poetry and Prose
- Math Elite
- Parent/Family nights
- Parent/Community curriculum events (providing Social and Emotional resources)

Our goal, over the next three years, is to actively encourage parent participation by using multiple modes of notification such as:

- AIG Website
- Connect Ed (Gaston County phone messaging system)
- Invitations sent home with students
- Flyers/brochures promoting events/opportunities

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG website

AIG Informational brochure

Survey results

AIG Advisory Meetings' agendas and minutes

Documentation of parent workshops/meetings and school-related activities

Documentation of community partnerships

Documentation of presentations by community experts

Award and recognition presentations at county-wide competitions/initiatives

Other Comments:

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.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Teachers communicate with parents both formally and informally to share information regarding the local AIG plan and to review policies as related to gifted education. We encourage parents to be active participants in their child's educational pursuits, and we welcome their input. We will continue to maintain this practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG Department shares information about our program services, our local plan components, and

gifted education policies with all stakeholders through:

- Specific information that directly relates to the AIG program and placement procedures
- Annual parent conferences
- Rights and services provided (by law)
- Service delivery models and amount of service time
- AIG Advisory Board
- Gaston County Schools' Board of Education
- Gaston County Schools' Website

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Gaston County Schools' AIG website

AIG Informational Brochure

Documented parent informational meetings

Copies of faculty meetings notes and presentations

Other Comments:

Practice C

Involves stakeholders, reflecting the diversity of AIG parents/families and the community, in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the local AIG program and plan.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Improving effective communication among all stakeholders will benefit gifted students. Our survey results indicate that we need to be more inclusive of parents and the community in the development, implementation, and monitoring of our AIG program. Input from a diverse group of people who reflect the diversity of our population should serve to enhance the AIG program in Gaston County Schools. In our program evaluation, this area was noted as needing improvement and therefore, it is a focused practice.

Goals:

- Organize feeder area communication meetings
- Invite community leaders to join the AIG Advisory Committee

Description:

In order to effectively involve our stakeholders in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the local AIG program and plan, GCS AIG Department plans to:

- Share survey results with all stakeholders annually
- Organize feeder area meetings to foster mutual understanding of program goals and identification procedures among all stakeholders countywide

- Promote diversity among members of the AIG Advisory Board

Our current plan is to have the feeder area parent representation organized by the 2013-2014 school year. We will invite new members to join the AIG Advisory Board during the 2013-2014 school year.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Invitations and membership rosters for various AIG-related committees
Documentation of suggestions and decisions made by various committees
Evidence of a diverse representation of stakeholders, including members of our community at large
Invitations and communications to committee meetings
Documentation of agendas and meeting notes
Survey results

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

AIG personnel strive to inform parents of educational opportunities that will expand the horizons of gifted students. We are mindful of our diverse population and make every effort to notify parents in their native language. Gaston County Schools' ESL Department works collaboratively with us to ensure non-English speaking parents and their students are informed of available educational opportunities.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The AIG department works to inform parents/families and the community of available opportunities for AIG students through:

- Newsletters about local events
- Events at Stowe Botanical Garden
- Schiele Museum of Natural History Programs
- Summer camps
- Duke University TIPS program
- Programs from private and government agencies
- County-wide initiatives such as Battle of the Books, Math Masters, Math Elite, Poetry and Prose Celebration, High Q, Moot Court, Debate Teams, Chess Clubs
- Governor's School
- North Carolina School of Science and Math
- Summer Ventures

- Gaston County's Commissioners' School of Excellence

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG Website
AIG Informational Newsletters
Connect-Ed Phone Messages
E-mail to parents
Documentation of parental meetings
Translated documents

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Much expertise abounds within our parents, institutions of higher learning, local businesses and industry, and other community stakeholders. Encouraging partnerships with these groups will allow the AIG Department to utilize the knowledge they have and to seek their academic support. Working together as a unified group will help us to foster the development of 21st century skills and provide alternative ways to enhance the educational pursuits of our gifted learners. We will continue our focus on this practice in the coming years.

Goals:

- Publicize existing partnerships and establish new ones
- Work with Gaston County Schools' Business Partnerships Director to establish partnerships with area businesses

Description:

Partnerships are formed within the community to enhance and gain support for AIG programs and services. Those agencies and/or groups that we envision partnering with include agencies and groups such as:

- Junior Achievement's Biz Town
- AIG Advisory Board
- Faith community
- Channel 21 (Gaston County's Educational Television Channel)
- Gaston Gazette
- Local industries and businesses
- Stowe Botanical Garden
- Schiele Museum of Natural History

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Established partnerships

Family involvement programs

Grant applications

Other Comments:

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 describing the local AIG program in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy, which has been approved by the LEA's school board and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

To comply with North Carolina state legislation, a local AIG plan is written and submitted to the local board of education and the Department of Public Instruction for approval every three years. However, should it be deemed necessary to make changes in alternate years, those changes would be made and the plan would be resubmitted to the local board of education for approval as well as to DPI. Gaston County Schools' AIG Department complies with state legislation; therefore, this is a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

From the date the state of North Carolina mandated the implementation of an AIG Program in each LEA, Gaston County Schools has developed and maintained a three year comprehensive AIG plan that supports and assures the incorporation of programs and services that are legislated by the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction. The plan is reviewed and evaluated annually and any changes that are deemed necessary are made at the time of review. However, every three years, as mandated by the state, our plan is revised by a committee of stakeholders. At this time, each component of the plan is discussed and necessary revisions are made to ensure the continuation of programs and services which address the unique academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted learners. When changes are made, the AIG Director submits the changes to the local board of education for final approval. The revisions are then forwarded to the Department of Public Instruction.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

AIG Plan
Annual AIG Review

Other Comments:

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.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG plan is continually monitored to ensure fair and equitable program implementation and service delivery for all K-12 AIG identified students. We are aware of the current legislation and state policies that govern the development and implementation of our local AIG plan and we continue to maintain this practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

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

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

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

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Service delivery options at each school site
Documentation of consistent county-wide identification procedures and curriculum offerings
Disaggregation of EOG and EOC results
Survey results

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Director oversees the expenditures of the state funds and works collaboratively with the county's finance department to ensure that all allocated funds are appropriately dispersed. Self-assessment results indicate this continues to be a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

The state funds allocated for the local AIG program are used in the following ways:

- AIG certified teachers' salaries and benefits
- Curriculum resources and materials
- Curriculum development
- AIG/Advanced Placement teacher training
- Technology materials
- Workshop expenses
- Field Trips (as related to gifted education)
- AIG sponsored county-wide competitions and initiatives

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Annual budget review and report of expenditures
Teacher Licensure and PRC 034 funds
Documentation of professional learning opportunities
Documentation of materials and curriculum products

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

On a yearly basis, Gaston County Schools maintains, analyzes, and shares student performance growth data (in grades 3-8) with all stakeholders including the local school board, central office personnel, school administrators, teachers, and parents. We, however, have not been as zealous in the collection of performance growth data for our high school students. Neither have we recorded or shared the drop-out rate data specifically for AIG students. We will make these items a focus in 2013-2016.

Goals:

- Collect high school growth performance data for all identified students in grades 9-12
- Analyze growth data and share it with the local board of education, county office personnel, all school administrators, teachers and parents
- Look for trends in the growth pattern
- Offer staff development for teachers who are not showing a pattern of growth
- Collect drop-out data for each of our 11 high schools
- Analyze the drop-out data and share with the local board of education, county office personnel,

all school administrators, teachers and parents

- Look for trends in drop-out data
- Conference with students about their reasons for dropping out of school
- Plan ways to encourage students to remain in school
- Involve high school counselors in mentoring students who are potential drop-outs

Description:

In the past, we have maintained, analyzed and shared performance data for our AIG identified students in grades 3-8. The growth of our students has been shared with the local board of education, county office personnel, school administrators, teachers, and parents. We not only look at yearly growth but also growth over time in both elementary and middle schools. AIG teachers and regular classroom teachers use this data to plan and implement appropriate educational opportunities for gifted learners. The growth data we analyze and share includes:

- End-of-Grade reading and math results
- County benchmark scores
- Portfolios of student work
- Quarterly classroom performance data (report cards)
- Progress reports completed by the AIG teacher
- Rubrics as they relate to student projects
- Informal/Formal assessments
- Teacher-led conferences with students, identifying areas of strength and weakness

In the past, we have not collected, analyzed or shared performance growth data for our students in K-2 because we have no standardized data to analyze. The data we use to determine growth consists of on-going assessments and periodic formal assessments at the end of units of study. In high school, we have always looked at the growth of students taking Honors and AP courses but have never disaggregated the data based on AIG identification. We do see a need to begin this process in the ensuing years.

We also see the need to maintain, analyze and share drop-out data for our AIG population. Each year, during the headcount process, we become aware of the number of students who have dropped out during that school year. The numbers are available, but little has been done to specifically address interventions for this particular group of students. High school counselors work with both students and parents and are often able to intervene and suggest alternatives when students seek to withdraw from school.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Disaggregation of EOG, EOC and other growth data
DEP's/IDEP's
Drop-out rate for AIG identified students
Documentation of interventions

Other Comments:

Practice E

Monitors the representation 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.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

In recent years, Gaston County Schools' AIG Department has worked diligently to be more inclusive of under-represented populations. The Composer Program, our nurturing program in all of our Title I schools, has given us an opportunity to identify students who demonstrate gifted potential. Many of these students do eventually meet the criteria for placement in the gifted program. As a result, our percentage of identified minority and low socioeconomic students, and twice exceptional students is on the rise. However, we realize that there continues to be a need to offer more accelerated opportunities for our highly gifted students and therefore, this is a focused practice.

Goals:

In the future if funding becomes available, we would like to:

- Increase service delivery time for Composer students
- Expand our IB Program to include more high schools

Description:

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

- Implement our Composer Program, a nurturing program for minority and low socioeconomic students who display gifted tendency
- Work with the ESL Department of the local school system to identify English Language Learners who are very strong math students
- Work with special education teachers to identify students who have dual exceptionalities and offer accommodations to ensure them successful learning experiences
- Utilize alternative assessments and nonverbal tests to assist in the identification of students
- Offer accelerated services such as grade and/or content acceleration, early college, AP coursework, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, etc., for our highly gifted students
- Encourage students to participate in extra-curricular opportunities that support academic excellence such as High Q, Moot Court, Chess Club, Governor's School, Commissioners' School of Excellence, Battle of the Books, Math Masters, Math Elite, Poetry and Prose, etc.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Data regarding referral and identification of subgroups
Data on Composer Program students who meet criteria for AIG placement
Enrollment data for upper level courses
Agendas, minutes, presentations at stakeholders' meetings or professional learning opportunities
Survey results
Annual reports, policy revisions

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

In order to ensure we have appropriately licensed teachers serving AIG students, Gaston County Schools currently maintains data regarding the credentials of personnel. The AIG Department maintains AP certification and training data. This data is housed in the AIG office. AIG certification/licensure data is housed at Human Resources. Gaston County Schools' Human Resources Department maintains personnel data and this continues to be a maintained practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

All personnel who currently serve students in grades K-8 are either AIG certified or are actively pursuing certification from an accredited university. Teachers in grades 9-12 who are teaching AP classes have already attended or will be attending College Board Summer Institutes for their respective disciplines. Once every five years, AP teachers are required to attend a College Board sponsored one-day update training session. These AP teachers also attend county sponsored job-alike meetings to discuss strategies and effective teaching methods.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Documentation of teachers' AIG licensure
Documentation of AP training
Records of professional learning opportunities
Use of PRC 034 funds
AIG students' class placement

Other Comments:

Practice G

Forms an advisory group of community members, parents/families of AIG students representative of diverse populations in the program, teachers of the gifted, and other professional staff who meet regularly to review all aspects of the local AIG program and make recommendations for program

improvement.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

While Gaston County Schools' AIG Department has had an advisory group in recent years, it has not been as effective as it could have been. Meetings were sporadic and often did not accomplish the intended mission. Our self-assessment indicates we need to form a more focused group with broader representation; therefore, this is a focused practice.

Goals:

- Form an advisory group comprised of community leaders, teachers, school administrators, central office personnel and a diverse group of AIG parents/guardians
- Select a chairman of the advisory group
- Establish meeting dates and times
- Formulate agendas for each meeting
- Review all aspects of the plan, both positive and negative
- Suggest needed improvements and determine ways to address these issues
- Discuss ways to promote the gifted program and to seek more parental involvement
- Share outcomes of the meetings with other stakeholders

Description:

The advisory group will meet quarterly to discuss issues as they relate to gifted education. They will also review the AIG plan and make recommendations for program improvement. The group may be comprised of the following:

- AIG Director
- AIG teachers from both elementary and middle schools
- Advanced placement and honors teachers from the high schools
- School principals/assistant principals
- Central Office representatives
- School Board representative
- Parents from all three academic levels
- Community members

Planned Sources of Evidence: Agendas and minutes of AIG Advisory Committee
Invitations and other communications to committee members
Documentation of presentations to other stakeholders
Stakeholders' survey results

Other Comments:

Practice H

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department elicits regular feedback from stakeholders regarding the quality and effectiveness of our local AIG program. However, our survey results indicate we need to be more diligent in sharing results with parents, regular classroom teachers, and school administrators. As we work to achieve this goal, this will be a focused practice.

Goals:

- Disseminate the results of the annual surveys to all stakeholders
- Implement strategies for addressing areas of concern

Description:

Annually students, parents, teachers, and administrators are given an opportunity to complete a survey to share positive aspects and well as points for growth. When the plan is revised every three years, an extensive on-line survey is completed by all stakeholders. The results of this survey are used to evaluate and revise the plan.

The results of these surveys will be shared with all stakeholders yearly. We will make this information available to our stakeholders through:

- Scheduled parent meetings
- Faculty meetings
- Principal/Assistant Principal meetings
- AIG website

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Data from surveys, interviews, focus groups with related stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, administrators, etc.)

Documentation of suggestions/recommendations/concerns shared by parents during yearly annual review

Other Comments:

Practice I

Reviews and revises the local AIG program and plan based on multiple sources of data for continuous program improvement.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

The AIG Plan is reviewed annually and revised as needed. We presently use multiple sources of

data to ensure continuous program improvement. Our self-assessment indicates we have been successful in this endeavor and we will maintain this practice.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department uses multiple sources of data to assist with program and plan reviews and revisions including:

- Student, parent, teacher and administrator survey results
- Advisory Board's feedback
- End-of-Grade/End-of-Course/Advanced Placement test results
- Students' classroom performance
- Gaston County's vision for academic success

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Survey results

Review of growth data for all AIG identified students

Review comments by DPI

Revisions submitted to the local board of education and DPI

Other Comments:

Practice J

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department recognizes the need to disseminate program evaluation data to the general public. Since this data is used to evaluate and revise the local AIG plan and program, we believe it is imperative to make this data readily accessible to all stakeholders. The majority of our self-assessment respondents indicated we need to focus on this practice in the coming years.

Goals:

- Be more diligent in seeking ways to better communicate the program evaluation data to the general public

Description:

We will disseminate all program evaluation data to the general public. Ways to accomplish this task include sharing data with the following groups:

- Staff members at individual school sites

- County-wide Parent Advisory Group
- AIG Advisory Board
- Instructional Committee of the Gaston County Board of Education
- Superintendent's Student Advisory Council
- Principals and Assistant Principals
- AIG students on all three academic levels

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Information posted on Gaston County Schools' website

Share data with local board of education

Communicate with parents and other stakeholders through newsletters, e-mails, etc.

Other Comments:

Practice K

Protects the rights of all AIG students through policies, procedures, and practices.

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department's self-assessment indicates we protect the rights of all AIG students through policies, procedures, and practices. Maintaining this practice is absolutely necessary and all measures are taken to ensure confidentiality of student records.

Goals: This section does not need to be completed based on the chosen category of the practice.

Description:

Gaston County Schools' AIG Department protects the rights of AIG students by:

- Providing parents a copy of Gaston County Schools Procedures to Resolve Disagreements
- Housing AIG student folders and personal information in locked file cabinets
- Securing all student information that is transmitted electronically

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Copy of Gaston County Schools Procedures to Resolve Disagreements

Documentation of complaints and subsequent responses and changes

Interviews with parents/guardians and school personnel where disagreements have occurred

Other Comments:

Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):

Appendix A - Gaston County Schools AIG Criteria - Grades K- 1.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)

Appendix B - Gaston County Schools AIG Criteria - Grades 2-12.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)

Appendix E - Gaston County Schools AIG Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) sample.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1*)

Appendix C - Gaston County Schools AIG Procedures to Resolve Disagreements.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1:6*)

Appendix D- Gaston County Schools AIG Nurturing Programs.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 2*)

Appendix F - Gaston County Schools AIG Informational Brochure.pdf (*Appendix*)