

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

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 27-JUN-13

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**Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on:** JULY 11, 2013, 15:01:01

**Revision Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on:** JULY 11, 2013, 15:01:01

Guilford 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, Guilford County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Guilford County Schools Vision for local AIG program:** All Guilford County Schools (GCS) will have equitable opportunities for students to engage in rigorous learning. Processes and procedures for Academically Gifted (AG) services will be commonly understood by the school community and the community at large. All school staff will share the responsibility and will collaborate to provide the most rigorous learning experiences for each student.

The scope of the GCS AG program will encompass grades K-12 with a K-2 consultative and collaborative model, Grade 2 Talent Development, a well defined 3-5 Enrichment model, advanced curricula for English/Language Arts and mathematics in middle school, and a wide array of honors, AP and IB courses in high school.

All differentiated curricula will incorporate conceptual and inquiry-based learning opportunities aligned to the district's power standards and the areas of focus on the GCS 2013-2016 Strategic Plan.

AG students will demonstrate academic growth annually and will experience smooth transitions to middle school, high school and college.

A strong continuum of AG services beginning at the primary level will lead to increased career and college readiness, including an increased number of AG students participating in and performing well

8/7/2013

on Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams and graduating with International Baccalaureate (IB) diplomas.

The whole school community will actively participate in supporting AG students so that they thrive and reach their full academic and intellectual potential.

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

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$3333784.00</b>	<b>\$594864.8.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$68000.00</b>

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## **Standard 1: Student Identification**

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

### **Practice A**

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

**This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** When surveyed, stakeholders indicated that screening and identification procedures were clearly communicated (74% parents, 71% teachers, 80% principals). Procedures for screening, referral and identification are clearly addressed and communicated through the GCS AG Handbook which is available on the GCS AG website or in print upon request.

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

**Description:** Parents, school staff, and community members may access AG identification procedures through the LEA website which communicates the Board-approved AIG Plan and the AG Handbook of policies and procedures. Regular AG department participation in monthly principal, counselor and curriculum specialist meetings promotes solid communication to staff.

The AG Department also sponsors Parent Academy sessions to disseminate information to parents and the community. AG teachers, TAG chairs and AP/IB coordinators participate in school-based beginning-of-year informational sessions and events. AG teachers attend initial kindergarten parent meeting to explain the AG eligibility process and spectrum of AG services.

The AG department maintains a database that houses information on all students in Guilford County Schools who have been screened by the AG department. Questions about screening and eligibility from families and schools can thus be handled and resolved efficiently.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • District and school websites

- AG teacher handbook
- AG parent handbook
- Agendas from school faculty meetings, district staff meetings, AG teacher meetings and Parent Academy sessions
- AG database
- Board of Education meeting minutes
- Feedback from stakeholders and survey results

**Other Comments:** Ideas for strengthening:

The AG department will design a screening/identification pamphlet to be included with the third grade referral letter and consent for evaluation letter during screening windows. The pamphlet will clearly outline the process to identification and resulting service. The AG department will hold parent informational meetings to explain the screening and identification process prior to the administration of the CogAT.

### **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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The GCS AG identification process has historically included the use of multiple criteria to identify students for AG services. A variety of tools have been used to measure aptitude, achievement and potential including standardized aptitude and achievement assessments. The 2013-2016 AIG Plan will expand the use of nontraditional tools for referral, screening and identification.

**Goals:** The GCS AG Department aims to increase opportunity through the use of both traditional and non-traditional measures to ensure comprehensive identification procedures for all students, including the use of assessment instruments that are sensitive to the differences of students from different cultural, linguistic and economic backgrounds.

To this end, the GCS AG Department will implement:

- a more robust referral system using a modified version of the HOPE Nomination Scale
- a research-based Teacher Observation Tool to identify the multiple dimensions of giftedness or high potential
- a Student Self-Evaluation Tool to assess motivation and leadership
- revised portfolio procedures in the form of authentic assessment through Performance Tasks to measure aptitude and achievement

**Description:** In Guilford County Schools, the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is administered to all students in third grade. This begins the screening process for AG eligibility. Students enter the screening pool with a CogAT composite score, partial composite or Extreme Profile or by referral from self, parent, staff member, peer or community member.

Students in the screening pool will be assessed for eligibility using the Iowa Assessments for achievement in reading and math. Based on achievement data, further screening may continue through the use of the Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test (NNAT) or the Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT). Other identification measures in grades 3 and beyond may include the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT), the NC End of Grade tests (EOG), a Teacher Observation Tool, performance tasks and self-evaluation.

Students in grades 3-8 are also screened for eligibility yearly following the release of EOG scores. Additional evaluation for AG consideration is conducted as new scores become available.

#### GCS Pathways for AG eligibility Intellectual

- 98 percentile aptitude

#### Exceptional Achievement

- 98 percentile achievement in reading and/or math
- Separate Setting - Very Strong
- Aptitude 97 percentile
  - Reading 97 percentile
  - Math 97 percentile
  - Science and Social Studies 95 percentile average
  - "A" average in each of the four core subjects

#### Strong Academic\*

- Aptitude 93 percentile or higher and achievement of 93 percentile or higher in reading and/or math

#### Moderate Academic\*

- Aptitude 85 percentile or higher and achievement of 85 percentile or higher in reading and/or math
- AND
- o Teacher Observation Tool AND
  - o Student Self-Evaluation Tool
- OR
- Aptitude 80-84 percentile AND minimum acceptable Teacher Observation Tool score:
    - o If the aptitude and reading achievement scores have an average of 85 percentile, the student is eligible in Reading/Language Arts
    - o If the aptitude and math achievement scores have an average of 85 percentile, the student is eligible in Math
    - o Based on the above criteria, students may be eligible in one or both subjects.

\*Aptitude is not used as a criterion for eligibility after grade 5. In grades 6-12 the achievement score must be accompanied by a Teacher Observation Tool

### Portfolio Options

Portfolios are available to students who meet specific criteria but who are unable to achieve eligibility using one of the identified pathways in only the following situations:

- A. Meets Very Strong criteria in all areas except one, and that one area is still within 5 points of the minimum VS score required. Student completes a VS performance task in the deficient subject. Student product must earn a rubric score of 3 or higher.
- B. In elementary schools where less than 10% of the total school population is AG identified, third grade eligibility may be determined when a student demonstrates a need for service by performing above grade level peers, within the context of the student's learning environment (Article 9B). This determination is made based on the accumulation of a body of evidence which may include traditional and non-traditional aptitude and achievement tests, authentic assessment in the form of hands-on, interactive multiple intelligence based performance tasks, referrals, Teacher Observation Tool, grades and self-evaluation.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Criteria for eligibility document

- Portfolio A and B documents
- Student Eligibility Record (SER)
- AG database
- AG student files
- TAG notebooks

### **Other Comments:**

Ideas for Strengthening:

The AG department will investigate the feasibility of implementing a 3-year "AG Apprenticeship" for underrepresented students which would provide a student the opportunity to receive AG enrichment services in grades 3-5 without eligibility. Demonstrated success would lead to eligibility for rising 6th graders.

The AG department will research the RAVEN aptitude assessment as a possible tool for identification. We will consider a pilot use of this assessment in addition to the NNAT2. Additionally, we will continue to explore the use of the Draw a Person aptitude assessment as another point of

data for Portfolio B.

### **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:** Under-represented populations account for only 36% of the AG population while they represent more than 63% of the general student population in Guilford County Schools (GCS). We are committed to increasing diversity in order to better reflect district demographics.

**Goals:** The GCS AG department's goal is to improve equity and access, thereby resulting in an annual district-wide increase for under-represented groups until AG representation of underserved populations better reflects district demographics.

Efforts to this end will include:

- The articulation of multiple pathways for AG identification which will ensure that all students are accurately evaluated using instruments that are sensitive to differences or disabilities.
- The use of measures that assess student ability and potential relative to the local learning environment.
- Expansion of the Grade 2 Talent Development Program during the cycle of this Plan to all schools with AG populations fewer than 10% of the total school population (funds permitting).
- Expansion of the Grade 2 Talent Development Program during the cycle of this Plan to grades K-1 in all schools with AG populations fewer than 10% of the total school population (funds permitting).
- Professional development for classroom teachers regarding the identification of gifted characteristics and effective differentiation strategies for high-ability learners.
- Support for the district-sponsored African American Male Initiative to increase awareness of obstacles to identification.

**Description:** GCS is addressing this practice through a variety of initiatives. The availability of multiple criteria and pathways to eligibility ensure that no single criterion should prevent eligibility. We have opted to replace the Gifted Rating Scale with another research-based Teacher Observational Tool which is adapted with permission from the Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory. This observation tool allows teachers to recognize multiple facets of giftedness, including characteristics that may be construed as negative. Additionally, portfolio options have been developed with under-represented students in mind which provide diverse measures of potential through authentic performance tasks.

Furthermore, we recognize the need to cultivate gifted characteristics and talents in our early primary students through our Grade 2 Talent Development Program. We have targeted schools in which less than 10% of the total school population is AG eligible for our primary years focus. The demographics of these schools traditionally have high populations of under-represented students. Additionally, the AG teachers conduct Grade 3 whole group critical thinking lessons in all schools in the district. During

these lessons, classroom teachers actively observe their students and use the Gifted Characteristics Checklist to identify students who demonstrate these traits. This checklist is used as an additional source of entry into the screening pool for AG eligibility.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG database

- Portfolios
- Gifted Characteristics Checklist
- Student folders
- NCWISE (PowerSchool)

**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:** According to surveys and focus group input, the school community indicates that the screening and identification process is consistently implemented across the district.

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

**Description:** The reliability of these processes is ensured by:

- close monitoring of the AG database
- bi-annual individual compliance reviews of student AG folders and rosters conducted by the AG program facilitators
- mandatory AG teacher meetings to discuss screening and identification procedures
- mandatory TAG chair meetings to discuss screening and identification procedures
- the approval of Student Eligibility Records (SER) by the district oversight committee (DOC)
- the availability of procedures, forms and letters to AG teachers and Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) chairs on a central AG SharePoint site
- the approval of portfolios by TAG and DOC

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG database

- Student folders
- TAG notebooks
- SharePoint site

**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:** GCS has established student and family rights that govern all programs, including AG. Written parental consent is required for identification and service. Additionally, the AG Department has developed a detailed grievance procedure, annual review and performance watch processes and guidelines for honoring previous placement for students transferring from other LEAs. All of these processes and documents are available on the AG website.

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

**Description:** The following procedures are in practice:

- written consent for testing and placement,
- procedures for annual review and performance watch
- placement for students new to GCS, including honoring previous placement
- procedure for resolving disagreements
- availability of a parent handbook
- parent representation on the Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) at each elementary and middle school
- parent representation on the AG Advisory Board

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG Plan

- AG Handbook
- Parent communications
- AG student files
- Documented process of actual grievance, if pertinent

**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:** Documentation reviewed during bi-annual compliance reviews indicates that annual reviews are occurring with relative consistency throughout the county.

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

**Description:** An annual review is required for all eligible AG students. The school-based Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) meets to review each student's academic progress. Students whose service plan continues to meet current needs receive written notification of continued service. Students whose service plan no longer meets their needs are evaluated and a parent meeting is held to determine appropriate adjustments to service. The Student Eligibility Record (SER) and the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) are updated to reflect modifications, and a copy is provided to the parent.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Agendas from TAG monthly meetings

- TAG notebooks
- DEPs
- SERs
- AG Database

**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:** GCS has developed and implemented instructional units in all subjects and all grade levels which align with the new NC SCOS. The AG department has developed extensions for the district ELA and math units for use with AG students in the regular classroom grades 3-8 which enrich and/or accelerate the curriculum.

Additionally, the AG department has targeted the power standards identified by GCS for AG enrichment unit development. Integrating the Essential Standards in science and social studies, these units provide appropriate rigor and differentiated curriculum for AG students in ELA grades 3-8 and math 3-5. Advanced math units are also available 6-8.

Since gifted students require curriculum and instruction beyond grade level expectations in their areas of strength, the GCS K-12 Academically Gifted Program provides appropriate services through opportunities to experience:

- consultative services in grades K-2
- enrichment classes in Language Arts and mathematics in grades 3-5
- advanced ability grouped classes in Language Arts and mathematics in grades 6-8
- accelerated mathematics sequence in grades 6-8
- full time self-contained service for highly gifted students in all subjects in grades 4-8
- advanced ability grouped classes in all academic subjects in grades 9-12
- dual enrollment through Early College for highly gifted students in grades 9-12

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

**Description:** K-2 consultative:

- Support is provided for K-2 students that exhibit gifted characteristics and need differentiated instruction. Through a collaborative process, the K-2 classroom teacher and Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) review the needs of students to facilitate appropriate instruction. Students are reviewed regularly by the classroom teacher and the AG teacher to address the progress of the student in order to ensure that his/her academic needs are being met.
- Other service delivery options for grades K-2 include subject and grade acceleration. This may be recommended for those students who perform well above their peers and may be best served by receiving grade level instruction in the next grade, in one or more subjects.

#### Enrichment 3-5:

- Identified students in grades 3-5 are served through a pull-out enrichment model with a minimum of 90 minutes per week in reading and/or mathematics. AG enrichment units have been created for grades 3-5 in Language Arts and mathematics using differentiated curriculum and instruction designed for the AG student and addressing specific learning objectives from the NC SCOS. Additionally, the units integrate the Essential Standards for science and social studies. These instructional units are implemented district-wide.
- Other service delivery options for grades 3-5 include subject and grade acceleration. This may be recommended for those students who perform two years above their peers and may be best served by receiving grade level instruction in the next grade, in one or more subjects.

#### Advanced ELA and mathematics 6-8:

- AG eligible students in grades 6-8 are served in the general education setting through differentiated content, process, product and environment in math and English/Language Arts. Ability grouped classes use rigorous courses of study designed for AG students using core objectives which are extended, enriched and/or accelerated.

#### Accelerated mathematics sequence 6-8:

- An accelerated math course continuum, including AIMM, Algebra I and Geometry (Math I and II, is available to students with strong math aptitude.

#### Very strong service 4-8:

- Highly gifted students in grades 4-8 who meet the criteria for Very Strong service may opt to enroll in the full-time self-contained VS program. Grade level SCOS is extended, enriched and accelerated in all four core subjects, Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

#### Advanced coursework 9-12:

- At the secondary level, AG students are encouraged through academic counseling to partake in the most rigorous curriculum available, including honors, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. Advanced coursework is available in all academic subject areas.

#### Early College 9-12:

- Some high school students who demonstrate academic excellence participate in an Early College magnet which provides advanced and accelerated curricula in grades 9 and 10. Students are dual-enrolled full time college students in grades 11 and 12, finishing their high school career taking only college courses.

#### Academic magnets:

- Other academic magnet programs provide additional opportunities for enrichment, extension and acceleration of the NC SCOS.

#### **Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG Handbook

- Scope and sequence of AG enrichment units
- Student work samples and assignments
- Classroom observational data

- Student inventories and surveys
- Student rosters

**Other Comments:** Ideas for Improvement:

- Encourage principals to cluster group like ability students across grade level in K-8 during daily reading and math instruction.
- Through education of stakeholders, increase awareness of the benefits of subject or grade acceleration for highly gifted students.

**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:** The district-wide ELA and math AG and regular education units require the use of diverse and effective instructional practices and strategies for differentiation and extension. Instruction of these units is supported through regular professional development opportunities and support sessions.

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

**Description:** Curriculum and instruction is built on best practices to address the rigor and depth of the Common Core standards. AG teachers utilize Learning Style, Multiple Intelligence and Interest Inventories to inform differentiation practices. Instructional strategies are embedded in all professional development opportunities and monthly elementary AG teachers' meetings. The AG department continues to provide professional development opportunities for general education classroom teachers that emphasize diverse and effective instructional practices to address the specific needs of gifted students.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Observational walk-throughs in AG classrooms and in general education classrooms

- Agendas, rosters and handouts from professional development offered by AG department
- AG ELA and math units which extend and enrich the Common Core State Standards
- District ELA and math units which provide AG extensions
- Unit lesson plans

**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:** AG instructional units have been developed using a variety of research-based supplemental resources and materials.

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

**Description:** Using Ainsworth's Rigorous Curriculum Design and Wiggins and McTighe's Understanding by Design as curricular models, the AG units incorporate a variety of research-based resources, materials and strategies including:

- William and Mary Center for Gifted Education
- Thompson's Caesar's English.
- The National Paideia Center
- Erickson's concept-based learning
- Parks and Black's Building Thinking Skills
- Costa and Kallick's Habits of Mind

Units of study provide students with rich, culturally diverse text, conceptual themes, advanced literary analysis, and vocabulary development. The units include classic literature studies, service learning, Socratic seminars, authentic performance tasks, simulations and engaging scenarios.

ELA teachers 6-12 have access to College Board's Spring Board curriculum to supplement district-developed instructional units for academically gifted students.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Observational walk-throughs in AG classrooms and in general education classrooms

- AG ELA and math units
- District ELA and math units
- Agendas from AG teacher meetings and support sessions
- Learning Fair documentation

**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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** 21st century skills have been embedded into elementary AG ELA and math enrichment units and the district-wide general education instructional units written for advanced classes in middle

school. At the secondary level, Honors, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate curricula are infused with 21st century skills.

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

**Description:** Elementary AG enrichment units include global inquiry and emphasize social responsibility through service learning. Students build and apply skills in critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, leadership, and metacognition. Student service projects provide an annual opportunity to apply developing skills. Quarterly Progress Reports for elementary AG enrichment include self and teacher evaluation of 21st century skills and content.

Reading and writing lessons in the middle school advanced language arts courses are infused with topics of health awareness, leadership and ethics, social responsibility, real-world learning in regional and global contexts, and applied information and media literacy.

Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate curricula are designed to promote 21st century content and skills.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Student work samples and assignments involving 21st century content and skills

- Unit plans/lessons/activities and associated rubrics.
- Elementary AG Student Progress Reports
- Action Service Learning Project results and demonstrations
- AP/IB syllabi

**Other Comments:**

### **Practice E**

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

**This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** All instructional units for ELA and math created by the district contain pre and post assessments as well as recommended on-going opportunities for formative assessment. The AG department recognizes the need for continued monitoring of the effective use of the data derived from these assessments to drive instructional decisions and practices.

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

**Description:** In the elementary AG classroom, results of unit pre-assessments are used to make informed decisions regarding the necessary differentiation of instructional practices. AG teachers are encouraged to collaborate with regular education teachers to discuss and analyze pre-assessment data and determine common goals for students. Use of rubrics promotes student reflection and awareness of learning. In grades 6-12, the AG department continues to encourage and promote the use of assessment data to drive decisions regarding differentiation and instructional practices within the service delivery framework and using the unique curriculum prepared for advanced classes.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Student work samples

- AG instructional units
- District ELA and math units
- Pre and post assessments
- Unit rubrics

**Other Comments:**

**Practice F**

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

**This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** GCS recognizes that the social/emotional needs of gifted learners are extremely important for our students' well-being and their academic success, and this component will be a primary focus of the 2013-2016 AIG Plan. Social/emotional traits of gifted students include enhanced manifestations of the following: divergent thinking ability, excitability, sensitivity, perfectionism, perceptiveness and self-awareness.

**Goals:** • Provide training for classroom teachers regarding the social and emotional needs of gifted students

- Infuse communication with stakeholders with pertinent information on social and emotional needs
- Determine best practices for providing support for gifted middle and high school students which targets their unique social and emotional needs

**Description:** In order to meet the goals of this area of focus, the AG department will:

- Train classroom teachers K-12 to understand and respond to the unique social/emotional characteristics of gifted students.
- Include discussion on specific social/emotional issues and implications for instruction of gifted learners in monthly professional development for AG teachers.
- Share social/emotional information and guidance in parent newsletters.
- Identify opportunities to embed social/emotional concepts into instructional design. Continue to integrate Habits of Mind in third grade whole group lessons and enrichment units.
- Collaborate with counseling services to explore commonalities and prioritize social/emotional content in the AG program at all levels
- Create opportunities to help students navigate transitional periods and the rigors of high school life. Investigate additional opportunities for middle and high school AG students to be together for interaction and support under the guidance of knowledgeable personnel.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Agendas from AG teachers meetings

- Parent newsletters
- Agendas from student meetings at transitional years

- Social/emotional content in units
- Habits of Mind

**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:** In addition to consultative services offered to help K-2 classroom teachers address the unique needs of gifted students and third grade whole group lessons, the AG department has established a model to provide early primary enrichment at targeted schools. This model attends to the needs of culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged Grade 2 students. There is overwhelming support from administrators, teachers, and parents to expand to a K-2 service component.

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

**Description:** Principals are encouraged to follow AG guidelines for grouping of high ability learners in K-3. AG teachers collaborate with K-2 classroom teachers on a consultative basis to help teachers meet the needs of high achieving students who show a need for differentiation of curriculum and instruction.

The Grade 2 Talent Development Model is an effort to cultivate the talents of primary aged students so that more may become eligible for enrichment experiences in grades 3-5. The model was piloted in more than twenty elementary schools and was extremely well-received.

In these schools, "Building Thinking Skills" is taught by the AG teacher in each second grade classroom during 30 minute lessons once a week. The classroom teacher has the opportunity to observe students who may exhibit gifted behaviors during the lessons. The AG teacher and classroom teacher collaborate to identify high potential students who need enrichment in a small group setting.

AG teachers conduct whole group lessons for all third grade classrooms during the first semester prior to initial identification. The lessons address critical and creative thinking skills and model higher-level questioning.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Instructional resources devoted to implementation of the Grade 2 Talent Development Model

- Sample curriculum plans/lessons/activities
- Student work samples and assignments
- Classroom observational data, "Look-For" document
- Data on patterns and trends

- AG database

**Other Comments:** Ideas for Strengthening

- Encourage principals to either:
  - o cluster group like ability students in reading and math within grade-level classrooms or
  - o use flexible grouping in grade-level reading and math blocks or
  - o use subject acceleration across grades K-3 in reading and math.
- Explore ways to reallocate or increase AG teacher positions in order to allow the AG department to provide intentional service for gifted students beginning in Kindergarten.

Other Comments:

Based upon positive feedback from participating teachers and principals, the Grade 2 model will gradually be expanded to additional schools and grades as funding permits.

**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 AG department has developed collaborative relationships with multiple departments in the best interest of our students. We continue to deepen these relationships and reach out to additional departments to improve the consistent use of differentiation practices for gifted students in all classrooms. This improved collaboration and deliberate communication enhances the effectiveness of the AG program as other entities become more aware of the core values of gifted education.

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

**Description:** The AG department collaborated closely with specialists in Curriculum and Instruction, Exceptional Children and English Language Learners to create extensions and differentiation for district-wide general education instructional units and to create AG enrichment units.

The AG department participates in regular district-wide meetings with K-12 School Counselors, K-12 Curriculum Facilitators, and K-12 Principals to facilitate communication in order to enhance curriculum and instruction for gifted students.

Each elementary and middle school has a school-level interdisciplinary team of faculty, staff and parents who serve on the Team for Academically Gifted (TAG). The intent of this team is to serve as the governing body for AG programming and service in that building. The interdisciplinary nature of the team allows for multiple perspectives to be represented and broadens the impact of the program.

The AG department leads Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Coordinator

meetings monthly to ensure that advanced course opportunities are equitable and appropriately staffed with trained teachers and approved rigorous syllabi.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Agendas for district-wide meetings

- TAG notebook
- Instructional units
- Agendas for AP/IB Coordinator meetings

**Other Comments:** Ideas of Strengthening:

AG teachers will be more intentional in collaborating with the EC and ELL contacts at the school to identify potential twice exceptional gifted students or high ability second language learners. The AG department will establish regular collaboration opportunities with EC and ELL Central Office staff to identify areas of improvement in serving AG students who are also served by their departments. The AG department will work with the ELL department to provide additional translated documents as needed.

**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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** Student Differentiated Education Plans (DEP) document the specific eligibility areas and applicable service models for individual AG students in elementary and middle school. The DEP is reviewed annually and adjustments to service delivery and/or eligibility are documented. Structures are not currently in place to address transition to high school and transfer to a different school.

Current documentation for curricular differentiation in content, process, and product exists (Group Annual Plans for Differentiation) but is too vague to provide adequate communication to parents and schools. Additionally, in grades 3-5, the group annual plan does not address differentiated services provided through the general education classroom setting. The AG department acknowledges the need for principals to be better informed about the commitment that teachers must make to personalize the education of gifted learners. This will improve the principal's ability to monitor, support and communicate the appropriate teaching and learning of gifted students within their building.

The Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP) is individualized to reflect service eligibility and annual review. However, the AG department foresees the need to strengthen the existing tool in order to address the unique needs and service of students identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG).

Communication about the annual plan for differentiation between the school and families is inconsistent at best

**Goals:** • Modify the format of the DEP to include the Annual Plan such that it reflects the specific curricular and instructional modifications that will be made for the student in terms of content,

process, product and environment

- Reinstate the requirement that the Annual Plan documents the differentiation practices in both the general elementary education classroom and the AG classroom
- Modify the DEP so that it may be used for service of intellectually gifted students
- Reinstate the high school DEP (preferably as part of the four-year plan)
- Require parental signature on the DEP with initial eligibility and at transition years, including transition to grade 9.
- Provide structure for improved communication of DEP to parent and student

**Description:** In GCS, a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is generated for each AG student upon initial eligibility and again upon transition into grade 6 due to the difference between the elementary and middle school AG service delivery models. Additionally, beginning in 2013-14, a new DEP will be generated upon transition into grade 9 to acknowledge the change in service delivery model.

Currently, a group annual plan is developed by the elementary AG teachers and the middle school math and reading teachers who have AG students in their classes. The group annual plans identify strategies for differentiation that they implement each quarter. A copy of the plan is shared with parents each year during an informational meeting. The group annual plan is filed in the Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) notebook/folder and a copy is submitted to the AG central office.

To strengthen the group annual plan as a communication tool, the format of the plan will be modified and merged with the DEP to better represent the differentiation occurring in the classroom. Not only will teachers indicate overall strategies used to differentiate content, process, product and environment, but teachers will also provide specific examples of these strategies in action. The elementary group annual plan will include a section that describes the differentiation occurring in the general education classroom setting. DEPs will be reviewed by the AG department and by school administration.

At the high school level, a DEP will be incorporated into the student four-year plan which is reviewed yearly through academic counseling. As a result, four-year plans for AG students will be more informed.

The notion of serving students who are intellectually, but not necessarily academically, gifted is new to the AG department. We anticipate that these students will require a service different from our current academically-based pull-out enrichment model in elementary school and advanced/accelerated classes in middle school. The DEP will be revised so that it can be used to define more appropriate service as needed.

Currently, elementary and middle schools are asked to hold a yearly parent informational meeting to inform parents about the AG program and to provide DEPs and group annual plans. This practice is inconsistently implemented throughout the district. The AG department will communicate its expectation for this practice with principals as a part of Academically Gifted non-negotiables.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG non-negotiables

- TAG notebook

- DEPs

**Other Comments:** Ideas for Strengthening:

Implement an accelerated ELA sequence for AG students in middle school which leads to the completion of high school English I in Grade 8. The accelerated ELA model should be initiated in the Very Strong program at The Academy at Lincoln.

Develop a high school DEP that will be attached to the four-year plan for communication to counselors, teachers and parents.

### **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:** The AG Executive Director is AIG-licensed and oversees the AG department including an AG Coordinator, three Program Facilitators and elementary AG teachers, all of whom are also AIG-licensed. The Executive Director is charged with the implementation and monitoring of the local AIG program and plan K-12.

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

**Description:** The Executive Director oversees all AG department practices and procedures to ensure full implementation of the AIG plan; including curriculum development, screening and identification, data collection, AG service models K-12, professional development for individuals serving AG students directly in any capacity, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, college readiness, and supervision of AG Coordinator and Program Facilitators. The Executive Director serves as a liaison between the AG department and all stakeholders.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Human Resource records

- Job description for the GCS AG Executive Director
- AG Handbook
- Database
- Enrichment curriculum
- SharePoint site
- AG webpage

**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 district AG Coordinator and AG Program Facilitators are AIG-licensed and serve as a link between administration and the 68 elementary, 22 middle and 28 high schools. The 55 AG

teachers assigned to the 68 elementary schools are AIG- licensed by the state of North Carolina. Elementary and middle school teachers who directly instruct students in the self-contained, full time program for Very Strong service must have AIG certification. These AIG-licensed teachers provide direct instruction for AG-identified students.

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

**Description:** AG teachers who are funded through state AIG monies must use 100% of their allotted instructional time at their assigned site(s) for the academic advancement of high ability students.

The AG teachers carry out screening and identification procedures, maintain the AG database, collaborate with classroom teachers, and provide direct instruction for AG students in reading and math. Elementary AG teachers provide appropriate differentiated instruction for AG identified students through a pull-out enrichment model using reading and math curriculum units which extend and enrich the NC SCOS beyond what is available in the regular classroom. Social and emotional issues are addressed in part through the study of Habits of Mind, which is embedded in the curriculum. AG teachers are also available to collaborate with general education teachers to ensure that AG students' needs are being met in the classroom.

The AG Program Facilitators oversee specific schools/AG teachers to ensure compliance with screening and identification procedures, support advanced/AG teachers in instruction and curriculum, provide staff development for advanced/AG teachers, and serve as a liaison with principals and parents to ensure that AG students are receiving curriculum and instruction that meets their needs. Program Facilitators are each responsible for specific initiatives such as Academic All-Star Camp, the Very Strong service model and Grade 2 Talent Development.

The AG Coordinator oversees the department's efforts to increase representation of underserved populations in AG, serves as a community liaison, and organizes professional development to support departmental initiatives.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG curriculum units

- AG scope and sequence in elementary and middle schools
- Agendas for AG Teachers' Monthly Meetings
- GCS Professional Development site

**Other Comments:** Ideas for strengthening:

Consistently provide the required minimum 90-minute instructional block in reading and math in Grades 3-5

- Instruction by the AG teacher is often interrupted with non-related school responsibilities and activities that include EOG review, EOG testing, field testing, interim testing, assemblies, celebrations, field trips, guided reading
- Due to budget and staffing reductions (7 Program Facilitators reduced to 3), AG teachers have been responsible for administering AG testing required for screening and eligibility during AG instructional time. This was previously the responsibility of central office AG Program Facilitators. Multiple screening windows require ongoing testing. The AG department is working to shift budget allocations to allow for the hiring of a testing team of retired, trained AG teachers who will administer and score AG eligibility tests, leaving AG teachers available for instruction.

### **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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** Out of almost 5,000 GCS teachers, there are currently 145 elementary, 100 middle school and 47 high school general education teachers who hold AIG licensure. GCS has an on-going partnership with High Point University to help our teachers obtain AIG licensure. In the 2010-2013 AIG Plan, the AG department established an LEA minimum requirement for all personnel who instruct AG students and who do not hold and are not pursuing AIG licensure. An 18-hour professional development series provides teachers with information about gifted characteristics and differentiation. Other staff development opportunities are available through the AG department for all personnel.

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

**Description:** GCS continues to provide limited financial support to teachers to help them obtain AIG licensure. Additionally, the 18-hour professional development series includes Characteristics of Gifted Learners, Differentiation for High Ability Learners: Awareness, and Differentiation for High Ability Learners: Into Practice. This workshop series constitutes the LEA minimum requirement for instructing AG students in the regular education classroom.

Monthly professional development is provided for elementary AG teachers, including curriculum support and instruction, instructional practices, technology and cultivation of K-2 students.

Based upon stakeholder feedback, there is a great need for purposeful, targeted professional development for classroom teachers K-12 on recognizing giftedness and exceptional abilities in students and best practices for cultivating high potential, particularly through differentiation. The AG department continues to expand professional development opportunities to respond to this demand.

At the high school level, professional development is provided for teachers of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. The district funds initial and renewal training for all teachers of these courses. Administrative personnel are also encouraged to pursue training in these areas in order to better support the programs.

The AG department reserves the right to place AG teachers in elementary schools and assign allotments. The AG department would like to participate more fully in the selection of school-based personnel working with AG students. Currently, the AG department screens candidates for elementary AG teachers but is not involved in the interview or selection process. The AG department has requested input in the hiring of teachers of AG students at the middle and high school levels, including the Very Strong service model.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • PD descriptions and rosters

• Human Resource logs

- AG website

**Other Comments:** The AG department is also working to increase the diversity of the AG teaching staff so that it better reflects the demographics of the district.

The AG department will continue to expand professional development opportunities to include workshops for district departments such as EC, ESL, Induction and Success, social workers, and counselors.

Offer professional development specifically targeting school administrators regarding gifted characteristics and best practices including placement, grouping and support.

### **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:** The appropriate placement of AG students with teachers who are in tune with the needs of high achieving students and with like-achieving peers is an area of concern that has not been resolved as evidenced by the lack of growth of AG students. We have recommended that principals group or cluster students by achievement and place them in classrooms led by teachers who are AIG licensed by the state or who have satisfied the minimum LEA requirements. Until these recommendations are consistently implemented, we will continue to witness a lack of growth.

The majority of the elementary AG student's day is spent in the general education setting. The entirety of the middle school AG student's day is spent in the general education setting, with the exception of VS students at The Academy at Lincoln. From that perspective, general education teachers need to utilize strategies for teaching gifted students that they may not have learned in their pre-service training.

The AG department feels strongly that high school teachers of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses should receive proper training from College Board or IBO prior to teaching these classes.

### **Goals:** • By 2016

- o 50% of schools will implement recommended AG grouping and placement practices
- o 100% of AP and IB teachers will have received proper training prior to teaching the course

**Description:** The ability to meet the stated goals will be largely determined by administrative cooperation and support including:

- school-based grouping and placement decisions that follow AG recommendations
- regional executive director and superintendent supervision and support of AG non-negotiables
- provision of personnel qualifications for placement with AG students to principals by Human Resources
- continued funding for AP and IB training

- academic counseling that promotes choice of rigorous courses by AG students

In elementary schools, the AG department recommends one of the following best practices for grouping that best fits the needs of the site:

- AG students are grouped together in the fewest grade level classrooms possible and assigned to a teacher with AIG licensure or who has met minimum LEA requirements.
- All students are cluster-grouped by ability such that any given classroom would have a minimum number of ability levels for which to differentiate instruction. Students in AG clusters should be assigned to a teacher with AIG licensure or who has met minimum LEA requirements.
- All students are flexibly grouped in math and reading/language arts and AG students are assigned to a teacher with AIG licensure or who has met minimum LEA requirements.

In middle schools, the AG department recommends one of the following best practices for grouping that best fits the needs of the site:

- AG students are grouped with their similarly-achieving peers in the fewest grade level classrooms possible and placed in the Advanced ELA and math courses. These students should be assigned to a teacher with AIG licensure or who has met minimum LEA requirements. Cross-teaming should be used when necessary to accurately place students according to academic need.
- All students are cluster-grouped by ability such that any given classroom would have a minimum number of ability levels for which to differentiate instruction. Students in AG clusters should be assigned to a teacher with AIG licensure or who has met minimum LEA requirements. This is most appropriate in schools with low numbers of AG identified students. Cross-teaming should be used when necessary to accurately place students according to academic need.

In high schools, the AG department recommends that AG students are enrolled in honors and AP/IB courses as often as their schedule and stamina will allow.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Class rosters

- Human Resource lists of AIG-licensed teachers
- Human Resource lists of teachers who have met the minimum LEA requirements

**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:** The AG department has established strong Professional Development opportunities for AG teachers and general education teachers, grades K-12, which are aligned with AG goals and other district initiatives

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

**Description:** Through professional development opportunities, the AG department addresses the

need to increase the number and diversity of classroom teachers who meet the minimum LEA requirement for working with gifted students, to further teacher understanding of the unique attributes of gifted learners and to build teacher capacity to provide appropriate rigor in instructional design in the general classroom.

In addition to local professional development opportunities, the AG department has established partnerships with local universities offering AIG add-on licensure and provides limited financial aid for teachers to pursue this licensure. The AG department also funds AP training through the College Board and IB training through the IBO for initial and renewal training.

The AG Department has established the following professional development:

- A series of three courses in gifted characteristics and differentiation
- AG teacher support for common core ELA and math units specific to the AG classroom
- Differentiating/extending common core units for ELA and math K-8
- AG teacher support for identifying high-achieving students in Grade 2 and building critical thinking skills for the students in Grade 2 Talent Development schools
- Professional Learning Communities for AP and IB teachers and coordinators district-wide

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • GCS PD website

- PD rosters and agendas
- HR AIG Licensure documentation

**Other Comments:** The AG department is developing additional targeted professional development for:

- School-based staff development in gifted characteristics, differentiation and rigor
- Recognizing characteristics of gifted students from underrepresented populations (i.e. dual exceptionalities, students of poverty, students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds)
- Recognizing characteristics of underachievement among gifted students
- Supporting the social and emotional needs of gifted students
- Content-specific support for teaching gifted students in science and social studies
- Maximizing the use of technology as an instructional tool to personalize learning for gifted students

### **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:** The AG department has established professional development opportunities that are aligned with research-based practices proposed by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). The AG department has designated minimum LEA AG course requirements for non-AIG licensed general classroom teachers of gifted students in concert with state and national guidelines. Twenty-first century content and skills have been integrated into AG teaching and learning opportunities.

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

**Description:** ELA and math units which are aligned with the NC SCOS and incorporate best practices in gifted education have been developed and implemented. Monthly AG teacher meetings focus on advanced content, differentiation, and use of technology to develop 21st Century skills. District-wide professional development sponsored by the AG department focuses on characteristics of gifted learners, differentiation and rigorous instructional practices. Teachers of AP and IB courses are required to attend College Board and IBO professional development prior to teaching the course.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • GCS PD website

- PD rosters and agendas
- HR AIG Licensure documentation

**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:** With the implementation of the Common Core State Standards and Essential Standards as the new NC SCOS, the AG department recognized the need to provide strategic support for the creation, implementation and refinement of AG ELA and math units. Professional learning opportunities have been intentionally designed to accomplish this goal.

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

**Description:** The following opportunities have been and will continue to be provided to AG teachers and general education teachers who serve AG students:

- Presentation of new elementary AG curricular units, including rationale, standards, conceptual focus, essential questions, instructional strategies, pre and post assessments, rubrics, differentiated resources, and evaluation techniques.
- Presentation of middle school Advanced ELA curricular units, underlining modifications of standard ELA units which tailor instruction to the needs of gifted learners
- Interactive support sessions through which teachers reinforce content, instructional strategies and management and techniques for extending learning
- Learning Fairs for AG teachers to share outstanding student products, celebrate success and share ideas

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG and middle school ELA and math units

- Student work samples
- Agendas from teacher meetings
- SharePoint calendar and documents

8/7/2013

**Other Comments:** The AG department collaborates with the Curriculum and Instructional department specialists to align pacing, extend content and differentiate products. An ultimate goal is for the AG teacher to be viewed more consistently as an expert in meeting the needs of high ability students and used as a resource in the school community.

## **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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The GCS AG department has made significant progress in establishing a comprehensive academic program for gifted students. However, GCS has not yet developed specific structural and programmatic opportunities to address intellectually gifted children and the social and emotional needs of high ability learners K-12. Therefore, this practice will be a focus for the 2013-2016 AIG Plan.

**Goals:**

- Decisions regarding student placement and service will be made in the interest of the whole child while meeting the student's academic/intellectual gifts and social/emotional needs
- Establish better understanding of the positive outcomes of subject/grade acceleration
- Establish a clearly defined procedure for the recommendation of subject or grade acceleration using the Iowa Acceleration Scales
- Continue to refine elementary AG curriculum and align with classroom pacing
- Middle school principals will embrace the need for differentiated instruction for AG students, including the required use of advanced ELA units
- Schools will consistently place students based on AG department recommendations
- AG identification is one of the factors in placement of students in 6-8 math and ELA. Cross-teaming should be used when necessary to accurately place students according to academic need.
- Expand and refine nurture services in grades K-2
- Explore appropriate resources for K-2 consultative
- Explore the feasibility of an additional VS site due to high enrollment, proximity factors, large class sizes and limited space for expansion at the current site
- Establish communication and professional development for AG teachers, classroom teachers, administrators and parents regarding social/emotional needs.
  - o Sponsor professional speakers
  - o Newsletter articles
  - o Library of resources made available to teachers and parents
- Reach out to counseling services to collaborate on the development of a social/emotional toolbox to support AG students using current research and experts in the field
- Increase use of interest and learning styles inventories
- Provide academic counseling specific to AG student needs to ensure appropriate high school course selection, career and college readiness and social/emotional support

**Description:** K-2 Consultative Services

- Collaboration and consultation between AG teacher and general education teacher to identify differentiation strategies best suited to meet the needs of high performing students in the general education classroom
- Process initiated by the classroom teacher or parent who recognizes performance well above grade level peers

Grade 2 Talent Development

- AG teachers, in participating schools, target Grade 2 students through weekly 30-minute whole group lessons in select schools for the purpose of cultivating potential
- After several weeks of teacher observation, weekly lessons continue in whole group or small group settings
- Research-based curriculum develops cognitive and metacognitive thinking skills
- These nurture opportunities will be extended to additional schools and to grades K-1, as resources allow.

Grade 3 Whole Group Instruction

- AG teacher conducts weekly 45-minute whole group lessons in all third grade classrooms prior to the initial third grade screening
- Curriculum focuses on critical thinking skills and metacognitive skills
- During group lessons, the classroom teacher is present to observe gifted traits in their students which can lead to teacher referrals for AG screening

Subject and grade acceleration

- Available with demonstrated need and are subject to principal approval

Grades 3-5 Pull-Out Enrichment

- AG teacher provides direct instruction in the AG classroom for a minimum of 90 minutes per week in each subject area of eligibility. Additional instructional time is recommended when possible. If a school cannot accommodate the recommended block of 90 minutes at a time, two 45-minute blocks is acceptable for each subject area of eligibility.
- Since AG teachers are funded through state-allotted monies, the priority for AG teachers must be in the service of AG identified students. Therefore, the majority of the AG teacher's day must be spent instructing AG eligible students.
- Concept-based curricular units developed by the AG department, which align with the NCSCOS and enrich and extend grade level standards. The units are culturally diverse and infused with 21st century content and skills.

Grades 3-5 Talent Development

- The Talent Development program will be phased out over the next three years in schools where less than 10% of the population is AG identified. Talent Development will no longer be a service option in 2015-2016.
- For 2013-2014, students in grades 4 and 5 may be served as Talent Development in schools where less than 10% of the population is AG identified.
- For 2014-2015, students in grade 5 may be served as Talent Development in schools where less

than 10% of the population is AG identified.

- Beginning in 2013-2014, Talent Development will no longer be a service option in schools where more than 10% of the population is AG identified.

#### Grades 4-8 Very Strong Service

- VS is a full time, self-contained program for the top third percentile of our gifted population. The program is offered exclusively on the campus of The Academy at Lincoln.
- The VS program addresses the highly gifted students' need for differentiation in grades 4 through 8 with daily service in ELA, math, science and social studies. The curriculum framework allows students to engage in complex, higher level, integrated thinking patterns, which transfer across the disciplines.
- The structure facilitates social/emotional support for highly gifted students.
- Middle School VS teachers must be highly qualified in the subject that they teach. All VS teachers must hold AIG licensure. The VS program currently serves approximately 400 students in grades 4-8.

#### Grades 6-8 Differentiated Instruction

- AG students are placed in advanced ELA and advanced math middle school courses with teachers who hold AIG licensure with the state or who have met the LEA minimum requirements for teaching gifted students.
- Advanced ELA courses offered increased depth and complexity of curriculum with some acceleration. Advanced ELA units have been created for grades 6-8 and the implementation is in progress. An accelerated math sequence is available to AG students which includes Algebra I and Geometry. Differentiation and extension opportunities are present in the district-provided units.

#### Grades 9-12 Advanced Coursework

- AG students in high school are encouraged to enroll in honors, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. High schools are expected to offer a minimum number of AP courses and each high school has a designated AP Coordinator who oversees the program and serves as a liaison with the central AG office. Advanced coursework is available to non-AG students.
- The Early College at Guilford is a dual-enrollment program on the campus of Guilford College which allows students to earn college credit while still in high school. Students complete honors courses and Advanced Placement courses in 9th and 10th grades, and are matriculated as full time college students in 11th and 12th grades. The application process is highly competitive and selective based on academic history and an interview with the school Admissions Team.
- The STEM Early College at NC A&T will welcome its second class in 2013-2014. It will offer dual enrollment opportunities for qualifying students looking to pursue interests in math and science.

Other academically-focused magnet programs are available to students across the district and suitable for gifted learners:

- Brown Summit Middle School Center for Advanced Academics offers advanced academic curriculum to prepare students to be successful in honors and advanced placement courses at the high school level. Rigorous instruction is provided in the core curriculum. In addition, each student receives three years of Latin instruction. Students must meet the eligibility criteria of 70th percentile or higher in both reading and math on the most recent EOG and grades of "B" or higher on their report card.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG handbook

- AG website
- Curricular units
- Magnet brochures
- AP/IB syllabi

**Other Comments:** The district offers more than 50 magnet programs throughout the district which address an array of thematic and curricular emphases. Admission to most of the elementary and middle magnet programs is based on a random selection process among applicants. Admission into high school magnet programs is based on criteria/interview for the specific program. There are 17 different magnet themes: Communications, Leadership, Traditional, Newcomers, Global Studies, Montessori, International Baccalaureate, Science, Technology, Spanish Immersion, Mandarin Chinese, Arts (performing and visual), Advanced Academics, STEM, Career and Technical, Education and Science, Single-Gender Middle College, and other Middle College programs held at various colleges, universities, and community colleges in Guilford County

Ideas for strengthening:

Consistently provide the required minimum 90-minute instructional block in reading and math in Grades 3-5

- Instruction by the AG teacher is often interrupted with non-related school responsibilities and activities that include EOG review, EOG testing, field testing, interim testing, assemblies, celebrations, field trips, guided reading
- Due to budget and staffing reductions (7 Program Facilitators reduced to 3), AG teachers have been responsible for administering AG testing required for screening and eligibility during AG instructional time. This was previously the responsibility of central office AG Program Facilitators. Multiple screening windows require ongoing testing. The AG department is working to shift budget allocations to allow for the hiring of a testing team of retired, trained AG teachers who will administer and score AG eligibility tests, leaving AG teachers available for instruction.

**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:** AIG programs and services are aligned with AIG identification, goals of the program, and LEA resources. Therefore, the AG department will maintain this practice.

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

**Description:** In GCS, students are identified in reading and/or math in grades 3-12. Students are served in their area of eligibility through pull-out enrichment or proper course placement. VS students participating in the VS program are served in all four core areas.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG database

- NCWise
- Annual review
- AG handbook
- GCS Strategic Plan goals

**Other Comments:** Ideas of Strengthening:

The AG department would like to investigate the possibility of offering a menu of service options to better meet the needs of students and diverse school structures. At the present time, obstacles to such an undertaking include resistance to change, insufficient staffing, funding, and the fact that many teachers and principals have minimal or no training on the nature of the gifted child and how to differentiate to achieve optimal growth. Some service menu options might include:

- Pull-out enrichment
- School-based differentiation specialist instead of AG pull-out
- AG teacher as teacher of record for reading and/or math
- Nurture in primary grades
- Collaborative or co-teaching in classrooms with AG clusters
- Full time AG differentiation specialist for middle schools

Explore the possibility of identifying and serving students in Science and Social Studies.

**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:** GCS AG programs and services are aligned with the total instructional district program in policy and practice.

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

**Description:** The GCS AG department has created ELA and math enrichment units based on the NCSCOS and infusing Social Studies and Science Essential Standards. These units use the same format as district-wide units. Revisions will be aligned with scope, sequence and pace to extend learning in the classroom.

The AG department also directly supports the LEA's Strategic Plan for Achieving Academic Excellence through Personalized Learning.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG report cards

- AG student and teachers schedules.

**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:** Administrators are aware of the GCS 2010-2013 plan (92%) and are aware of the NC AIG guidelines for gifted students, Article 9B (71%). Administrators indicate that the screening process is clear and consistent (80%); however 58% felt that the process was not equitable.

Classroom teachers are aware of NC AIG guidelines for gifted students (60%). While 94% of teacher respondents indicated that they are aware of the local AIG plan, only 52% were knowledgeable about the content and where to access the plan. Teachers indicate that the screening process is clear and consistent; however 48% of teachers felt that the screening process was not equitable.

The AG department also acknowledges the need to improve communication with and involvement of school-based student support personnel, including school counselors, EC and ELL staff.

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

**Description:** The GCS AG department will enhance existing structures and implement an array of communication and collaboration strategies to improve understanding of AG student needs, AG curriculum, and AG processes and procedures by all stakeholders.

- The AG department will take advantage of existing GCS communication outlets such as Parent Academy, GCS News Briefs, ConnectEd and local news sources.
- AG central office staff will participate in monthly principal, counselor, and CF meetings to provide information regarding AG services, procedures and curriculum.
- AG central office staff will collaborate regularly with EC and ELL central office staff.
- TAG membership currently includes EC, ELL and counselor and this opportunity for collaboration will be strengthened.
- TAG minutes will be communicated monthly to the AG department, principals and teachers.
- AG central office staff will provide updated rosters to principals after each screening.
- AG teacher will provide monthly newsletters or webpage updates to parents, principals, teachers and AG central office staff which will include content specifics and current departmental happenings.
- AG teachers will participate regularly in school-based faculty meetings and professional development opportunities to inform school staff about AG procedures, policies and practices.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:** • TAG minutes

- Meeting agendas from principal, counselor and CF district meetings
- School faculty meeting agendas
- Newsletters
- Webpages

- GCS News Briefs
- Emails to principals regarding updated rosters

**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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** Stakeholder input indicates that communication is acceptable. Anecdotally, however, principals and teachers have communicated a need for more structured and consistent communication specific to AG service, particularly during transition from one school to another.

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

**Description:** Rosters of AG eligible students will be disseminated to appropriate teachers, counselors, administrators and other school personnel at all levels to facilitate and promote optimum placement and service for AG students.

To strengthen transitions, the AG central office staff will provide AG rosters to middle and high schools prior to spring registration to ensure proper course placement for AG students. Cross-teaming may be necessary to ensure that course placement aligns with AG students' academic strengths. Communication structures regarding middle school math placement recommendations have been developed and will be refined.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Rosters from GCS AG database

- TAG minutes
- Master schedules

**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:** Stakeholder feedback indicates that collaboration and involvement is an integral part of the AG Program. It is important to note that the itinerate nature of elementary AG teachers and scheduling structures within schools can create challenges to finding time for consistent collaboration with classroom teachers and EC/ESL service specialists. A strong structure is in place for

collaboration between the AG department and AP/IB Coordinators. Regular participation in district-wide interdepartmental meetings provides opportunities for communication and collaboration.

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

**Description:** K-2 consultative services are available to support differentiation for high ability learners in primary years, and this support will be reviewed and refined so that it is utilized more consistently by regular education classroom teachers.

Elementary AG teachers hold informational meetings for AG parents at the beginning of each school year and again mid-year for parents of newly eligible third graders. Additionally, AG teachers provide AG rosters for all classroom teachers.

In middle schools, information is disseminated to parents regarding a revised Differentiated Education Plan, often in conjunction with an informational meeting.

Support has been provided for regular education teachers on the development of Annual Plans. This practice will be strengthened so that the Annual Plans more accurately reflect the differentiated curriculum and instruction used in the classroom. Deliberate attention to this communication tool will provide parents with a clear understanding of educational objectives for their child.

Intentional participation in monthly interdepartmental meetings provides the AG department with opportunities to cultivate a deeper understanding of the needs of AG students.

Advanced Placement teachers and coordinators hold informational sessions to promote participation in the AP program. International Baccalaureate Coordinators hold regular informational sessions for prospective and current IB families.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Annual Plans

- Agendas and Minutes
- AG Rosters
- DEPs
- IB Agreement

**Other Comments:** Ideas of Strengthening:

- Develop strategies to improve parental participation in informational opportunities sponsored by the AG department.
- Collaborate with high school counselors and AP/IB coordinators to provide informational sessions for gifted high school students and parents.
- AG central office staff will train a site-based contact person at each middle and high school on how to access and interpret the GCS AG database rosters.
- The format of Annual Plans for Differentiation will be revised to better indicate the ways in which the needs of gifted students are addressed in the AG and regular education classroom. Annual plans will require administrator approval so that principals are apprised of instructional practices provided for the AG population in their schools.
- The AG department will explore structures to alert school-based and AG staff to the

underachievement of gifted students so that appropriate interventions can be put into place.

- To strengthen this communication process, the AG department will initiate additional informational sessions for AG students and parents as follows:
  - o Understanding the CogAT and the AG screening process
  - o Enrichment opportunities for AG students at all grade levels
  - o Transition meetings
  - o Very Strong service model
  - o Preparing for middle school success
  - o Preparing for high school success
  - o College preparedness and planning

### **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:** While the district survey indicates that there is a general positive perception that the social and emotional needs of AG students are being met, the AG department recognizes there has been little systematic attention given to these needs.

Sixty-five percent of teachers responded that they know how to meet the social and emotional needs of AG students and 88% of parent respondents say that their AG child's social/emotional needs are being met. The majority of respondents represents an elementary perspective and thus may not address the challenges and issues that middle and high school AG students face.

**Goals:** • Provide a structured communication regarding the social and emotional issues facing AG students

- o Present to Counselors, CFs, AP/IB Coordinators, TAG chairs
- o Provide opportunities for parents to learn from experts in the field
- o Create a monthly parent newsletter which addresses social and emotional characteristics and challenges
- o Explore the creation of a blog to provide a discussion opportunity for parents and/or staff
- o Include information on social and emotional issues that AG students face in quarterly communications to principals
- o Include social and emotional issues in regular AG teacher meetings

**Description:** The GCS AG department designated the development of a structured plan for addressing social and emotional needs of AG students K-12 as a focus for the 2013-2016 AIG Plan. We recognize that research shows that social and emotional needs of gifted students must be systematically addressed for students to develop their full potential. Failure to address the affective needs of gifted children may contribute to academic underachievement and adjustment issues. Social/emotional traits of gifted students include enhanced manifestations of the following: divergent thinking ability, excitability, sensitivity, perfectionism, perceptiveness and self-awareness.

In lieu of a formal affective curriculum, the AG department feels that the most pertinent first step is to educate all stakeholders concerning how the characteristics of gifted learners may impact their social and emotional well-being and academic success. The AG department will communicate with stakeholders using current research in the field of gifted education with respect to affective needs to lay the groundwork for a better understanding of the uniqueness of gifted students.

Once the groundwork has been laid for educating stakeholders, we will reassess the needs of our AG community to develop next steps.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Parent newsletters

- Principal communications
- Agendas for AG teacher meetings
- Agendas for district-wide meetings
- Flyer for speaker sessions

**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:** The AG department is choosing to maintain this practice since subject/grade acceleration remains a site-based decision. Until academic acceleration is recognized as an appropriate strategy to meet the needs of advanced students, the AG department will have limited impact on acceleration decision-making.

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

**Description:** Subject and grade level acceleration is for those students who consistently perform above their peers and may be best served by receiving grade level instruction in the next grade. Subject acceleration is recommended for those students who demonstrate performance above grade in one subject but not necessarily in all areas. Students who are grade accelerated should be learning two grade levels above their peers.

Requests for subject or grade acceleration are typically initiated by the parent. The requests are brought to classroom teachers or principals. The AG department has a process to support the gathering of evidence to be considered by the Team for Academically Gifted (TAG). The TAG's findings are presented to the principal for consideration.

The AG department is investigating a research-based placement tool, the IOWA Acceleration Scale, as a first step in creating a district-wide acceleration policy.

Additionally, the LEA will develop guidelines regarding subject acceleration based on DPI's guidelines

for Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (SBE policy #GCS-M-001) for implementation in the spring of 2014.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • IOWA Acceleration Scale

- TAG notebook
- AG Handbook
- DPI website

**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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The GCS AG department has historically addressed this practice through multiple formats in grades K-5, but lack of funding, resources and support has rendered the efforts minimally effective. The particular programs were not sustained long enough for adequate data to be collected in order to analyze the success of the efforts. Currently, we have a structure in place to cultivate high potential students in Grade 2 from traditionally under-represented AIG populations and hope to expand this structure. Additional resources and services will be explored to further address this practice.

**Goals:** • Establishment of structure for regular collaboration with EC and ELL central office contacts to identify needs of twice-exceptional students and gifted English language learners.

- Strengthening of Grade 2 Talent Development Program and gradual extension to grades K-1 in schools with few AG eligible students.
- Analyze the effectiveness of current curriculum and service to identify areas of success and need.
- Provide training to AG teachers on the importance of respecting and valuing cultural, linguistic and learning differences
- Identify possible services and resources specific to under-represented students.
- Identify possible funding sources for programming.

**Description:** The Grade 2 Talent Development Model is an effort to cultivate the talents of primary aged students so that more may become eligible for enrichment experiences in grades 3-5. The model was piloted in more than twenty elementary schools and was extremely well-received.

In select schools, "Building Thinking Skills" is taught by the AG teacher in each second grade classroom during 30 minute lessons once a week. The classroom teacher has the opportunity to observe students who may exhibit gifted behaviors during the lessons. The AG teacher and classroom teacher collaborate to identify high potential students who need enrichment in a small group setting.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Grade 2 lessons and student samples

- AG training rosters and agendas
- Training materials
- AG SharePoint

**Other Comments:** Other Comments:

The AG Coordinator, a new staff position, will be dedicated largely to the research of potential services, programs and resources that will help meet our goals in this area.

Ideas of Strengthening:

Workshops for students, parents, teachers:

- Study skills
- Organization
- Extra-curricular enrichment opportunities
- Cultural diversity
- Social and emotional needs of students from under-represented populations
- College readiness
- Choosing rigor

Investigate programs such as:

- Explorations K-1
- Mentoring Mathematical Minds, Mentoring Young Mathematicians
- Strengthening the IB PYP and MYP programs
- Renzulli's Schoolwide enrichment

**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:** Stakeholder input indicates that many GCS schools (65% of responding principals) offer extra-curricular enrichment opportunities that are appropriate for AG students. Parent respondents (64%) indicate that their AG children are encouraged to participate in these opportunities and 60% would like to attend informational meetings about these opportunities. The GCS AG Department will continue to work with schools to promote PTSA involvement and community participation to strengthen and increase opportunities, particularly in low-performing schools.

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

**Description:** Extra-curricular enrichment opportunities available to AG students in GCS schools include Science Olympiad, Odyssey of the Mind, Continental Math League, AG Reading Club, Math

Counts, Mad Science, Debate Club, National Junior Honor Society, Chess Club, Battle of the Books, Robotics, History Club, and 24 Game Challenge. AG students are encouraged to participate in Duke TIP and Governor's School opportunities. These opportunities are often promoted and/or facilitated by the AG specialist at the elementary school level but participation is not limited to AG students.

The GCS AG department also sponsors a summer Academic All Star Camp for rising 9th graders which is attended by students from every middle school. The top thirty students from each middle school are invited to attend the camp at no cost. This unique experience provides an opportunity for intensive study in an area of interest, ACT preparation, leadership and team-building skills, preparation for advanced high school classes and informational sessions from colleges, guidance counselors, advanced study opportunities (AP, IB, Governor's School, School of Math and Science) and financial institutions.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Flyers

- School calendars
- GCS AG website
- GCS News Briefs
- local newspaper
- Camp brochure

**Other Comments:** Other Comments:

The reinstatement of the Guilford Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education (PAGE) chapter will be an excellent venue for the communication of existing opportunities. The PAGE organization will also be able to tap into community, business and university resources to develop mentorships, real work experiences, community service/awareness and to increase enrichment opportunities for AG students.

Networks of available opportunities for students will be posted on the AG websites and social networking sites.

Investigate flexible scheduling or other compensation for AG teachers to initiate extracurricular enrichment opportunities.

Ideas for strengthening:

Investigate the expansion of the Academic All Star Camp to other grades.

## 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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The AG department has established relationships with many community organizations to support the gifted students in Guilford County. We acknowledge the need to be more intentional in this practice and to continue to develop stronger support for the social/emotional and academic needs of AG students and their families.

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

**Description:** Communication:

- Elementary AG teachers communicate with parents at beginning of the year orientation meetings, at end of year student reviews, with unit designed report cards, and with monthly newsletters and webpages. Middle school classroom teachers review the student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) and group annual plans.
- The AG plan is available for parents to review on the GCS AG website.

Partners:

- Parents of AG students serve as members of the Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) at each school. The TAG is responsible for AG decision making at the school level.
- A Guilford chapter of Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education (PAGE) is in the process of being reactivated.
- The AG department partners with Business for Excellence in Education (BEE) for financial support for the Academic All Star Camp.
- The Guilford Education Alliance has partnered with the AG department in writing a widely published informational article about the AG students in GCS.
- GCS Parent Academy has partnered with the AG department to host several informational meetings concerning the AG screening and eligibility process.
- The AG department is represented on the board of the Hampton University Partnership magnet, an elementary school which partners with North Carolina A & T.
- Community businesses have partnered with the "Cool to be Smart" celebrations by providing prizes to students who have achieved academic success.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Agendas from PAGE meetings

- Agendas from GCS Parent Academy meeting
- Newsletters, website links

- 2013-16 AIG plan online
- Agendas/flyers from speakers

**Other Comments:** Other Comments:

The Cool to Be Smart celebration is a unique example of partnerships to recognize academic success. Students who obtain a passing score on five Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate exams and/or earn a "B" or higher in a qualifying college course are invited to participate. GCS partners with a local auto dealership and other local businesses to reward these high achieving students with prizes such as personal electronics and even a car.

Ideas for Strengthening:

- Partner with other district departments and community businesses and organizations to develop a middle school mentorship program aimed at combating underachievement and strengthening extra-curricular opportunities appropriate for gifted students.
- Pursue additional summer camp opportunities in conjunction with local universities and community organizations that will prepare students for jobs in the 21st Century.

**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:** Concerted efforts were made in the 2010-2013 Plan to thoroughly communicate with all stakeholders. Surveys indicate that stakeholders are currently more aware of the AG plan and program but are still unclear about certain procedures and policies. The GCS AG department will continue to develop avenues of communication with teachers, families and the community at large in an intentional and consistent manner.

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

**Description:** The AG department will continue to use its website as a resource for students, parents, and the community to access information about the AG Plan, program and processes. Additionally, the AG Department will partner with the Parent Academy, Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education (PAGE), and the GCS District Relations department to develop a network of communication feeds for parents, students and all stakeholders. AG teachers will also be involved in disseminating information to parents and students about the AG program.

The AG department will:

- Communicate through a monthly newsletter for parents.
- Communicate through a quarterly newsletter for principals.
- Attend district-wide counselor, curriculum facilitator and principal meetings.
- Require AG teachers to write monthly newsletters and maintain a website.
- Ensure that schools hold regular parent informational sessions led by AG teachers at the beginning of the school year to discuss curriculum, processes, and procedures.

- Continue to partner with the Parent Academy to provide presentations on topics of interest in a timely manner. i.e. before 3rd grade screening, before middle school and high school registration.
- Publish parent/students' rights on the AG website.
- Post the 2013-16 AIG Plan and AG Parent Handbook on the GCS AG website.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG webpage

- brochures
- annual parent/teacher/student surveys
- handbooks
- agendas/presentations/minutes from meetings and work sessions

**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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The number of participants in surveys, meetings, and programs conducted by the AG department is a very small sample of the general GCS population and is not representative of the diversity of our community. However, the number of respondents (2264) to recent AG surveys has dramatically increased due to ameliorated dissemination of the survey. The AG department has been very intentional when inviting participation on the AG Advisory Board to accurately represent the demographics of the district.

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

**Description:** Stakeholder input is solicited through surveys, meetings, and GCS website postings. Administrators, parents, teachers, and students are surveyed annually by the AG department for stakeholder input. Feedback received from stakeholders will be used to improve services to GCS AG students.

An AG Advisory Board monitors the development and implementation of the AG plan and program. The AG Advisory Board is composed of the AG Executive Director, AG Program Facilitators, AG teachers, regular education teachers, parents, students, representatives of Exceptional and English as a Second Language departments, and administrators. The Advisory Board represents the demographics of the community.

The Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) at each elementary and middle school includes a parent member.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG Advisory Board membership and agendas

- Names of parents who serve on TAG

- Meeting agendas
- Survey data

**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:** The AG department maintains communication with parents/families and the community through the GCS AG webpage, individual school AG teacher webpages, parent meetings and regular written communication.

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

**Description:** Many resources and opportunities for AG students are available on the GCS website. Services and enrichment activities appropriate for AG students are communicated through parent meetings and regular written communications (newsletters and school websites).

As linguistic diversity increases so does the need for additional sources of interpretation. Through collaboration with the ESL department, the AG department presently supports non-English speaking parents through translations of letters and forms, by advocating for non-English speaking students, and by providing translators as needed. Translators are used to inform and counsel parents on educational options that may be available within the school system for their student.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Translated letters and forms

- Notes from TAG meetings
- AG teacher meeting agendas
- Correspondence with translators

**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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** GCS is fortunate to be located in close proximity to several colleges and universities with which partnerships can be forged to support and extend the way in which AG students are served throughout the district. Additionally, local businesses and industry have taken a marked interest in

partnering with GCS to provide the students of Guilford County the most advantageous education possible. At the present time, GCS partners with several local universities to provide early college (high performing students earn college credit) and middle college experiences for students.

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

**Description:** The AG department partners with institutions of higher learning and businesses to improve services and enrichment opportunities for our students by:

- Meeting with contacts at local universities to look for ways to partner with the AG department whether it is to develop a mentorship program or services that can be provided to our students.
- Inviting members of Businesses for Excellence in Education and Guilford Education Alliance to participate on the AG Advisory Board.
- Developing new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships with local universities including UNC Greensboro, North Carolina A & T, Greensboro College, Guilford College, Elon University, Duke University and Bennett College.
- Continuing the partnership with local businesses who sponsor "Cool to Be Smart" and the Academic All Star Camp.
- Continuing to partner with High Point University in offering AG certification courses.

GCS partnerships with local universities provide professional development opportunities for teachers, including AIG licensure, and access to college courses for students. Middle College partnerships exist with Greensboro College, Bennett, NC A&T and several GTCC campuses to provide alternative learning environments for students. The Early College at Guilford College allows highly gifted students to enroll in full time college courses in the 11th and 12th grades.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Cool to Be Smart brochure

- Academic All Star Camp brochure
- High Point University flyers
- GCS website on middle and early colleges
- Agendas
- Calendars

**Other Comments:** Ideas for Strengthening:

- Explore potential partnership with NC A & T University to develop AG certification courses
- Explore potential partnership with Elon College's Master's in Gifted Education
- Explore summer camp opportunities for AG students in conjunction with local universities and non-profit organizations (i.e. Natural Science Center)
- Explore partnerships with individual corporations/businesses
- Explore the possibility of sponsorship opportunities by organizations and businesses to support in their pursuit of AIG certification.

## **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:** The 2010-2013 AIG plan was approved by the GCS Board of Education in June 2010 and submitted for review by SBE/DPI in July 2010.

The 2013-2016 AIG plan was approved by the GCS Board of Education in June 2013 and submitted for review by SBE/DPI in July 2013.

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

**Description:** The written AG plan is to be reviewed by the AG Advisory Board. The executive summary of the plan will be shared with the GCS Academic Services Committee and Cabinet to address specific AG program needs and goals. After review by the Cabinet, the plan will be posted online for public comment. Then the plan returns to the Cabinet prior to being submitted for approval to the Board of Education. Any revisions or adjustments to the plan will be brought to the attention of the Superintendent, Cabinet, and Board of Education before submitting the plan to the DPI for review and comment.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • GCS AG website

- GCS AIG Plan 2013-2016
- Memorandums to Academic Services, Cabinet and BOE
- Summary of public comments

**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:** The AG Advisory Board monitors progress on implementation of the AIG Plan through quarterly meetings. The AG program and plan are monitored through school visits by the AG program facilitators, the AG Coordinator and the AG Executive Director. The AG Department conducts compliance reviews in elementary and middle schools following every large-scale screening.

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

**Description:** AG program facilitators closely monitor the AG database and review records and services at each school. AG teachers conduct annual reviews, looking at one student at a time, to assure that all records and placement decisions are accurate and in compliance with the AG plan and state legislation. Quarterly AG Advisory Board meetings focus on identified areas for growth and progress toward stated goals.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Compliance Review forms

- AG database
- School records
- Advisory Board agendas and minutes

**Other Comments:** Ideas for Strengthening:

- Provide opportunities for other input groups to meet regularly
- Modify the compliance review to include a principal component and curriculum and communication evidences.

### **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:** GCS contributes above and beyond state funding to ensure full implementation of the AG Plan. Expenditures and personnel allotments (HR) are in compliance with the federal, state, and local budgets.

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

**Description:** Budget oversight is conducted at the district level for all federal, state, local, and grant funds.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • GCS finance reports

- annual budget statement
- teacher licensure report
- purchase orders for curricular materials
- contracts for professional development

**Other Comments:**

### **Practice D**

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

### **This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The present GCS AG database does not have the capability to disaggregate data on student performance growth or annual drop-out data. The AG department must request this data from other departments including Data and Accountability, Student Information and Drop-Out Prevention. The addition of AG students as a subgroup for the state accountability model will be a catalyst for more thorough data analysis.

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

**Description:** The AG database allows the AG department to track test scores for students who have undergone screening for AG identification. However, the system will necessarily undergo modifications due to the conversion of the state data management system. Additionally, the current AG system to capture data does not provide the capacity to analyze student growth or teacher performance. It will be necessary for the AG department to obtain assistance from the LEA technology and student information departments to ensure that the AG database is compatible with the new platform.

The Data and Accountability department composes an annual report on student performance, disaggregated by subgroup, for the district. This report is distributed directly to schools and district administration; from there it is disseminated among department staff. In the case of schools, data from the reports is also shared with principals, parents and the local community through methods that include, but are not limited to, ConnectEd and school newsletters. District-wide data from the report is published in the local newspaper and posted on the district website. Drop-out data is also included in district-wide reports.

The AG department uses and shares performance data obtained from College Board regarding Advanced Placement participation and performance to inform instruction and support. PSAT and PLAN results are used to encourage participation in rigorous high school coursework.

To adequately address this practice, the AG department's database needs to have the capacity to access current and on-going student growth and drop-out data. The ability to compile and analyze data is a challenge for our department and impedes our progress toward accurate representation of AG student growth and of teacher performance. We are hopeful that the state's focus on AIG as a sub-group will prompt attention to this need.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:** • EOG/EOC scores

- PLAN and PSAT reports
- AP reports
- Annual report from Data and Accountability

## 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:** The AG department is currently able to monitor many of the specified sub-groups of under-represented populations, including ethnicity, highly gifted and twice exceptional. Our current database does not allow us to access data in regards to ESL or economic status.

**Goals:** At the suggestion of stakeholders, the AG department will request that an equity analysis be conducted by the GCS Office of Diversity. The data obtained through the analysis will be used to inform decision-making in regards to the district goal of increased representation of diverse populations. Similarly, the AG department will establish structured collaboration with the ESL and EC departments as well to ensure that we are accurately and adequately monitoring the participation of these subgroups in AG programming.

**Description:** Demographic information about under-represented students is maintained on the AG database as well as in NCWise. As the data management system is converted to PowerSchool, there will be a need to communicate AG monitoring requirements to GCS data programmers in the redesign of the AG database. Adequate monitoring of participation of underrepresented subgroups will necessitate increased access to multiple points of data.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG database

- NC-WISE
- Historical data
- GCS Equity Analysis report

**Other Comments:** Ideas for strengthening:

Ameliorations on the AG database may provide increased access to data on under-represented groups.

### **Practice F**

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

**This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** Information regarding the credentials of personnel serving AG students is currently available through the Principal Portal (online HR access for principals) and the Human Resource Department.

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

**Description:** Qualifications of all school personnel are easily accessible through the Principal Portal and through Human Resources. Records are updated regularly to reflect highly qualified status in all areas.

A minimum LEA AG course requirement has been established for teachers who do not hold AIG licensure but who instruct AG students. The completion of this requirement is recorded by the AG department and by Human Resources.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Human Resource rosters (licensure reports)

- Professional development records
- Data of LEA requirements.

**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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The AG Advisory Board, which reflects the diversity of our district, meets regularly to review the AG plan, provide feedback and make recommendations for improvement. Parent representatives participate on the school-based Team for Academically Gifted (TAG) at some schools, but membership on the TAG is not always demographically representative of the school.

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

**Description:** Members of the Advisory group reflect the demographics of the district and include:

- Middle school, high school, and elementary school principals (at least one from each level)
- Parents to represent middle school, high school, and elementary school (at least one from each level)
- Regular classroom teachers to represent middle school, high school, and elementary school (at least one from each level) including EC and ELL representatives
- Two AG teachers
- Regional superintendent or designee

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Agenda

- Meeting minutes
- Roster of Advisory Board

**Other Comments:** Include a business representative and a representative from an institution of higher learning as members of the AG Advisory Board.

### **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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** The survey process for eliciting feedback from stakeholders regarding the AG plan and program has been greatly improved compared to previous efforts. Face-to-face interactions with various departments and other stakeholders have increased opportunities for feedback.

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

**Description:** The process for eliciting feedback from stakeholders via survey responses has improved thanks to the availability of electronic survey tools and improved dissemination. Surveys are made available to administrators, teachers, students and parents. The surveys are translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, French and Arabic. Surveys are available digitally and on paper.

The AG Advisory Board provides opportunities for on-going feedback on the implementation and successes of the AG plan and program during quarterly meetings.

The AG department meets regularly with various central office departments to gather input and support.

Regular parent informational meetings are conducted at the school and district level which provide opportunities for parents to ask questions and express concerns.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG surveys

- Summary of survey responses
- AG Advisory Board minutes
- Agendas

**Other Comments:** Ideas for Strengthening:

- Revise surveys to target standards and selected focus practices
- Tailor surveys to address specific middle school and high school needs
- Develop additional methods for reaching middle and high school stakeholders

### **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 AG department gathers and evaluates multiple sources of data to analyze progress toward stated goals and areas in need of improvement. This analysis is used to amend and enhance the AIG Plan and program.

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

**Description:** The AG department compiles and examines the following information for the purpose of decision-making and planning:

- Second grade talent development database rosters and initial third grade screening results
- Survey responses
- Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate reports
- Academic All Star Camp ACT growth statistics
- Data obtained through the use of portfolio options
- Teacher feedback on AG curriculum
- Teacher/Principal feedback on professional development opportunities
- AIG licensure status of personnel
- Participation in professional development offered by the AG department
- Student growth reports from Data and Accountability

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • AG database

- AG surveys
- AP/IB reports
- AASC ACT reports
- Human Resources personnel status
- Professional Development feedback

**Other Comments:**

### **Practice J**

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

**This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.**

**Rationale:** All data from evaluation of the local AIG program gathered during the revision of the AIG Plan is disseminated to the public through the Board of Education approval process. Once approved, the revised plan is published on the AG website.

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

**Description:** Data from evaluation of the AG program is available on the AG website, including:

- Summary of survey responses
- AG headcount
- Demographic breakdown of eligible AG students
- AP and IB participation and performance data

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • Annual DPI AG reports

- Survey responses
- AG website

**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:** AG student rights are currently protected through the general GCS student rights policies and procedures. Additionally, the enforcement of Article 9b through AG program procedures and practices protects the unique needs of gifted students.

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

**Description:** Practices and procedures are carefully monitored for consistency and fairness across the district by the AG department and the AG program facilitators. A process to resolve disagreements has been developed for parents and was implemented under the 2010-2013 Plan. The "Resolving Disagreements" document is located in the GCS AG Handbook and on the AG website. This document provides parents with the steps to follow should they have a disagreement with an AG decision.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** • GCS AG Handbook

- AG website
- Grievance documentation
- GCS student handbook
- GCS website – BOE policies and procedures

**Other Comments:** Ideas for Strengthening:

- AG Student Bill of Rights
- AG Non-Negotiables for schools

**Glossary (optional):**

**Appendix (optional):**

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