

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

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Union County Public 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, Union County Public Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

Union County Public Schools Vision for local AIG program: The vision of the Union County Public Schools' Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program is to nurture and excite the potential within students who show high ability and/or aptitude for learning. In order to meet these needs, the program must provide advanced instructional approaches and curriculum that go beyond the regular classroom. These experiences should include acceleration options, opportunities for individual interest development and high level problem solving skills in order to be prepared for the challenges and workplace options in the 21st century.

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

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
\$3544904.00	\$1550000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Making the Academically/Intellectually Gifted (AIG) program identification process transparent to school personnel, parents/families, and the community at large has been a high priority for Union County Public Schools (UCPS). As a result, the self-assessment data recommended this practice be maintained. These procedures are designed to lead toward appropriate educational services for gifted students and potential gifted students at all grade levels. The rationale behind early identification and service is based on several studies which found that identifying and supporting gifted students early increases the probability of future extraordinary achievement and reduces the risk of emotional and educational problems.

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

Description: SCREENING

Annual system-wide screening will occur in the spring for grades 3-7. Student nominations for screening will be sought from teachers based on classroom performance and/or behavioral characteristics. Students who have qualifying standardized test scores and grades will also be added to the pool. The process continues until May when all test scores have arrived. At this time, parents and other individuals may also request screening. Placement is effective the following fall.

On-going screening takes place throughout the year for students who transfer in from another school district during the year. Placement is immediate at any point in the school year. If current students are identified early in the fall and were not screened during the previous spring, then they will also be screened at this time.

Screening and placement decisions continue throughout the summer. These efforts are coordinated by the Director of AIG Services. Placement is effective in the fall.

Screening Pool Components

- School Personnel – (Teacher, counselor, media specialist, special area teachers, previous year's teacher) – supported by a research-based rating scale
- Student's grades
- Student, Parent or Community Member (with academic knowledge of the student) nominations
- 85th percentile on an above level achievement test or full scale aptitude test (local or national)

norms)

- 90th percentile in aptitude subtest score
- 93+ on grade level achievement test (such as EOG Ready tests and Stanford)
- Student has been identified as gifted in another school system

Screening Steps

- Screening lists and associated records will be maintained by teachers throughout the year. These lists will reflect the name, race, referral dates and decisions along with all test data available for each student being considered for AIG placement. AIG teachers will collaborate with classroom teachers in forming the screening pool.
- Students in kindergarten, first and second grades will be screened as requested for subject/grade acceleration according to above grade level evaluations in reading, math, and writing assignments.
- The screening procedures for third and sixth graders begin mid-year when the InView test is administered.
- Screening for grades 4 and 5 begins after the fourth grading period. Screening for middle school may begin after first semester.
- Students in grades 3-7 who score 85th percentile or higher on an above level achievement or full scale aptitude test will be screened. When available, both local norms and national norms will be used.
- Students who have an 'A' average in grades 3-7 will be screened.
- Students will be screened upon school AIG team recommendation.
Students will be screened upon parent or teacher request.

Through the use of multiple indicators, the AIG team and AIG teachers will search proactively to ensure those culturally diverse students and students from other under-served populations are not overlooked. The following strategies will be used:

- Meetings with teachers will be held at each school site to review the screening list of those students who score 85th percentile or higher on aptitude or achievement and did not qualify. Using the alternative assessment selection form, teachers are asked to determine if an alternative assessment is needed for any of the students listed. Teachers may also nominate other students not on the list for an alternative assessment.
- A notice to all new parents in the school system in grades K-7 is given at the time of registration and is available at all times on the district website to notify all parents that a gifted program is in place. These notifications are made available in both English and Spanish.
- Criteria provide more than one pathway for identification using multiple indicators.

- Multiple indicators include:
 - 1) Research based rating scale – valid and reliable indicating gifted behaviors
 - 2) A portfolio of student work samples such as outstanding projects, unique ways of doing assignments, outstanding academic achievement, etc.
 - 3) Numerical grade averages
 - 4) Scores from most recent achievement and aptitude tests
 - 5) Documentation of any interests that the student has indicated (Has the student actually been researching a topic of interest?)
 - 6) Any other documented evidence of gifted characteristics or possible potential

Articulation and dissemination efforts take place at a variety of levels and through many access points. The following is a sample of the activities:

District and school level administration: annual informational meetings conducted by the AIG Director, Auxiliary Services updates distributed to all administrators monthly, presentations at leveled principal meetings, assistant principal, and counselor meetings

School AIG team: AIG team informational sessions provided by the AIG teacher at local schools to ensure all AIG team members understand the program and their roles as team members.

Staff in-service training: Training is given to all regular education staff and others to explain how the AIG program functions and who the contacts are for further information

Parent/Guardian: General information is provided through AIG website, school and teacher websites. Meetings held at the school for parents by the AIG teacher regarding various aspects of the screening, referral, and placement processes.

Student: Information made available at school through regular education teachers

Community: General information provided through the AIG website, as well as through school and district staff.

IDENTIFICATION

Once students are in the screening pool, the identification process begins. Parents are sent AIG 2 forms which request permission to test. Once testing is complete, parents receive the results, the placement matrix (Appendix A) and if their child qualified, are invited to a conference where the remaining paperwork is signed.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Meeting notices, agendas, sign-in sheets.
- 2) Newspaper articles and other print media (including internet publication) explaining the process.

- 3) Stakeholder surveys
- 4) Personnel recommendations at K-7 grade levels.

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: UCPS utilizes a multiple criterion approach to gifted placement and services. In the previous revision, additional options for use of aptitude subtest scores were added as a new dimension. The results from the past two years, along with the self-assessment rating and significant discourse during the revision process, determined this practice should be maintained. Research clearly indicates that the use of multiple criteria is essential to the identification of giftedness and "is especially useful to overcome the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted and talented programs." (Robinson, 2007) Research by Naglieri and Ford (2003) supports the use of the Naglieri Non-Verbal Abilities Test to successfully "identify minority gifted students".

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

Description:

EARLY KINDERGARTEN

(See Standard 4, Practice H and Appendix B for complete requirements and important dates)

Students are identified for early kindergarten placement according to State Board policy using the following methodology:

- Student aptitude: 98th percentile on a recognized student aptitude test
- Student achievement: 98th percentile in reading and mathematics on a standardized test
- Performance: Student work samples that show performance above that of their age peers.
- 3 letters of recommendation
- A social development checklist.
- Informal interview with the child and the school administrator or designee
- Structured interview with the parent(s)

WHOLE GRADE OR SUBJECT ACCELERATION (grades K-3)

Subject Acceleration

Based on recommended criteria, student receives instruction at a higher grade level with another group of students while remaining with their peer group for the remaining part of the their instructional day. A second option would be to implement curriculum compacting. These methods work best in

subjects that have a clearly developed sequence of skills (ie: reading and math). These strategies are appropriate at any grade level. Once acceleration opportunities have begun, the availability of continued opportunities remains essential. Subject acceleration must have an ongoing plan.

In order to participate in subject acceleration, a student must meet all of the following criteria:

1. An Iowa Acceleration Scale – Qualitative and Quantitative components (listed below)
 - a. School and Academic Factors, Developmental Factors, Interpersonal Skills, Attitude and Support Factors
 - b. An on-grade-level achievement test with score of 95th percentile or higher in the subject(s) to be accelerated
 - c. A recognized achievement test, two years above grade level, with a score of 75th percentile or higher in subject(s) to be accelerated
 - d. A Full Scale IQ test of 115 or higher
 - e. Follow Iowa Acceleration Scale guideline recommendations and a grand total score should be 60 points or greater
2. Teacher/team recommendations
3. Principal recommendation and placement

See (Appendix J)

Whole Grade Acceleration

This involves skipping levels in the normal progression of school. It is only appropriate for highly gifted students. In order to qualify, students must meet all of the following criteria:

1. An Iowa Acceleration Scale – Qualitative and Quantitative components (listed below)
 - a. School and Academic Factors, Developmental Factors, Interpersonal Skills, Attitude and Support Factors
 - b. An on-grade-level achievement test with a score of 95th percentile or higher in the subject(s) to be accelerated
 - c. A recognized achievement test, two years above grade level, with a score of 75th percentile or higher to be accelerated
 - d. A Full Scale IQ test of 130 or higher
 - e. Follow Iowa Acceleration Scale guideline recommendations and a grand total score should be 60 points or greater
2. Teacher/team recommendations
3. Principal recommendation and placement

See(Appendix J)

AIG IDENTIFICATION

AIG Identification for grades 4-7 (Appendix A)

• Aptitude, achievement, and performance are criteria used in a variety of ways to identify gifted students. UCPS uses a three-pathway model for entrance in its gifted program (Appendix A). Nationally standardized tests and research-based instruments designed to assist in the identification of gifted students are used. Such tests may include the Cognitive Achievement Test (CogAT), the Otis-Lennon School Abilities Test (OLSAT), the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), and the Gifted Rating Scales (GRS). Above grade level nationally normed achievement tests such as the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and Stanford Achievement Tests, can be used in the event that the End of Grade (EOG) test scores are not available or are not high enough.

•For students who have educational or situational circumstances for which traditional testing alone may not be sufficient to identify giftedness, the third pathway is designed to allow students to submit portfolio work along with aptitude or achievement results which indicate a need for differentiated services.

A transfer student can submit the results of other nationally normed testing which can be considered in lieu of additional testing if completed within the last 12 calendar months.

Non traditional measures include the use of the Gifted Rating Scales and portfolio processes.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Individual School Screening List: This file contains a full profile for each student nominated and considered for placement in the program, including those who did not qualify.
- 2) AIG paperwork documentation: Hard copies are maintained at the school site with electronic archive backup. This information includes permission forms, test scores, grades, and other information indicated on the paperwork required by the AIG department.
- 3) Identification of the pathway used to enter the gifted program
- 4) NC AIG Headcount
- 5) Summer testing records

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Union County Public Schools use multiple criteria to find students for its gifted program. According to a research article written by McBee (2006), lack of referral is an identified concern in finding gifted students from socioeconomic and racial minority groups. UCPS has recognized this problem and has multiple ways to identify students who would do well in gifted education but local data suggests this is not sufficient on its own and has not yielded strong representation across all groups within the district. As a result, this practice was determined to be a focused practice during the revision process, based on both the self- assessment data and discussions held within the committee. Ford (2004), states her concern for underrepresented populations in gifted education. She further shares her concern about the low performance on standardized tests by Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and African Americans. This concern has also been a topic of discussion by the AIG Advisory Council.

Goals:

1. Provide more training to all school staff on the characteristics of gifted students.

2. Increase the AIG population in all currently underrepresented groups.
3. Provide increased training regarding Alternative Assessment and Pathway 3 screening to address the underrepresented groups.

Description: UCPS has an alternative assessment screening process and tool (Appendix C) in place which needs to have a broader application and awareness. It provides for the AIG team to meet and determine which students, based on their cultural/ethnic diversity, economic disadvantages, English language barriers and other learning disabilities to enter the AIG program using the third pathway. This pathway allows for the student to submit a portfolio in addition to grades and/or the teacher recommendation as described through the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS).

The use of this instrument will be given new focus in the training at each school site where there are many underrepresented groups. AIG teachers will inform the staff about the use of the alternative assessment instrument and encourage its use as part of an effort to include children from these groups.

The GLOBAL Kids Program as described in Standard 2 is utilized to address the need for early enrichment opportunity for gifted potential in underrepresented populations. As a screening and enrichment program, the GLOBAL Kids Program may provide early enrichment experiences at targeted schools.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

1. Screening notebooks
2. AIG headcount disaggregated by Pathway 3 students
3. Alternative Assessment screening tool training records (agendas, sign-in sheets, etc.)
4. Portfolio

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: UCPS employs a check and balance system of local review to act as a quality control in the implementation of screening, referral and identification procedures. Currently, a summer team reviews screening notebooks and data to ensure consistency within the district plan. The team is comprised of veteran AIG staff to serve as a peer review team. The AIG team also provides professional development for the AIG staff on the processes and procedures included in the screening process. The self-assessment data indicated this could remain a maintained practice.

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

Description: AIG teachers are provided with a variety of ways to ensure consistency in the implementation of screening, referral and identification processes. The following tools have been

developed and are revised annually:

- Procedures Manual- Every teacher is provided a written AIG Procedures Manual. This Procedures Manual outlines all processes and provides a ready reference that includes flow charts, screen shots, etc. to help provide guidance to the teacher. It describes the appropriate paperwork to be completed, signed and archived. This same manual provides all directions needed for accessing and utilizing the electronic database for all records in the AIG program.
- Regular teacher meetings showcase the individual stages of each process throughout the year as they may occur. This serves as a refresher training for veteran teachers and focused training for new teachers. Regular teacher meetings provide an ongoing forum for teachers to ask procedural questions, seek clarification on processes, and receive intermittent training opportunities at various points throughout the year.
- New teacher trainings- these occur periodically and are intended to be a timely opportunity for new teachers to meet together to receive specific information about the processes in a small group setting.
- Buddy teachers- each AIG teacher is encouraged (new teachers are assigned) to have a buddy teacher review their screening notebook prior to submission at the end of the year.
- Teacher Work Sessions - Teachers have joint work sessions scheduled where they can serve as a second set of eyes to check and double check each other's work and placement decisions.
- Year end compliance paperwork review team – This team is employed early in the summer to check each teacher's screening notebook and archived paperwork to ensure consistency in placement across the district. All AIG teachers submit screening documents to the Central Office for review by a team of AIG teachers to ensure inter-rater reliability and to ensure that districtwide standards are maintained. This process involves having the records of every student who was screened be reviewed for compliance and consistency. In the event mistakes are found, they are returned to the school based AIG teacher with corrections indicated. If a student is found to be placed incorrectly, teachers are contacted during the summer by the AIG office. This team is integral to the quality control process.
- At the beginning of each school year, AIG teachers submit rosters of the identified students in their classrooms and verify that the paperwork exists in the students' files documenting their appropriate placement.
- The AIG Director or designee reviews all paperwork electronically throughout the year as new students enter the program.
- The AIG Director is always available to work one-on-one with teachers as they make placement decisions.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Screening notebooks
- 2) Electronic and hard copy archives of paperwork
- 3) Class rosters showing verification of placement
- 4) Summer compliance team sign-in sheets, corrective emails to teachers and other actions
- 5) Training meeting notes, agendas, sign-in sheets

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: The state of North Carolina, in line with The Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Student Act of 1994, established Article 9B in 1996 to protect the legal rights of gifted students and their parents. It is found within the statute Chapter 115C, Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Subsection 7 calls for "A procedure to resolve disagreements between parents or guardians and the local school administrative unit when a child is not identified as an academically or intellectually gifted student or concerning the appropriateness of services offered to the academically or intellectually gifted student.

If the local procedures do not resolve the disagreement, the parent may, under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, file a petition for a contested case hearing. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains findings of fact and conclusions of law. The decision of the administrative law judge becomes final, is binding on the parties, and is not subject to further review under Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes."

UCPS has in place such documents and are revised every three years or as in between as needed.

UCPS and it is revised every three years or as needed during those years. Self-assessment data suggested that this practice should be maintained.

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

Description: The following written documentation exists to safeguard the rights of AIG students:

- The Local Plan for Gifted Education- revised every three years through an extensive evaluation and review process involving input from all stakeholders and submitted to DPI for comment.
- A Parent's Rights Handbook (Appendix D) has been developed to provide a step-by-step due process appeals process in the event that the parent disagrees with the AIG placement decision. UCPS provides access to a "Parent's Rights" booklet when asking for permission for additional testing. This booklet outlines the rights of a parent to appeal the placement decision.

- AIG FORMS- Parents retain copies of AIG 1, 2, 3, and 4's. All student originals are maintained at the school level and archived copies are maintained by the district electronically.
- AIG 1- Contains a student profile of all data (including reassessment) used to determine placement. This form is reviewed and signed by the school level AIG team and the district level representative. A copy is sent home to parents as part of the decision process.
- AIG 2- Permission to Test Form- explains the need for testing and requests parent permission.
- AIG 3- Invitation to Conference
Informs the parent of their child's placement into the AIG program.
- AIG 3B
Informs parents that their child does not qualify at this time for placement in the program.
- AIG 3C
Informs parents of newly qualified rising 6th graders that their child's 6th grade teacher will invite them to a conference at the start of the school year, in order to explain and receive their signature of agreement for the Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP).
- AIG 4- Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)
Completed as needed in K-3, once in grades 4-5 and again in grades 6-8. If additional subjects are added or students exit the program, a new form will be completed to document the changes. This form contains information regarding the placement of the student into the AIG program, describes the service delivery, curriculum differentiation and enrichment experiences which may be included in the placement.
- AIG 5R- Rosters completed at the end of each school year to ensure appropriate placement in the following year.
- AIG 7 – Transfer Form
To be completed whenever a student leaves the school as an internal or out of district transfer.
- AIG 10- Transfer to High School
To be completed by 8th gr AIG teachers to accompany the transfer of folders to the High School.
- Procedures Manual- this document outlines all policies and procedures that should be followed for AIG related decision-making. It is available from each AIG teacher and online.
- Additional letters and forms are created as needed for special circumstances such as summer testing referrals and scheduling, sweep screening test results, etc.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

1. AIG form 2-Parent signature indicating receipt of Parents' Rights Handbook
2. Parents' Rights Handbook
3. Procedures Manual

4. Local AIG Plan
5. AIG Forms-accessed through electronic database system or originals in student files

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: Self-assessment data rated this practice as completely evident and should be a maintained practice.

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

Description: UCPS has implemented a multi-stage program for informing parents of gifted education. Elements of this program include:

- A dedicated portion of the UCPS website which outlines the services offered by UCPS.
- Individual meetings with every parent/guardian to sign the papers agreeing to gifted services which includes information about what those services include.
- Annual open house meetings for parents of gifted students to meet with Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted teacher and discuss the scope and sequence of the program. Service options are reviewed at this time. This meeting typically occurs during the regular school open house meeting.
- All paperwork related to service options and identification processes is maintained in hard copy files at the school level and in electronic archive format at a district level.
- Individual student conferences held throughout the year as needed to discuss student achievement and placement options.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

1. Signed AIG 4 form (Differentiated Education Plan)
2. Electronic archives
3. Notification of school open houses
4. Parent conference notes and related communication
5. Sign-in sheets for annual parent meetings and Open Houses

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: In order to accomplish the district mission of "Preparing All Students to Succeed", the Union County Public Schools (UCPS) designs and differentiates curriculum and instructional practices across all grade levels and programs within the district. Results have shown that the differentiation of instructional materials, pedagogy, and instructional techniques provided by the existing AIG program are helping meet the needs of gifted learners. These will be maintained and adjusted as needed.

According to Van Tassle-Baska (2003), she maintains that programs that accelerate the curriculum for learners should be utilized with fidelity to accomplish the goals of the program.

In order to accomplish the district mission of "Preparing All Students to Succeed", the UCPS AIG program serves students in both math and reading with accelerated and enriched curriculum options.

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

Description: There are many documents produced for district use (Appendix E) that clearly define expectations for instructional goals and include AIG specific recommendations.

For use in the AIG program, specific materials have been selected corresponding to the current version of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS). This process includes studying the current research on high ability learners and rigor. Current materials under review are further researched and when possible, site visits to other schools using the materials are made. Once selected, the curriculum is then aligned to the NCSCOS and pacing guides are used to assist teachers in utilizing the materials fully.

AIG teachers are expected to employ the best practices of differentiation and extension of the NCSCOS to the degree that their students may need. This can include development of teacher designed units of instruction not found within pre-selected materials. This could also include resources to support the social and emotional needs of the gifted learner. AIG teachers are expected to utilize all available assessment information in making instructional decisions and designing differentiated lessons.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Singapore Math and William & Mary alignment and pacing documents for the elementary level
- 2) Elementary AIG and Middle School AIG curriculum framework documents
- 3) High School Honors and AP/IB documents
- 4) Individual AIG teacher lesson plans
- 5) Professional development
- 6) Curriculum and resources used and developed for a range of abilities and specifically designed for gifted students
- 7) Student assessment data (informal and formal)

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Self-assessment data deemed this practice a mostly evident, however, there exists a need to address this practice in a more direct way to ensure that diverse and effective instructional practices are utilized regularly. The data suggest that this is particularly a need in grades K-3. Additionally, a range of learning needs in an AIG classroom exists and can sometimes be overlooked. With specific attention given to this practice, it is anticipated that the mission of "Preparing All Students to Succeed" will be furthered.

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

Description: AIG teachers will be provided opportunities to create differentiated lesson plans as part of professional development provided at the district level. In this design, the use of assessment data will help determine which instructional practices should be used within their classrooms. These strategies will include best practices in gifted education pedagogy as well as district level initiatives which can be modified for the gifted learner, AIG teachers will provide consultative services to regular classroom teachers to support differentiation for high achieving students. In addition, the continued use of gifted instructional practices such as Paideia seminars, problem-based learning opportunities and individual projects will be encouraged.

- Planned Sources of Evidence:**
- 1) Teacher lesson plans
 - 2) Attendance and /or presentation of differentiated instructional practices through professional development opportunities
 - 3) Classroom observation opportunities (peer and administrator)
 - 4) Student achievement data

Other Comments: Goals: Not required but included:

1. Increase the use of diverse and effective instructional practices both in regular and AIG classrooms
- 2) Increase student achievement by meeting a range of learning needs

Practice C

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The AIG program currently meets this practice through the use of many research-based curriculum materials for identified gifted learners. Self-assessment data shows this practice is minimally evident with regard to students in grades K-3. Because the enrichment for students in grades K-3 is the responsibility of the general education classroom teacher, all teachers would benefit from further professional development on differentiation. Other resources, as they become available, will be considered for the AIG program.

Goals: 1) To enhance the resources and training available for K-3 teachers in order to differentiate high achieving learners.
2) The development of and training for curriculum maps for grades 4-8.

Description: READING/LANGUAGE ARTS

The following research-based/ supplemental resources are available:

William & Mary Language Arts units
Jacob's Ladder
Junior Great Books
Michael Thompson's grammar and vocabulary materials

The William and Mary Integrated Curriculum Model (ICM) was selected for the application of high level language arts instruction in grades 4-5 as the core instructional component and in grades 6-8 as a supporting resource. The William & Mary Language Arts units have significantly shifted the level of instruction and rigor in those classes using the units.

In addition, extensive use of vocabulary development through a rich study of Greek and Latin stems accompanies this instruction. The Reading and Writing Workshop Model is in place as a district initiative and provides an additional approach to extending and enriching the NCSCOS through high level student choice reading selections and reflective writing.

The development of grammar skills is introduced early through the elementary AIG program and is continued throughout the middle school years. The curriculum resources selected for this study include those authored by Michael Thompson, a recognized curriculum developer for gifted education.

Junior Great Books provides the platform for high level discussion in a seminar style with students finding evidence within the text to support their comments.

The middle school English Language Arts curriculum may include accelerating, compacting, and telescoping of grades 6 and 7 curricula in order to accelerate students through the middle school NCSCOS and better prepare them for English I in the 8th grade.

At the high school level Honors courses, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and International Baccalaureate (IB) provide advanced curriculum which students may self-select in accordance with their interests and skills.

MATHEMATICS

The following research-based/ supplemental resources are available:

Singapore Math

Mathematical talent is developed through the use of a variety of materials designed for students who are acquiring in-depth knowledge of mathematical ideas and concepts. The adoption of the Singapore Mathematics program in grades 4-5 was instrumental in providing a platform and approach to problem solving that was deep and focused. This approach has been successful with our AIG students to such a degree that many other districts and teachers from other states come to see it in action. The development of mathematical thinking follows a curriculum model that begins with the concrete, followed by the pictorial and ends with the abstract. This concrete-pictorial-abstract pedagogy provides ample ways for students to approach a mathematical problem and demonstrates to them there are many ways to solve these problems. The underlying expectation is based on mastery learning, and students are expected to maintain skills previously taught by application and continual use of the skills.

Singapore Mathematics Program will be used at grade 6. The middle school math curriculum may include accelerating, compacting, and telescoping of grades 6 and 7 curricula in order to accelerate students through the middle school NCSCOS and better prepare them for Math I in the 7th or 8th grade.

INTEGRATED UNITS

The Global Kids Program offers a variety of units of study for enrichment developed by teachers. These kits are available for check out at the Walter Bickett Education Center.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Teacher lesson plans
- 2) Classroom observations (both formal and informal)
- 3) Professional development attendance and CEU credit earned
- 4) Student achievement data
- 5) Curriculum maps for AIG curriculum

Other Comments:

Practice D

Fosters the development of 21st century content and skills by infusing the following at an advanced level: high-level content for global awareness, civic and economic literacies, and health awareness; critical thinking and problem solving; high-level communication and collaboration; applied information

and media literacy, including concepts, systems, and operations in challenging research contexts; creativity and innovation; real-world learning in local, regional, and global contexts; and applied life skills for leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, productivity, responsibility, people skills, self-direction, and social responsibility.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The guiding mission of the North Carolina State Board of education is that every public school student will graduate from high school globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st century. In support of this, the Union County Public School Strategic Plan clearly articulates goals, objectives, and strategies to measure district-wide progress in this area. AIG classrooms need to provide enhanced opportunities for students to practice and demonstrate the principles and context of the 21st century skills and content. As our future leaders, these students need to be able to see the relevance and personal responsibility for their learning in everyday life.

Goals: 1) To provide opportunities for AIG students to utilize technology, as available, to problem-solve

and research issues and concerns related to global awareness.

2) To provide AIG students with skills required for 21st century success

Description:

In addition to the extensive focus on the development of these skills through various district initiatives, the AIG program will emphasize and provide high level classroom experiences designed to reinforce and apply these skills. As the efforts to expand access to classroom technology continues throughout the district, AIG teachers will continue to share best instructional practices with one another as they relate to the AIG learner.

The AIG program will support the UCPS globalization effort by providing culturally diverse studies of literature, art and global issues through the curriculum activities, projects and research presentations developed by the students. Critical thinking, problem-solving, and use of creativity and innovation are foundational to gifted education pedagogy and should be evident in all lessons. Students will be provided opportunities and resources to work in groups to collaborate and communicate with one another to produce presentations that demonstrate real-world learning. These experiences can be in the form of extended field trips, service-learning initiatives, and global communication/collaboration activities with students in other areas of the world (i.e. e-pals, sister schools, Skype or other technology-based communication as available). Students will be encouraged to share these experiences with others by posting video segments, links etc. to school-based communication sites such as Moodle and school websites.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Teacher lesson plans
- 2) Classroom observations
- 3) Student presentations/projects/activities

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Identified in the self assessment as mostly evident, AIG teachers continually utilize on-going assessment in their instructional decisions. This assessment process includes both formal and informal methods of assessment. In this way, the individual student's strengths and needs are evident. This provides a basis for other instructional decisions such as flexible grouping , curriculum compacting and related extensions.

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

Description: AIG teachers share their ongoing assessment strategies during regular professional development meetings. These strategies, along with others that are recommended, will comprise a set of tools that the AIG teacher can rely on to properly identify individual student's strengths and areas of need. Additional local assessments (i.e. benchmark testing, reading records, etc.) are used to help assess the AIG students' skills in both reading and math. Pre-assessments, when appropriate, can be used to help teachers determine which content can be compacted for some and provided through direct instruction for others. In many cases, AIG teachers need to create their own benchmark assessments since the sequence of instruction in an AIG classroom does not always follow the regular classroom.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Teacher lesson plans
- 2) Classroom observations
- 3) Student achievement data

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: Social and emotional support is not a unique need for AIG students, but due to their abilities, many do not believe that separate support systems are needed for them. According to the organization Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (2010), gifted individuals suffer if their needs for social and emotional support are not met. The organization further maintains that if the gifted students' needs are not met, then gifted students could be misdiagnosed as ADHD or with other learning disorders. AIG teachers have expressed the need for more training to support students with unique social and emotional needs.

Goals: AIG teachers, guidance counselors, other school staff, parents, and all stakeholders will

collaborate to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Description: Guidance services designed specifically for AIG students begin in the elementary years where class sessions are scheduled each semester to directly address issues affecting gifted students. The specific topics are generated from student and teacher input. In general, the topics frequently address underachievement, self-esteem, perfectionism, peer interactions and giftedness in poverty and diverse cultures. These classes are conducted by the guidance counselor at each grade level during grades 4-8 and are evaluated by the classroom teacher or guidance counselor for effectiveness. These reports are sent to the AIG office for review and monitoring.

Career counseling plays an equally important role for gifted students as they grow in age and developmental maturity. Career development is a lifelong process by which individuals develop and refine their self-identity as it relates to life and employment decisions. Middle grades students have reached a critical age where they can explore career decision making and develop future educational plans. Career development experiences for middle grades students are designed to be exploratory in nature and do not develop specific skills.

Guidance services also reach out to the parent community to meet the needs of the gifted. Parents will frequently seek out support and resources from the school guidance counselor when addressing and planning for their child's future. The AIG plan will provide support to the Guidance Services by providing professional development and other resources which directly address the social and emotional needs of the gifted.

In the AIG classroom, teachers have been given resources and training in the use of bibliotherapy to help students address specific topics of interest. Through bibliotherapy students can find other examples of gifted students dealing with similar issues in their lives and look for potential ways to manage and handle those same circumstances in their own lives.

Guidance counselors will play an integral part in the decision-making associated with subject or grade acceleration decisions as well as placement into the AIG program. As a part of the AIG Team at each school, the guidance counselors ensure the emotional needs of the students are considered in all placement decisions.

At the high school level, guidance services are increasingly important in supporting the students and their families through processes which could affect their future career choices and opportunities. Guidance services give individual guidance for students as they select their high school courses, apply to Governor's School, research colleges, apply to schools, and they provide information about dual enrollment. Guidance counselors are essential to the program.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Guidance lesson reports
- 2) Teacher lesson plans
- 3) Sign-in sheets, agendas, notes from collaborative planning sessions

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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Recognizing the need to enhance K-3 services for high-achieving students not yet formally identified for AIG program, the following components have been designed to help address these needs without additional personnel resources. Parent and teacher surveys and the self-assessment data all spoke to the need for more AIG collaboration earlier in elementary school.

Review of local AIG headcount and enrollment data suggested underrepresentation of populations within the AIG program. The self-assessment data indicates a rating of minimally evident. After researching various K-3 programs, each school will develop an individual school plan to address the goals for cultivating the potential of K-3 students and will be approved by the principal and Director of AIG. This plan will be developed collaboratively with the school AIG team and the Director of the AIG program to provide high level early enrichment experiences for students with the potential for AIG identification from traditionally underrepresented populations in the current AIG program. Early intervention and identification of gifted potential has shown to be the most accurate way to increase underrepresented populations who qualify for AIG services by locally established criteria in the later elementary years.

- Goals:**
- 1) To provide early enrichment experiences to students, with an intentional focus on Title I schools, who show gifted potential at an early age, prior to local AIG screening at the end of third grade
 - 2) To increase the number of students from these populations who qualify for gifted services according to criteria established in the Local Plan for Gifted Education
 - 3) To develop alternative assessments, portfolios and curriculum that will help nurture gifted potential and increase student achievement and self-esteem
 - 4) To identify grade level cohorts of potentially gifted students for the purpose of providing enrichment activities
 - 5) To continue to promote the use of Singapore Math and Junior Great Books materials in collaboration with K-3 teachers for high achieving students

Description: Options for School AIG Teams to consider:

Each school's AIG team will be responsible for developing a plan to address and meet the needs of the underrepresented population at grades K-3 at the individual school. The plan must be approved by the AIG director on an annual basis. Schools may include the current Global Kids program, utilize the AIG teacher as an enrichment provider, as a collaborator with the regular classroom teacher, or other research-based models for identification of underrepresented populations. Schools may opt to include a pull out enrichment study group for potentially gifted K-3 learners. Another option is the AIG teacher may push into the classroom to deliver enrichment services.

Each school is responsible for developing a cohort of potentially gifted learners from the underrepresented population.

COHORT/CLUSTER MODEL

1st Grade/End of first semester:

Identify top 2-4% students in grade level

1st Grade/Second semester:

Begin developing portfolio of student work for identified students for the purpose of Alternative Assessment and Pathway 3.

2nd Grade:

Cluster the identified cohort in general education classroom and provide differentiated instruction/enrichment activities.

Continue to develop a portfolio of student work.

3rd Grade:

Continue to cluster identified cohort in general education classrooms for differentiated/enrichment activities.

Consultative and pull out services provided by AIG teacher.

Continue to develop portfolio.

Formal screening for identification in AIG program, using portfolio as Alternative Assessment as needed, is conducted.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Results from alternative and informal/formal assessments
- 2) Teacher observation
- 3) Results of AIG testing in spring of 3rd grade
- 4) Approved AIG school plan
- 5) Activities addressing multiple intelligences, critical thinking, use of high level vocabulary and applied learning will be evident through lesson design.
- 6) Global Kids Program
- 7) The Global Kids Program offers a variety of units of study for enrichment development by teachers
- 8) Feedback from survey data
- 9) Student achievement data

Other Comments:

Practice H

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Given limited resources to provide direct AIG services to all students, it is imperative that AIG personnel work collaboratively with other instructional staff in order to ensure all AIG needs are met throughout the instructional day. This will allow specific expertise (ie. EC services, regular education staff and other resources) to add value and to provide additional services as needed. In addition, it allows the AIG staff to bring their expertise to the rest of the instructional staff. Gifted students are not gifted for only a part of the day and need all instructional staff to be knowledgeable and able to deliver differentiated instruction whenever possible.

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

Description: Collaboration will be made possible in the following ways:

- AIG School Team - Representation from regular education teachers in Grades K-3 and 4-5, guidance counselor, AIG teacher, and administrator serve as the designated AIG team at each school. This team has the responsibility to sign off on all placement and removal decisions for the program.
- Grade level planning time with regular education teachers (schedule permitting)
- K-3 time designated in the AIG teacher's schedule to accommodate school designed plan (required)
- EC collaboration when students are twice exceptional or have special learning needs
- AIG teachers may serve as teachers in enrichment block configurations (not used for remediation). In this capacity, the students are pre-assessed for mastery and then grouped for enrichment throughout the year. These groups are flexible in nature and will frequently not be AIG identified students only. Sometimes referred to as Academic Exploratory (AE) or Advanced Content Time (ACT), these are school-based enrichment groups.
- AIG teachers may provide professional development to regular education teachers in order to expand the use of available enrichment resources across many grade levels (Junior Great Books training may be offered to K-3 teachers in order to allow them to utilize the program with their students as a type of accelerated, differentiated enrichment).
- Collaboration with guidance counselors is needed to plan classroom guidance sessions or to discuss students who have been accelerated or are under consideration for acceleration.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) K-3 school designed plan documentation
- 2) Grade level and IEP meeting notes, AIG paperwork and other similar documentation as appropriate.

Other Comments:

Practice I

Develops and documents a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG students, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/families to ensure effective programming, a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The AIG Advisory Council noted this practice is being met minimally with an annual review of the Differentiated Education Plan. A continuum of services from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school can be more clearly articulated.

Goals: 1)To develop guidelines for transition to middle school and high school services , to include course tracks

Description: A team of AIG and regular education staff will work together to vertically align the continuum of services for students as they transition to middle and high school.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) K-3 school designed plan documentation
- 2) Grade level and IEP meeting notes, AIG paperwork and other similar documentation as appropriate..

Other Comments:

Standard 3: Personnel and Professional Development

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Practice A

Employ an AIG-licensed educator as a curriculum coordinator to work under the direct supervision of the AIG Director to guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program and plan.

Recognizing the need for the AIG program to be supported by an AIG licensed curriculum coordinator who has appropriate training and licensure, the self-assessment data reflected this with a rating of not evident. UCPS has an AIG Director at the Central Services level and a minimum of one AIG licensed staff member at each elementary and middle school. Additional licensed personnel are added as enrollment demands increase and the budget allows.

Goals: To employ an AIG licensed Curriculum Coordinator to work under the direct supervision of the AIG Director to guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program and plan.

Description: UCPS will employ a licensed AIG Curriculum Coordinator to work under the supervision of the AIG Director at the Central Services level to provide coordination and direction district wide to the AIG program (See Appendix I for job description). In addition, there will a minimum of one lead AIG licensed teacher at each elementary and middle school. AIG licensed teachers in Union County Public Schools are responsible for providing gifted education classes for identified AIG students in both math and reading at grades 4 and 5, and in grades 6-8th language arts. These teachers are also responsible for the monitoring of the program, adhering to compliance requirements including documentation of all phases of the program, maintenance of hard copy files and cooperation with electronic archiving of such paperwork. Additional licensed personnel are added as enrollment demands increase and the budget allows.

Planned Sources of Evidence: 1) Central Services position allocation and job description
2) AIG Teacher allocation at each school
3) Teacher certification
4) Compliance paperwork and electronic documentation
5) Teacher lesson plans
6) Teacher maintained student and program data

Other Comments: Ideas for strengthening: Hire a licensed AIG curriculum coordinator.

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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Specialized AIG licensure provides the AIG teacher with a variety of understandings and strategies appropriate for the gifted learner. Self-assessment data rates this practice as minimally evident. The parent surveys indicate concern about teachers' knowledge on how to best support the varied needs of AIG learners. Efforts to fully utilize AIG teachers' "expertise" in the areas listed indicate this practice will be focused.

Goals:

1. To have an AIG licensed math and an AIG licensed reading teacher at each middle school to serve as lead AIG teachers.
2. To increase the number of AIG licensed teachers at each school.

Description: The primary responsibilities of AIG teachers in the Union County Public Schools are to provide direct services to gifted learners. AIG teachers are to have classroom instructional time, planning time, and collaboration time in their daily schedule without additional duties and responsibilities which do not serve the gifted learner.

Each fall all AIG teachers are to submit a copy of their schedule to the Director for review and approval. The following components must be reflected in the schedule:

Elementary: Full 7.5 hr day

Adequate time should be included in this daily schedule to provide full time reading and math instruction at the elementary level be no less than 60 minutes in length for each class. If the school schedule allows, additional time is always beneficial.

Reading: 60 min. minimum

Math: 60 min. minimum

Planning/Collaboration: 30 min. minimum

K-3 services (if provided by AIG teacher): 30 min. minimum

Lunch: school discretion

Enrichment: school discretion

Additional duties: At school discretion with consideration of time needed for AIG services such as paperwork, communication with parents, electronic archiving, student data collection for screening, and district compliance requests.

Middle LA/English I and Math Teachers: Full 7.5 hr day

The schedule will indicate the number of AIG identified students placed into each section. In Language Arts sections, all AIG identified students must be placed in a classroom staffed by an AIG licensed teacher before non-identified students can be added to the classes on a space-available,

annual placement.

Math:

All AIG math identified students will be scheduled into AIG Math classes, and principals may schedule additional students based on local guidelines.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Teacher schedules (including assigned duties, extra-curricular activities, etc.)
- 2) Teacher lesson plans
- 3) AIG class rosters (including AIG identified and non-identified student paperwork)

Other Comments: Ideas for Strengthening: Hire middle school math AIG licensed teachers or support the process for AIG add-on licensure for math teachers in order to strengthen AIG services at the middle school level. Increase the number of AIG licensed teachers throughout the county as appropriate.

Practice C

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Self-assessment data rated this practice as minimally evident. In order to assure awareness and continuity of message in the communication of AIG services and other related information, it is necessary to provide regular professional development for all personnel in the LEA. All teachers, general education and AIG, will benefit from professional development that addresses differentiating instruction at all levels and addressing needs, including social and emotional needs of the gifted learner.

Goals:

- 1) To provide professional development opportunities for differentiating instruction for the gifted student on a regular basis for all levels of personnel involved in AIG programs, including administrators, regular education teachers, exceptional children's education teachers, AIG teachers, and counselors.
- 2) To ensure all personnel involved in AIG programming are continually informed of AIG student characteristics, social and emotional needs, program requirements, and enrichment activities.
- 3) To provide professional development for early identification of gifted students, particularly in underrepresented populations.

Description: AIG teachers will assume an enhanced role in the delivery of AIG professional development to their school-based staff and parent groups. The development of presentations that can be used by the teachers will be developed centrally and disseminated to everyone in an effort to make the message reliable and consistent. Training will be provided to AIG teachers on how to deliver the information and how to address questions. Administrator training and other presentations

indicated as 'Central' will be provided by the AIG Director or designee. (Appendix G)

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Prepared workshop presentations
- 2) Sign in sheets from each workshop
- 3) Workshop

Other Comments: Ideas for Strengthening: Provide research-based training for AIG teachers, regular education teachers, EC teachers and counselors that will enhance the AIG program and improve student academic achievement.

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 Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Having earned a mostly evident rating, this practice will be maintained for reading and math classes. Since the service delivery model is full time services in math and/ or reading, it is necessary that the district continue to offer each teacher appropriate professional training. Gifted and high-ability children show positive academic effects from some forms of homogeneous grouping. The strongest positive academic effects of grouping for gifted students result from either acceleration or classes that are specially designed for the gifted and use specially trained teachers and differentiated curriculum and methods.

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

Description: All AIG teachers (Elem and grades 6-8 in Language Arts) are required to obtain an AIG add-on license in order to maintain their AIG position. This includes all teachers paid from either state or local AIG funds. As funds are available, schools have the discretion to provide tuition reimbursement support for teachers seeking this license while employed in an AIG position within the district. Middle school AIG math teachers are encouraged to obtain the license as well. AIG math and Language Arts teachers are expected to attend regular meetings and local training on the AIG program, characteristics of gifted students, and any training offered for their specialty (i.e. AIG math differentiation, AP/IB training and renewal). AP and IB teachers are expected to attend specific trainings for their content area.

Class rosters indicating completed AIG placement documentation are submitted and reviewed regularly to ensure that AIG identified students are homogeneously grouped together in classrooms with an AIG licensed teacher. AIG class sizes should not exceed that of the average in the regular education classes.

In middle school, the following expectations are in place to ensure all AIG needs are met before additional students are added to any AIG sections:

In language arts sections, all AIG identified students must be placed in a classroom staffed by an AIG licensed teacher before non-identified students can be added to the classes on a space available, annual placement.

Non AIG students placed into AIG sections of language arts will have paperwork documenting the

placement annually. That paperwork will reside with the AIG teacher. Placement in an AIG language arts section or English I does not serve as AIG identification. Students will be screened annually for formal identification. It is hoped that these non-identified students will be nurtured through this experience and potentially qualify for services directly.

Math

All AIG math identified students will be scheduled into AIG math classes and principals may schedule additional students based on local guidelines.

Non AIG students placed into AIG sections of math will have paperwork documenting the placement annually. That paperwork will reside with the AIG teacher. Placement in an AIG math section does not serve as AIG identification. Students will be screened annually for formal identification. It is hoped that these non-identified students will be nurtured through this experience and potentially qualify for services directly.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Teacher credentials
- 2) Workshop sign-in sheets
- 3) University transcripts
- 4) Class rosters
- 5) Teacher's schedule
- 6) Non AIG language arts and math student paperwork documentation

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Effective professional development will allow AIG teachers to implement both AIG and local district initiatives. Rated as minimally evident in the self-assessment and district survey, this practice will be focused.

Goals: Coordinate professional development with Central Service's departments of Curriculum and Instruction, Exceptional Children, and Technology.

Description: All professional development planned (Appendix G) will directly be aligned to all AIG and local district initiatives. AIG teachers are also included in professional development opportunities beyond the scope of this plan that are provided both at the district and school level. This includes professional development targeted towards differentiating the Common Core State Standards for high ability learners and an emphasis on the social and emotional needs of varied AIG populations throughout the district. This allows for AIG teachers to be fully aware of local initiatives so they may reflect these initiatives in their lessons.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Professional Development documentation: agendas, sign-in sheets, evaluations
- 2) Classroom observation
- 3) Teacher lesson plans
- 4) Student achievement
- 5) CEU credits for teacher certification renewal

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Self-assessment data rated this as minimally evident. This area can be improved upon with the continued implementation of the new content standards and emphasis on 21st century skill development. Local initiatives and priorities such as research based best practices, Professional Learning Communities (PLC), globalization and technology will serve as a framework for professional development throughout this plan.

- Goals:**
- 1) To provide professional development in research-based, best practices in gifted education, to address content areas as well as social/emotional needs.
 - 2) To more fully utilize available technologies in instructional design and delivery.
 - 3) To provide professional development on 21st century skills development for gifted students.

Description: As reflected in the Professional Development Plan (Appendix G), AIG teacher professional development will focus on embedding the 21st century skills and the NC Teaching Standards into their everyday practice.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Workshop documentation: agendas, sign-in sheets, evaluations
- 2) Classroom observations and walthroughs

Other Comments: Ideas of Strengthening: Expand professional development opportunities beyond what is currently being offered to include current research-based best practices.

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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Rated as minimally evident in the self-assessment data, this practice will be focused. The teacher survey data shows that slightly less than half of the teachers disagree or have no opinion that the district provides opportunities for AIG specialists and other teachers to plan, implement, and refine applications of their professional development learning. Recognizing the constraints of time and resources, the majority of AIG professional development is embedded in existing meeting times and schedules.

Goals: Create building level and/or system level Professional Learning Communities for AIG teachers to meet regularly to analyze student data and plan appropriate instruction to address indicated needs and strengths.

Description: Teacher-centered professional development for AIG teachers is provided continuously and regularly throughout the year in a variety of structures such as:

- Professional Learning Communities established to support the planning, implementation, and refinement of applications from AIG based professional development
- meeting opportunities each grading period to attend special topic break out sessions to address identified needs
- pairing of veteran and novice AIG teachers for continued support throughout the year on an individual basis, as needed
- specialized trainers within the AIG teacher community prepared to assist on an 'as needed' basis in the implementation of specific curricula and on-site school-based planning with peers.
- opportunities to extend an individual's interest in certain curricula are made available as needed
- appropriate attendance and participation in state and national conferences
- intensive summer training in specific curriculum or areas of need

The development of teacher-leaders in the area of curriculum is a high priority for building capacity within our cadre of teachers. AIG teachers are encouraged and supported to participate as presenters in both state and national level conferences on gifted education in order to share their best practices and demonstrate leadership within the field. Once completed, these same teachers come back and share their experiences and new insights, repeat the presentations they gave, and then continue to provide local support for other teachers who choose to implement one of their new resources. The addition of professional learning communities will allow for the implementation of strategies learned at professional development.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Meeting documentation: agendas, sign-in sheets, evaluations
- 2) Classroom observations
- 3) Classroom visit reflections by AIG teachers when observing other AIG teachers
- 4) Teacher feedback
- 5) Conference materials for state and national conferences

Other Comments: Ideas for Strengthening:
Professional Learning Communities should be set up so that they can meet frequently. A suggestion would be to have AIG PLC's within similar clusters of schools.

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: Comprehensive programming is essential to a quality AIG program. Matching the identification criterion with the services offered is necessary for comprehensive services. In keeping with the UCPS mission of "Preparing All Students to Succeed", the AIG slate of services seeks to continually improve and meet students' needs in a variety of ways. Self-assessment data showed this to be minimally evident. This practice will be focused.

Goals: 1. Research viable strategies/programs to support the grades K-3 development of potential candidates, particularly in underrepresented populations.

Description: K-12 PROGRAM SERVICE OPTIONS

Program service options will include a range of services for students in grades K-12. Determined by the level of need, these services will include individual consultative services, full time instruction in reading and or math, acceleration options such as grade subject acceleration and the selection of advanced and college level courses as needed. These options are described in detail along with the qualifying criteria.

Service Options include:

- Early Admission to Kindergarten
- Single Subject Acceleration – Grades K-8
- Whole Grade Acceleration – Grades K-8
- School Approved Academic Enrichment Program
- Advanced Subject Grouping / Resource Services in reading and/or math – Grades 4-8
- Extracurricular/ Enrichment experiences –Grades 4-12
- 8th grade English I
- Honors Courses- Grades 9-12
- AP/IB Courses- Grades 9-12
- Concurrent Enrollment- Grades 9-12
- Early Graduation – Grade 11-12
- On-Line Courses/NC Virtual Public School – Grades 6-12
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery
- Independent Study – Grades 9-12

- Special NC Schools/Programs- Grades 9-12

KINDERGARTEN – GRADE THREE SERVICES ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT/NURTURING/COHORT/CLUSTER PROGRAM

Prior to formal identification in the spring of grade three, all students receive differentiated services and appropriate enrichment to create opportunities for higher-level thinking, problem-solving and advanced skill development. Individual interest and abilities can be addressed through activities which involve competitions, creative experiences and accelerated learning opportunities. AIG teachers and school level administration will design the type of services to be provided at each school based on its needs and resources. AIG teachers will have time built into their schedule to accommodate the school level plan. These designs may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Consultative services provided to K-3 classroom teachers, providing resources and assistance with differentiated lesson design i.e. tiered instruction, compacted curriculum, learning centers, thematic units, technology-based instruction, problem-based learning, independent projects, field trips, etc.
- Targeted enrichment instruction with small groups of students selected by the regular education teacher based on student mastery of current topic
- Professional development provided to K-3 teachers in differentiation and use of alternative curricula (i.e. Jr. Great Books, Singapore Math, Jacob's Ladder, etc.)
- Specialized interest clubs (i.e. chess, drama, Odyssey of the Mind, etc.)
- Targeted whole group instruction in Building Thinking Skills curricula
- Global Kids Program

AIG PLACEMENT

FOURTH – EIGHTH GRADE SERVICES

These students will have met the identification and placement criteria required for gifted services. A Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) will be developed to provide the following services.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND/OR MATH:

Advanced Subject Grouping/Subject Acceleration/ Resource Services

Students are grouped for specific subjects based on identification and placement criteria. AIG students identified in a specific subject should be grouped together in a classroom(s) for a specified period of time with an AIG teacher. Elementary and middle school language arts AIG teachers must have AIG licensure. Middle School AIG math teachers are strongly encouraged to obtain AIG licensure. Activities may include use of curriculum materials designed for high ability learners, extension of the regular curriculum, and focus on specific skills such as critical and creative thinking, research skills, and investigations.

Differentiation is expected even within the AIG classroom. These strategies will include:

CONTENT MODIFICATION

- Mastery learning units
- Differentiated units
- Learning centers
- Thematic units
- Technology-based instruction

- Extended reading/writing activities
- Tiered assignments
- Curriculum compacting
- Socratic seminar
- Coached Projects
- Problem-Based Learning
- Paideia Seminars

SPECIFIC INTEREST DEVELOPMENT & ENRICHMENT (these may vary with school)

- Academic competitions
- Field trips
- Special presentations
- Special interest clubs
- Odyssey of the Mind
- Math Olympiad
- Future Problem Solving
- Seminars within school system
- Fine arts activities
- Summer Enrichment Programs

AIG PLACEMENT

NINTH – TWELFTH GRADE SERVICES

An AIG High School Liaison is in place at each high school to monitor and support parent and student awareness of all options available through the high school program.

Honors Courses (some of these are available in 8th grade)

Honors courses are advanced courses that cover traditional content, but also focus on issues, problems, and themes related to topics. They are designed to help students develop knowledge at an advanced level. Although these courses are not usually limited to gifted students, they need clearly defined prerequisites and entry criteria to be effective. Teachers should have training in gifted education and a differentiated syllabus of study.

Recommended Criteria:

- Level IV end-of-grade scores (grade 8)
- B or above average in previous course(s)
- Teacher recommendation

Credit Demonstrated by Mastery

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is the process by which LEAs shall, based upon a body-of-evidence, award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time.

"Mastery" is defined as a student's command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and application of knowledge.

Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery shall be available for all NC students in grades 6-12.

Students shall demonstrate mastery through a multi-phase assessment, consisting of (1) a standard examination, which shall be the EOC/EOG where applicable, or a final exam developed locally and

(2) an artifact which requires the student to apply knowledge and skills relevant to the content standards. LEAs may require additional requirements, such as performance tasks.

This multi-phase assessment process builds a body-of-evidence that allows a committee to determine if the student has a deep understanding of the standards for the course or subject area, as defined by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, thereby earning credit for the course without experiencing it in the school setting.

AP/IB Courses

The Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Program consist of college-level courses and examinations for high school students. AP/IB Course descriptions are carefully followed and are usually taught by teachers who have received special training. Teachers should have AP/IB training.

Recommended Criteria:

- B or above average in Honors level prerequisite(s)
- Teacher recommendation
- Parent recommendation-waiver process
- Use of AP Potential data generated by College Board Concurrent Enrollment
- Students are enrolled in two levels of schooling at the same time. This is appropriate for secondary students who might be enrolled in courses at a post secondary institution. Through dual enrollment, students may receive college credit for courses taken while still in high school. Courses are not in the Union County High School Program of Studies. (See School Guidance Counselor and Program of Studies for Additional Information)

Early Graduation

- Any student who wishes to be considered as a candidate for early graduation must consult the principal and guidance counselor. See current guidelines in the Union County High School Program of Studies

On-Line Courses/ NC Virtual Public School

- On-line courses are available to middle and high school students through various state and national websites.

Independent Study

- Independent study courses may be arranged through a university or other approved agency. Student needs to be self-motivated and able to work independently. A faculty member needs to serve as an advisor or mentor in case the student needs assistance.

Special NC Schools

- Governor's School
- NC School of the Arts
- NC School of Science and Mathematics on-line courses

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Student DEP/IDEPs
- 2) Teacher schedules
- 3) Lesson plans
- 4) Enrollment data (i.e. AIG headcount, AP/IB AIG enrollment, high school records reflecting early graduation, concurrent enrollment, etc)

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Self-assessment data reflected this practice as mostly evident; therefore, this practice will be maintained. Discussion within the committee generated ideas that could be included in a future revision, pending funding availability. These ideas may be useful in the future progress toward meeting this standard and those ideas are listed in the comments section of this practice. Specifically, these ideas focus on resources for the high school services.

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

Description: The AIG program directly aligns its identification processes with delivered services. Resources of the LEA are utilized to their fullest extent in providing high quality specialized instruction to meet the needs of gifted students. Specifically, at the K-3 level, the services are designed to nurture gifted potential and provide acceleration, either subject or full grade, for advanced students working well beyond their peer group. Formal identification in the specific areas of reading and/or math begins in 4th grade and continues throughout middle school. Students identified for math and/or reading services receive full time, AIG instruction from an AIG licensed teacher. Materials and resources used for instruction are selected from research based materials used with gifted students.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) AIG identification records
- 2) Teacher class rosters
- 3) Teacher schedules

Other Comments: These ideas were generated for future consideration, budget permitting.

- Provide support for AP/IB teacher renewal training
- Support efforts to require high school honors courses to include extracurricular activity participation, including service-learning
- Support efforts to encourage students to take rigorous and accelerated coursework at all points along the continuum of schooling in order to be college or career ready upon graduation.

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: This practice will be a maintained practice based on the self-assessment rating and

district survey of mostly evident. Much effort is made to align the AIG program with the total instructional program of UCPS. The mission of the Union County Public Schools "Preparing All Students to Succeed" recognizes the need to provide services and programs for all students, including those who need above grade level instruction.

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

Description: Personnel:

AIG positions in UCPS are staffed at the school level. Principals hire their AIG teachers and those teachers are then included in all school and district initiatives as appropriate. AIG teachers are included in all professional development opportunities and are expected to be contributing members in the total school. In this capacity, many of them serve on various school and district-level committees, in leadership positions and in other roles that are not directly defined by their AIG position. The AIG program in Union County Public Schools is linked with many other school system initiatives.

Listed below is a summary of how other programs in our school system coordinate with our gifted program.

- School System Plans- District Accreditation

All schools have School Improvement Plans which are updated annually based on the Ready Schools Framework and the Southern Association criteria. Within the Ready Schools framework, schools will focus on ensuring that all public school students first master the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics. The same curriculum areas will be emphasized in our gifted education plan.

- Professional Development

Results from the most recent evaluation of the gifted plan indicate a need to provide professional development for administrators and all regular education teachers across all grade levels in gifted education strategies. The gifted program will implement staff development which will be correlated between the needs of regular and gifted education. Staff development funds may be used to instruct educators in techniques and learning strategies that will be necessary in the implementation of the gifted plan. Much of our county's on-going staff development has been beneficial for gifted students. The professional development needs for our school system will be assessed yearly to plan for the best of regular education and gifted education. Specialized training in curriculum programs implemented solely for the AIG students will be provided. College coursework leading to full AIG licensure will be supported to the degree that funding permits.

- Curriculum and Instructional Issues

Ongoing AIG curriculum committees will assist in making decisions related to the selection and modification of AIG curriculum as needed to insure rigor and vertical alignment. District-level efforts in vertical teaming and alignment will be supported through the AIG plan. Many curricular issues focus on meeting the needs of high-achieving students such as curriculum alignment and increased instructional time given to reading, language arts, and math. Group problem-solving, Socratic questioning, curriculum compacting, technology-assisted instruction, and instruction based on learning and reading styles have placed an emphasis on higher order thinking skills. Programs such as Building Thinking Skills and Singapore Math are being implemented under this plan specifically to address the needs of gifted students. Reading Workshop provides another innovative approach to individualizing instruction with a focus on specific skill development.

- Recruitment and Training

The Human Resource Department actively recruits graduates in the field of education from colleges throughout our state and the Southeast. One factor that has a great impact on student performance

are qualified and caring teachers; our system actively recruits such persons and educators. A recruitment package that showcases the school system, its program, and the community at large is provided to interested students at colleges and universities on their career day. Recruiting trips are made by the members of the Human Resources Department and school-based staff to ensure diverse and high quality applicants. As a resource to regular classroom teachers, each elementary and middle school has access to a licensed academically gifted teacher.

- Technology

Technology is promoted for students at all levels and is integrated throughout the curriculum. Computer-assisted instruction affords students the opportunity to work at an individual level and pace.

Use of instructional software individualizes instruction and accelerates learning. AIG teachers participate in district-level technology initiatives such as 1:1 laptops for students. The AIG department maintains an AIG webpage on the Union County Public School system website as part of ongoing efforts to increase community awareness of the AIG program and provides communication and support to parents and students seeking resources.

- Scheduling

Elementary schools exert great effort to provide for schedules which allow for AIG services to be provided in the most efficient and effective manner. This cooperation leads to many opportunities for innovative instructional activities such as enrichment blocks and provides for accelerated options as well. Flexible scheduling at many high schools and middle schools enhances the possibility for extension, enrichment, and integration of the curriculum for AIG students for example, through block scheduling, modified block, zero period, and extended class periods.

- Student Assessment

Assessments are conducted in grades K-12, including varied state and district assessments in grades K-2, and the North Carolina testing program (grades 3 -12) which includes End of Grade, End of Course, Common Exams, open-ended assessment, and nationally normed standardized tests.

These assessments are used to help identify gifted students, and specific measurable objectives are used to evaluate student progress and growth.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) School Improvement Plans
- 2) Teacher schedules
- 3) Teacher evaluation artifacts
- 4) District achievement and benchmark data
- 5) District Accreditation Plan
- 6) School-wide master 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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Self-assessment rating reflects a minimally evident score. Recently, there has been a decrease in the services that have been provided to AIG students by the total school community. As a focused practice this will allow expanded venues and audiences for presentations and training related to the AIG program and plan.

Goals: 1) To provide professional development to all teachers, school administrators, and support staff

regarding the delivery of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan.

2) To increase awareness and knowledge about the AIG program in UCPS.

Description:

Training will be provided and information will be disseminated about the AIG program and plan throughout the district in the following ways:

Presentations: Throughout the year, various presentations will be made to the following groups on an annual basis by both the AIG Director and the AIG Curriculum Coordinator or by each school's lead AIG teacher.

- Central Services Administrators at a cabinet meeting
- School Principals at leveled principals' meetings
- Assistant Principals at AP Academy
- Guidance Counselors at a regularly scheduled meeting
- School staffs at a meeting early in the school year

Website: Updated regularly, the AIG website provides general program information and important announcements regarding the program.

AIG Moodle page: Maintained by the curriculum coordinator and available for all school personnel to share instructional strategies and other important information regarding the program.

Planned Sources of Evidence: 1) Meeting agendas, sign-in sheets, minutes

2) Website /Moodle

Other Comments: Ideas of Strengthening: Prior to the beginning of school, schedule meetings/trainings to ensure that they are carried out early in the school year.

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Self- assessment data rated this practice as minimally evident. It was determined that there is a great deal of additional attention needed in this area. Since curriculum changes are occurring at these levels, it is of utmost importance to be sure there is good vertical alignment.

Goals:

To increase consistency among AIG services between 5th-6th grade and 8th-9th grade transition points.

Description: In order to achieve greater continuity among key transition points, the following actions are planned:

1) Teacher classroom observations and meetings:

- Fall – 5th grade AIG teachers observe 6th grade AIG LA and Math classes and meet to discuss. 8th grade AIG LA/English I teachers observe 10th gr Honors English classes and meet afterwards to discuss.
- Spring- 6th grade AIG LA and Math teachers observe 5th grade AIG classes and meet to debrief 9th grade Honors Eng teachers observe 8th gr AIG LA classes and meet to debrief 5th grade AIG teacher and 9th grade Honors teachers will be invited to a transition meeting in order to discuss instruction and transition of students. Teachers will provide the AIG office a summary of the visit and any recommendations or needs from that visit.

2) AIG meetings for Middle School AIG Math and English teachers and 9th grade Honors Teachers: These meetings will bring together the key teachers at the elementary-middle-high school transition points. The meetings will address the specific curriculum areas of each and provide a vehicle for enhanced communication with the AIG program.

3) AIG Curriculum Coordinator will facilitate the creation of curriculum documents which will address the expectations and resources to be used at each level of AIG services.

4) AIG meetings with middle and high school counselors will take place. During this meeting the counselors at each level will be able to address specific questions they may have about the AIG program and to discuss the academic, social and emotional needs of all identified AIG students.

5) Written information about the AIG program at each level will be available at each school for general dissemination. The AIG Curriculum Coordinator will facilitate these materials at every level.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Observation schedule and meeting notes
- 2) Sign in sheets
- 3) Meeting agendas
- 4) Curriculum documents

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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice was rated as minimally evident in the self-assessment and was determined to be a focused practice. Because of the nature of the current AIG schedule, AIG teachers lack common planning time with general education teachers, Exceptional Children's teachers, and support staff. Finding dedicated time for teachers to meet as a team to analyze trend data and to plan instruction is a challenge. AIG teachers meet as a team on a regular basis which provides time to share and discuss.

Goals: 1) To provide opportunities for collaboration across all stakeholder groups in the differentiation of AIG programming and services.

Description: Opportunities for enhanced collaboration will be provided through the following efforts:

- regular meetings of the AIG Advisory Committee
- increased staff development at the school level which will include all instructional areas
- planning time available for AIG teachers and other instructional staff to further collaborate
- collaboration of the AIG teacher and the regular education teacher in identifying best practices for AIG students
- parents' meetings with AIG teachers to discuss their child's Differentiated Education Plan
- AIG team meetings to discuss student placement as needed

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Teacher schedules
- 2) Meeting notes, sign-in sheets

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale:

Social/emotional needs of AIG students require attention and awareness from all school staff and families. Self-assessment data indicates this is minimally evident and requires focus. While some schools include sessions with the guidance counselor on targeted social/emotional needs topics, the plan calls for more collaboration of staff and families across all schools. Currently, workshops on these topics led by professors from Wingate University, professors from the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, and UCPS AIG staff have been offered at the Family Conference. Evaluations on these sessions demonstrate positive responses and a demand for more sessions.

Goals: Provide training on social/emotional needs of gifted students to school counseling personnel, regular education teachers, AIG specialists, parents/families, and others.

Description: School counselors are available at all schools to meet with parents to provide individualized and group services to AIG students as needed, and to serve on the AIG team. The AIG teachers address the social and emotional needs of their students on a daily basis. Much of this interaction depends on the input and collaboration from the regular education teacher and parent, in that the child spends the majority of their day outside the AIG classroom. AIG teachers have resources for students and can integrate social/emotional topics into discussions and literature analyses. Parent group meetings can focus on the social/emotional needs of these students in support of one another. These combined efforts will help determine what additional resources are needed.

Planned Sources of Evidence: 1) Classroom lesson plans
2) Teacher resources
3) Parent meeting notes and agendas
4) Classroom guidance reports

Other Comments: Ideas for Strengthening: Increase the knowledge of AIG students' social/emotional needs with all stakeholders.

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: A research-based process for making accelerative decisions using the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) has been in place and proven invaluable in providing data to inform acceleration decisions. Early entrance to kindergarten is determined in accordance with State Board Policy G.S.115C-364. The self-assessment rating and district survey results of mostly evident is the basis for this practice remaining maintained.

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

Description:

Standards for Early Admission to Kindergarten

The 1997 General Assembly passed legislation allowing a child who has reached his/her fourth birthday by April 16 to enter kindergarten if he or she demonstrates an extraordinary level of academic ability and maturity and is presented no later than the end of the first month of school. In determining eligibility, the principal shall convene a committee of educational professionals who will assist him/her in making decisions about each individual child. Criteria that shall be considered include the following:

- Aptitude
- Achievement
- Performance
- Observable Student Behavior
- Motivation to Learn
- Student Interest

Student Aptitude Indicator: 98th percentile

A child eligible to enter school early shall be precocious in academic and social development and score at the 98th percentile on a standard individual test of intelligence such as the Stanford-Binet Fifth Edition, the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Fourth Edition, the Kaufman Anderson, or any other comparable test administered by an outside licensed psychologist.

Achievement Indicator: 98th percentile

Children entering kindergarten early shall be functioning two to three years beyond their peers. Children eligible for early admission to kindergarten shall score at the 98th percentile on both Reading and Mathematics on a standard test of achievement such as the Metropolitan Readiness Test, the Stanford Early School Achievement Test, the Mini Battery of Achievement, or the Woodcock-Johnson, administered by a licensed psychologist or a member of his/her professional staff who is trained in the use of the instrument as long as he/she has no potential conflict of interest in the outcome of the assessment.

Performance Indicator: Student samples of work

The child shall be able to perform tasks well above his age peers. Some indicators the principal may observe are the child's ability in independent reading, problem solving skills, advanced vocabulary, and writing fluency. The parents shall submit a sample of student work showing outstanding examples of ability in any of the following areas: art, math, writing, dramatic play, creative productions, science, social interactions, etc. For further indication of performance, the principal may instruct a teacher to complete an informal reading assessment.

Observable Student Behavior/Student Interest

Indicator: 2 letters of recommendation

Social development checklist

The child shall demonstrate social and developmental maturity sufficient to be in a structured school setting for a full school day. The child should be capable of following verbal instructions and functioning independently within a group. The school system shall require two recommendation letters with specific documentation of physical and social maturity from preschool teachers, child care workers, pediatricians, or other adults with direct knowledge of the child. Documentation checklists that might be useful are the California Preschool Competency Scale, the Harrison Scale, or any other comparable scale of early social development.

Motivation/Student Interest Indicator

1. Informal interview with the child
2. Structured parent interview
3. Principals or his/her designee shall determine this information in an informal interview with the child and in a more structured interview with the parent to determine if the child displays a thirst for knowledge and seeks new and challenging learning situations.

TIME LINES

Within the first 30 calendar days of the school's instructional year -Parent submits all required documentation to the principal

Within three weeks of receiving the information, the Principal shall make a determination

Within first 90 days of enrollment - Principal has right to rescind placement

10 days notice to parent - Written notification to parent if placement has been rescinded

A parent wishing to submit his/her child for consideration for early admission to kindergarten shall present to the principal of his/her local school the required information within the first thirty (30) calendar days of the school year. All testing must be administered after the April 16th that follows the child's fourth birthday. If the child is admitted to kindergarten, before the end of the first ninety (90) calendar days of the child's being enrolled, the principal may rescind his/her approval based on substantial evidence documenting that the child is not adjusting satisfactorily to the school setting. If the decision is made to remove the child from school, parents must be given at least ten (10) days notice to arrange child care if needed.

Note: Early admission to kindergarten does not guarantee placement in the Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Program.

K-8 SERVICES ACCELERATION OPTIONS

Subject Acceleration

Based on recommended criteria, students receive instruction at a higher grade level with another group of students while remaining with their peer group for the remaining part of their instructional day. A second option would be to implement curriculum compacting. These methods work best in subjects that have a clearly developed sequence of skills (ie., reading, mathematics, etc.) These strategies are appropriate at any grade level. Once acceleration opportunities have begun, the availability of continued opportunities remains essential. Subject acceleration must have an ongoing plan. In order to participate in subject acceleration, a student must meet all of the following criteria:

1. An Iowa Acceleration Scale – Qualitative and Quantitative components (listed below)
 - a. School and Academic Factors, Developmental Factors, Interpersonal Skills, Attitude and Support Factors
 - b. An on-grade-level achievement test with score of 95th percentile or higher in the subject(s) to be accelerated
 - c. A recognized achievement test, two years above grade level, with a score of 75th percentile or higher in subject(s) to be accelerated
 - d. A Full Scale IQ test of 115 or higher
 - e. Follow Iowa Acceleration Scale guideline recommendations and grand total score should be 60 points or greater

2. Teacher/team recommendations
3. Principal recommendation and placement

See (Appendix J)

Whole Grade Acceleration

This involves skipping levels in the normal progression of school. It is only appropriate for highly gifted students. In order to qualify, students must meet all of the following criteria:

1. An Iowa Acceleration Scale – Qualitative and Quantitative components (listed below)
 - a. School and Academic Factors, Developmental Factors, Interpersonal Skills, Attitude and Support Factors
 - b. An on-grade-level achievement test with a score of 95th percentile or higher in the subject(s) to be accelerated
 - c. A recognized achievement test, two years above grade level, with a score of 75th percentile or higher to be accelerated
 - d. A Full Scale IQ test of 130 or higher
 - e. Follow Iowa Acceleration Scale guideline recommendations and grand total score should be 60 points or greater
2. Teacher/team recommendations
3. Principal recommendation and placement

See(Appendix J)

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Early Kindergarten student records presented to the principal
- 2) Iowa Acceleration Scale student record form
- 3) AIG paperwork indicating the results of testing and decision (potentially AIG 1, 2, 3/3B, 4)
- 4) AIG Acceleration headcount (including early kindergarten admission enrollment)

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: Rated as minimally evident in the self-assessment rating, this practice will be addressed as a focused practice. Local data indicates a need for specialized services for gifted students whose needs are not met fully with our current model. UCPS is currently using the Global Kids Program to target the traditionally underrepresented populations by providing enrichment opportunities at second and third grades. The plan includes a more focused approach using strategies such as Global Kids with the Title I schools and identifying cohorts by the end of first grade. This will allow for intentional

services to be provided for second and third grade students and ultimately supporting identification for AIG by the end of third grade.

Ensuring that students are receiving enrichment opportunities within the regular classroom in the early grades can support the potentially gifted learner. Partnering with other agencies, such as local higher education institutes, can provide opportunities for enrichment of the gifted subgroups.

Because each school has its own unique population and needs, each school needs to plan for providing intentional services for under-represented AIG populations.

Goals: Create an AIG plan at the school level, to include options such as Global Kids, create a cohort model, and/or provide opportunities for the regular education teacher, exceptional children's teacher and the AIG teacher to collaborate in a variety of ways such as planning, coteaching, coaching and modeling to meet the needs of gifted and potentially gifted learners.

Description: The district is committed to identifying underrepresented subgroups while supporting the efforts of the AIG staff at focused Title I schools. The Global Kids Program was piloted in UCPS in 2010 and is based on the Gaston County Public Schools model. During this revision process, it has become evident that schools are at different levels of delivery of this model. Training and supporting staff, especially new staff, in early identification of candidates for Global Kids is critical to ensuring the time needed to make an impact with enrichment. Becoming more intentional with our selection of a cohort, providing enrichment activities, and creating a portfolio of work prior to the third grade screening will be a focus at the Title I schools.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

1. Student rosters for Global Kids Program or other enrichment groups
2. Examples of portfolios
3. Screening data
4. Lesson plans
5. Student work
6. School plan to meet the needs of underrepresented population

Other Comments: Ideas of Strengthening:

- 1) Future expansion of GLOBAL Kids
- 2) Expand Talent Development programs or practices to support underrepresented populations at all schools.
- 3) The development of a plan for highly gifted students needing more radical acceleration and /or specialized educational opportunities, such as online learning.

Practice J

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Currently AIG extracurricular activities are provided at a school-based level and are

teacher directed. Most of these activities include AIG students but are not restricted to just AIG students. These extra-curricular activities may include teams, clubs and competitions such as Odyssey of the Mind, Future Problem Solving, chess, Battle of the Books, Beta Club, math clubs, etc. Recognizing the need for more enrichment activities beyond the classroom, especially in the summer months, is something for consideration. The parent survey indicates that over half of the respondents have no opinion or disagree that the district has extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG students. The teacher survey indicates the over 40% of teachers have no opinion or disagree that the district has extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG students. Rated as minimally evident in the self-assessment rating, this practice will be addressed as a focused practice.

- Goals:**
1. To explore and implement extracurricular programs at the school level that are consistent with the needs of the AIG student and the school culture (facilitated by the AIG Curriculum Coordinator).
 2. To improve communication about extracurricular programs that are appropriate for the AIG student (facilitated by the AIG Curriculum Coordinator).

Description: Current extra-curricular activities include teams, clubs and competitions such as Odyssey of the Mind, Future Problem Solving, chess, Battle of the Books, Beta Club, Math Clubs, etc.

Provides summer enrichment activities to engage gifted learners may include career exploration and special interests.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

1. Descriptions of offerings per school
2. Communication regarding availability of activities appropriate to AIG students.

Other Comments: Ideas of Strengthening:

Explore summer enrichment opportunities operated locally for AIG students to enhance special interests, provide field experiences and maintain academic engagement over the summer months.

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: UCPS works to develop partnerships with parents/ families and the community. The Family Conference, held in February, 2013, provided a variety of sessions for families of AIG students. Presenters included staff from Wingate University, UNC Charlotte, and AIG staff from UCPS. Several community agencies presented workshop sessions and information booths on many topics, not exclusive to the AIG student.

Based on the stakeholder survey data, more information and support on the social and emotional needs of the AIG student is needed. Involving outside agencies and partnerships, locally, at the state level, and nationally, will help to maintain and strengthen this practice.

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

Description: Union County Public Schools encourages a high level of parental and community involvement. Most written communication is available in both English and Spanish including website sections such as Parent Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), informational brochures, and all official forms used in AIG placement and services. If a different language is requested efforts will be made to accommodate the request.

The following communication strategies will be implemented:

AIG Parent Organization

A local AIG parent organization is being proposed to provide support for parents of gifted students. Included in the programming for this group will be social-emotional resources as well as those addressing the academic needs of gifted students in and out of school. Emphasis will be placed on the positive role of parents in providing for gifted students.

AIG Curriculum Nights

Special parent nights will be held to introduce and familiarize parents with the differentiated curriculum and models used in the AIG program.

School-based AIG Parent Communication Plan

Each school will prepare a communication plan for keeping AIG parents and interested community members informed. These plans will be submitted to the central office and updated as needed. Samples of newsletters, meeting invitations, special event involvement, etc. will be provided throughout the year. It is expected that every school will support the efforts of the AIG teacher in

showcasing the achievements of the AIG students and sharing them with the parent community. Special meetings such as DEP/IDEP meetings will be documented through normal record keeping procedures. It is recommended that multiple methods of involving parents be a high priority.

Parent Involvement in AIG Identification Team

Parent referrals will be part of the screening and placement process.

AIG Advisory Council

Parents are part of the AIG Advisory Council at the district level and site-based teams at the school level. These roles include ongoing implementation and monitoring of the three-year plan.

International Baccalaureate (IB) information sessions are available as a possible pathway for AIG students.

Annual AIG Parent Survey (available in Spanish)

This survey is designed and targeted to parents of all AIG students in order to insure annual evaluation and satisfaction levels. Results of this survey are available on the website and through school level communication plans.

Community Organizations

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) and Wingate University are community organizations which offer a range of opportunities for the AIG teacher community. Both UNCC and Wingate offer AIG licensure programs to local teachers. We include community partners in the Family Engagement Conference to provide information and workshops on meeting the needs of gifted learners.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Meeting agendas, announcements and sign-in sheets
- 2) School Websites
- 3) Survey results
- 4) Professional development and licensure class records
- 5) School communication plans

Other Comments:

Practice B

Shares with stakeholders, including all students' parents/families, information regarding the local AIG program, the local AIG plan, and other policies relating to gifted education.

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: UCPS communicates with stakeholders in a variety of ways regarding the AIG program and policies related to gifted education. The district website, school, individual AIG teachers, Moodle sites, newsletters, AIG brochure, and AIG parent meetings are utilized for this purpose. The parent survey results indicate 47.3% feel they are communicated with regarding the AIG program on a regular basis thus showing room for improvement.

Goals: To provide additional avenues for all stakeholders to access information regarding the local AIG program.

Description: Information about the AIG program is shared with parents and other stakeholders through the following efforts:

AIG Brochure (to be available in Spanish):

An AIG brochure will be available to all parents as they register or inquire personally with each school about existing services. This same information will be readily available on the UCPS website. This dual access will help to ensure that parents seeking relocation have information about the program as they research various school systems in the region.

AIG website/School websites:

A portion of the UCPS website is dedicated to information and vital links for parents and others in the community. This site links parents and others in the community with out-of-school opportunities, services, current issues in gifted education, and articles of interest. In addition, special AIG happenings around the district are showcased. FAQs for parents are available in both English and Spanish.

School websites also need a clear link to the AIG website.

Presentation of the Local Plan for Gifted Education at an Annual Parent Meeting:

Parents will be invited to discuss the AIG plan and how it will be implemented. This meeting may be held in conjunction with other school events such as open house or curriculum nights.

Middle School Curriculum Guide:

This booklet includes a description of the AIG program and the related curricular differentiation provided through the classes.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) AIG Brochure(s)
- 2) Website
- 3) Meeting notes, agendas, sign-in sheets
- 4) Middle School Curriculum Guide

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: In an effort to obtain feedback from all stakeholders, the AIG survey was available both online and as paper copy. In our work to revise the AIG plan, the team has carefully reviewed the

survey data to inform our process. We have parent representation on the AIG Advisory Council and parent participation in the revision process. Currently, the plan indicates an AIG parent group will meet regularly and rotate locations to ensure equitable access to all parents. The parent survey indicated parents have ideas and a desire for further discussion regarding the education of their gifted students. An AIG parent group would provide an opportunity for parents to regularly interact with other parents of gifted learners to communicate with AIG staff in addressing questions and problem-solving in a collaborative environment. This component of the plan is not fully in place but will remain in the plan as a focused practice.

Goals: To increase the involvement of all stakeholders in the AIG plan.

Description: Components described more fully in other Standards/Practices include:

1. An AIG Advisory Committee formed for the primary function of providing representation of the stakeholders who meet regularly to assist in the development, implementation and monitoring of the AIG program. (See Standard 6, Practice G)
2. AIG Parent group which will meet regularly and rotate locations around the district to provide equitable access to all parents. (See Standard 5, Practice A)

In addition to these already described opportunities for involvement, it is also possible for schools to determine other ways of connecting and sharing information such as having a parent representative of the site-based committee to gather concerns, share information, etc. as a conduit of communication directly between the school and Central Services. Another possibility is the formation of a PTO subcommittee, if so desired at the school level.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Advisory Committee meeting notes, sign-in sheets, agendas
- 2) Parent group meeting documentation
- 3) Survey data
- 4) Advisory Committee membership list and roles

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 Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: As noted, there are various methods of communication with families but we strive to improve this on an ongoing basis. UCPS has a strong support system in place for non English speaking families. Interpreters for programs and parent conferences as well as the translation of resources is a strength of the district.

Goals: To increase communication efforts with AIG families about opportunities available to AIG students

Description: In addition to efforts described in Standard 5, Practice A and B, additional AIG information will be made available in other languages, as needed. Brochures describing the AIG Program along with general information about the school system will be available at the district intake center. This center is the first stop for parents of students whose first language is not English. Translation services are also available through this center and the Federal Programs department. Whenever possible, parents who speak other languages will also be invited to assist in disseminating information to their native language community. All AIG surveys, forms and paperwork requiring a parent signature are available in Spanish.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Materials available at intake center.
- 2) Translated materials.

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Our data and feedback from parents and staff indicate the need to better support the emotional and social aspects of the gifted learner as a priority. Because 21st century skills require rapidly changing demands via new technologies and social media, it is critical to keep our staff current and updated on the needs of our students. Ongoing professional development for all staff working with the gifted student will be needed. Partnering with local businesses and community agencies as well as institutes of higher education is an ongoing process. Local community agencies and businesses could offer enrichment opportunities for students to explore career and interest possibilities.

Currently, all schools in UCPS have existing partners from the community and they continually strive to grow these partnerships. Specifically working towards gaining support for AIG through these partnerships may be possible.

- Goals:**
- 1) Continue to grow partnerships with institutes of higher education and community agencies and businesses to provide enrichment opportunities such as career exploration and mentoring opportunities
 - 2) Involve parents and their areas of expertise and interest as avenues for enrichment for the AIG program

Description: UCPS has partnered with Winthrop University, University of North Carolina-Charlotte, and the Duke TIP Program as they have presented parent workshops on specific needs of the gifted learner. These schools offer AIG add-on licensure which offers opportunity to increase our AIG licensed staff.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Family Conference Program brochure
- 2) Data on number of teachers enrolled in AIG add-on licensure coursework
- 3) Documented partnerships and events (sign-in sheets, agendas, program brochures)

Other Comments:

Standard 6: Program Accountability

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The Union County Public Schools AIG plan is developed by using the data such as the stakeholder survey data and enrollment data to inform revisions and to improve the plan with the goal of improved student achievement in accordance with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The plan is aligned with best practices and standards for gifted education as approved by the State Board of Education. The North Carolina Department of Instruction provides expert support staff to serve as consultants with regards to the development and implementation of the AIG plan. The plan was written and revised by the AIG Planning Committee and the plan was approved by the UCPS Board of Education.

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

Description: Every three years, the Academically/Intellectually Gifted Program Director leads the evaluation and revision process of the AIG local plan. Developed with the input from all stakeholders, including central administrative staff, school level administrators and teachers, parents, community members and students, this plan is reviewed, updated and submitted to DPI for additional review.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Evaluation data (including survey data, self-assessment data and anecdotal data)
- 2) Revision committee meeting notes, agendas, sign-in sheets
- 3) Completed plan presented to School Board for approval
- 4) AIG plan submitted by established deadline to DPI

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 AIG Advisory Council, comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, worked

collectively to ensure the plan revisions reflect the standards and best practices for gifted education and align with current state and district policies. The Director of AIG facilitates this process as well as the regular meetings for AIG staff. The plan will be revised every three years.

Ensuring fidelity for all AIG components will require a collective effort from all teachers and administrators. Improving the services and support offered to the gifted student will be an ongoing process. The AIG Advisory Council will meet three times per school year to review the goals and current assessment, enrollment, and survey data.

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

Description: Monitoring of the local plan is the primary responsibility of the AIG Director, but is facilitated by school level administration, the AIG team at each school and the AIG teacher.

The AIG team is composed of a school administrator, guidance counselor, regular education teachers and the AIG teacher(s). This team is charged with reviewing AIG placement decisions and supporting the implementation of the AIG program.

The AIG teacher is the primary link between Central Services and the school. Attendance at AIG regular meetings is required as well as timely electronic communication through email or phone contact as needed to insure smooth program operation. The AIG teacher also maintains primary responsibility for the submission of all monitoring documentation as requested throughout the year. These requests include, but are not limited to the following:

- AIG Teacher schedule
- Class rosters verifying AIG paperwork exists reflecting correct placement
- AIG Team listing
- Screening notebook
- Electronic archiving of all signed and processed student paperwork
- Data entry into electronic database of all students under evaluation for AIG placement
- Ensuring PowerSchool accuracy for headcount purposes
- Class rosters for end of year transitions
- Summer testing lists
- Textbook and AIG resources inventories
- Analysis of identification criteria
- Maintenance of hard copy student files
- Transfer of hard copy student files at transition points to Middle school, high school and internal transfers
- Guidance Lesson evaluation forms
- Lesson Plans on request

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Regular meeting sign-in sheets
- 2) Electronic archives
- 3) Notebooks maintained at AIG office of requested documentation
- 4) Classroom observation and monitoring notes

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Rated as mostly evident in the self- assessment data, this is a practice that will continue to be maintained. Many respondents to the self-assessment rated this practice as unknown since they do not have direct knowledge of the process. Funding provided through the state is augmented by significant local support and as such requires diligence and good stewardship of funds to insure high quality AIG programming within UCPS.

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

Description: The AIG Director has direct responsibility for and access to both state and local funding budgets designated as 034 accounts. Budgets are submitted in the fall and then reviewed by the AIG Director under the supervision of the Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services and the Chief Financial Officer periodically throughout the year. The Finance Department provides access to real-time accounting systems which show expenditures and remaining funds. Payroll works closely with the Director to insure accuracy of personnel costs such as salary and benefits. Licensure works closely to verify that only AIG licensed personnel are paid from state AIG funds. Funding is also provided to teachers for instructional materials, professional development and other AIG related needs. This collaborative environment insures state policy is followed.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Annual AIG budget requests
- 2) Annual AIG budget as approved and funded
- 3) Internal purchasing processes of approval flow
- 4) AS400 spreadsheet access for regular monitoring

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: Having knowledge of whether or not AIG students are growing in student achievement every year is an important concern. Although only on grade level achievement is available through state testing, the ability to disaggregate data is now available through various data systems such as EVASS. These systems make information more readily accessible. Drop-out data on gifted students

will serve to inform the program about issues related to this occurrence such as underachievement and social isolation resulting from giftedness.

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

Description: Working collaboratively with the Director of Testing and Student Services, the AIG Director will collect annually the results from state testing and provide analyses and reports about AIG student growth and drop-out rate, as available. In addition, working with the Director of Secondary Education, data reflecting AIG students' achievement in Honors, AP and IB courses in high school will also be reviewed. These results will be shared with administrators, teachers and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) PowerSchool EOG/EOC reports
- 2) EVAAS reports
- 3) AP/IB reports
- 4) Drop-out reports disaggregated for AIG students
- 5) Local benchmark assessment data

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: Self-assessment data rated this as mostly evident, however, upon further discussion, it has been determined that more focused attention needs to be placed on this practice and new processes put in place where possible. Currently, tracking of the Global Kids participants has been in place for just three years. The AIG staff recognizes the need to put more effective processes in place to follow the identified Global Kids over a longer period of time, through graduation from high school. By looking at longitudinal data, we can better assess the effectiveness of the enrichment and early identification process and determine ways to improve the program and to better support these students throughout their educational path. Therefore, this will be a focused practice.

- Goals:**
- 1) To intentionally monitor the retention of all AIG students including data on under-represented populations.
 - 2) To determine if efforts described in this plan to increase the numbers of under-represented populations in the local AIG program are yielding expected results.
 - 3) To reflect on program implications based on the findings of this focus.

Description: The AIG Director will collect information from a variety of sources, including DPI headcount data, AIG teacher screening data and electronic data as archived and recorded in AIG

documentation paperwork to create reports showing the numbers of both representation and retention for these populations. Efforts will be made to use existing technology to identify these students and track their progress through the AIG program at all levels.

When students exit the program, the Director will be immediately alerted via email, and paperwork documentation will be entered into the electronic database immediately. Changes such as these will require the AIG teacher to communicate with the PowerSchool operator at the school to be sure the AIG headcount is accurate.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Disaggregated headcount reports
- 2) Retention data
- 3) Alternative assessment forms
- 4) IEP documents, as appropriate
- 5) Student achievement data
- 6) Screening notebooks
- 7) Enrollment data in upper level courses

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Hiring a highly qualified AIG staff is critical to the success of each gifted learner. We recognize the impact a teacher has on a student's success as well as their motivation and desire to learn. Because many of these students remain with the same teacher for two years or more, we acknowledge the importance of hiring teachers with appropriate training, licensure and expertise to serve our gifted learners. Currently, all AIG teachers are either licensed or are completing the requirements for an AIG add-on license.

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

Description: Prior to hiring an applicant for an AIG position, the principal will involve the AIG Director in order to insure the applicant has the proper credentials for the position, or is willing to attain them. If selected, the principal at the school sends a Personnel Selection Form (PSF) to the AIG Director for signature. That PSF begins the process of verifying credentials. Licensure then checks the teaching license of the applicant and communicates with the AIG Director if there are any deficiencies in the credentials.

In addition, the AIG Director annually requests teachers complete a profile sheet that includes information regarding their credentials and what additional professional development they may need. This information is then cross-checked with licensure to insure teachers assigned to teach AIG sections have current licensure or are in the process of getting it. This information is then used to determine funding sources for salaries and has other budget implications in terms of professional

development needs and possible tuition reimbursement needs.
Licensure and payroll work collaboratively with the AIG Director to ensure proper monitoring.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Personnel Selection Forms
- 2) AIG Teacher Profile Sheets
- 3) AIG Salary and Budget reports

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice was rated in the self-assessment as minimally evident. The role of an advisory committee can provide much needed support for the development, improvement and review of local AIG programs. Including a wide range of stakeholders on the committee insures the voices of many are represented. Currently, the AIG Advisory Council is comprised of teachers, administrators, and parents. Feedback and input from students is also currently in place. Students thoughtfully responded to the student survey and their input has been carefully considered in the plan revision.

Goals: 1) To create a representative committee of all stakeholders to serve in an advisory role for the AIG program.
2) To support the UCPS Total Quality Education (TQE) goal of 'continuous improvement', the AIG Advisory Committee will make recommendations for improvements throughout the course of the 3 yr plan.

Description: The AIG Advisory Committee formed during the 2009-2010 school year to serve as the plan revision committee has established the base for this committee's future. The makeup of this committee will reflect districtwide representation and the following stakeholder groups. Service on the committee will be in staggered, 2yr rotations, with the exception of the AIG Director and the Superintendent's Cabinet level administrators.

Committee members: (representative numbers can be adjusted as needed)

AIG Director (facilitator)

AIG Curriculum Coordinator

2-Cabinet Level Administrators

2-Central Services Administrators

2-Elementary school level administrators

2- Middle School level administrators

1- High School level administrator

3- Parents of AIG students (elementary, middle, and high school)

2- AIG teachers, one from the elementary level, one from middle school

- 1- High School curriculum coordinator
- 1- High School teacher (Honors/AP/IB)
- 1- EC or ELL staff representative

The committee will meet a minimum of three times a year and can schedule additional meetings as needed.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

Committee documentation:

- 1) List of members with school/community affiliation noted
- 2) Agendas
- 3) Invitation to serve
- 4) Sign-in sheets
- 5) Minutes

Other Comments:

Practice H

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Regular feedback from AIG program stakeholders offers additional data to help achieve the UCPS Total Quality Education objective of continuous improvement. The self-assessment rating of minimally evident demonstrates that this area can be improved. For the 2012-2013 school year, a comprehensive survey regarding the AIG program was completed via separate surveys for parents, students, teachers, and administrators. The surveys netted overwhelming numbers in responses: 945 parent responses, 3,304 student responses, 75 AIG teacher responses, and 91 administrator responses were collected through an on-line, optional hard copy format. All responses were anonymous and the format included open-ended and Likert scale responses. The feedback from stakeholders has been a key component for the revision process of the current AIG plan. The survey itself can be improved by ensuring adequate hard copies for families without internet access are readily available. Communication, well in advance, regarding the upcoming survey would improve the process. In the future, surveying non AIG teachers would provide additional information for the purpose of informing revisions. Thus, it is a focused practice.

- Goals:**
- 1) To provide a process by which various stakeholders can provide regular input into the AIG program.
 - 2) To provide data that the Advisory Committee can use annually to determine if any program changes are warranted.

Description: Currently, there is an extensive effort made annually to survey all stakeholders including school administrators, AIG teachers, Regular Education teachers, AIG students and parents/guardians. Surveys are available in hard copy print, via internet access and in Spanish.

- Annual surveys— short, concise, effectiveness and satisfaction surveys. Administered each spring, the results will be compiled and reported to the AIG Advisory committee and made available on the

AIG website each May. These will be administered annually.

- Evaluation/Revision cycle surveys- longer, more in-depth surveys designed to capture effectiveness and satisfaction aligned to NC AIG Standards. Administered in the spring of the year prior to revision (i.e. 2012, 2015, 2018, etc), this information will serve to further inform the revision process taking place the following year.
- Parent group meetings and other informal settings where stakeholders come together to learn more about the AIG program.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Survey data
- 2) Parent meeting minutes
- 3) Advisory Committee minutes

Other Comments:

Practice I

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Rated as mostly evident in self-assessment data, this practice will be maintained. Since AIG students are assessed by multiple criteria for program placement this process should continue to be part of the programs' on-going assessment as well. Reviewing data regarding underrepresented subgroups will provide information regarding the success of the Global Kids and other enrichment programs as well as tracking the Alternative Assessment and Pathway 3 identification process. By adding AIG as a subgroup on state assessment disaggregated data, we will have even more information to inform continuous program improvement.

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

Description: Program evaluation is conducted at regular intervals by both internal and external evaluators with expertise in gifted education as well as parents and students. Those professionals include university professors in gifted education, educators with gifted licensure and student assessment services. The Exceptional Children's staff member program is utilized when special populations and twice-exceptional students are participating. The evaluation process includes monitoring of student identification and placement, student services and options and student achievement resulting from these services. In addition, effectiveness and efficiency of AIG departmental and administrative functions are also evaluated throughout this process. All resulting information will be presented to the AIG Advisory Committee for further recommendations.

The following evaluation components are in use:

Every three years: (summative)

- Comprehensive needs assessment surveys developed for community members, parents, students, principals, AIG teachers and regular education teachers to complete.

- Analysis of demographic data over time (trend data) reviewed to determine enrollment changes over time in diversity, gender and district wide access to the program.
- Interviews and focus groups with various stakeholders.
- Disaggregated AIG Student achievement trend data to evaluate program services effectiveness
- Comparative AIG data from other district models to determine curriculum differentiation impact and service delivery model effectiveness.
- School Board presentation of evaluation results and suggestions for revision.
- Review comments from DPI on current AIG plan

Every year: (formative)

- Student identification, placement and retention processes monitored centrally for compliance with the plan and accuracy in head count reporting.
- AIG enrollment data reviewed
- Disaggregated AIG student achievement results and AMO growth data reviewed
- Satisfaction/ attitudinal surveys to principals, teachers, students and parents.
- Off –grade-level assessment administered to all fifth grade AIG students to determine programmatic impact on achievement levels (as requested).
- Professional development needs assessment conducted to provide the basis for long-range planning as evidenced by teacher reporting and student achievement data.
- Review and revision of curriculum documents to insure alignment with the NCSCOS and to insure rigor.
- Public Information office publishes report to the community which includes gifted services and program information.

Every semester: (formative)

- Bi-annual guidance report sessions evaluating the effectiveness of classroom guidance sessions delivered directly to the AIG students.

Every month: (formative)

- Classroom visits by the Director, Coordinator, or designee to oversee delivery services, curriculum implementation and provide support and monitoring.
- Regular meetings of AIG personnel with the Director to discuss programmatic effectiveness and quality improvements.
- Monthly principal meetings providing opportunities for program discussions and recommendations for improvements or adjustments as needed.
- Parent communication reports/newsletters/website postings to evaluate communication efforts. This process will also disseminate and report AIG academic performance and programmatic activities throughout the community.

Ongoing: (formative)

- Teacher assessment of student achievement as measured by districtwide tests.
- Parent meetings to provide awareness of differentiated curricula and support services for social-emotional development of gifted students.
- Maintenance of records that reflect the volume and type of inquiries made to the AIG department

from community members and other stakeholders. These records will be used to determine areas needing improvement.

- Planning meetings held to continually improve and evaluate curriculum differentiation strategies.
- Professional development evaluations completed to inform the process of delivering high quality professional development.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Summary reports compiled from screening notebook data and system-generated reports reflecting annual student achievement and growth
- 2) AIG Advisory Committee meeting minutes
- 3) Review comments from DPI on current AIG plan
- 4) Classroom visit documentation
- 5) Meeting documentation
- 6) Public website postings
- 7) Professional development evaluations
- 8) Survey data

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: Rated as mostly evident in the self-assessment data, this practice will be maintained. Dissemination of data from the evaluation of the AIG program is essential for stakeholders to see their input reflected in the recommended revisions and program improvement.

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

Description: Evaluation data, such as survey data, student achievement and enrollment data will be made available annually through a variety of vehicles such as the AIG website, school websites and newsletters. This communication effort will provide a better understanding to the general public about the AIG program and its results.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) AIG website
- 2) School websites
- 3) Newsletters

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: Rated in the self-assessment as completely evident, this practice will be maintained. It is of utmost important for student's rights to be protected and as stipulated in Article 9B of the North Carolina General Statutes, due process procedures must be in place for all students to appeal decisions made regarding the local AIG program

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

Description: Students' rights are protected in a variety of ways in the AIG program:

- The Parent Handbook (See Appendix D) is provided to each parent when they are indicating their permission to have their child tested. This handbook describes in detail the steps in the appeals process.
- Student records are maintained in teachers' classrooms in locked filing cabinets.
- Electronic information is protected by FERPA measures and any documents transmitted via electronic means are password protected to prevent inadvertent interception of confidential information.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- 1) Parent Handbook
- 2) Signed AIG 2 forms (Parent Permission to Test) indicating receipt of the Parent Handbook.
- 3) Electronic database and record access restricted to AIG teacher of record and Central Services personnel
- 4) Password protected electronic files (screening notebooks)
- 5) Documentation of complaints, minutes of appeals and subsequent responses

Other Comments:

Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.doc (*Appendix*)
Appendix A-Placement Matrix.doc (*Appendix*)
Appendix B- Early Kindergarten Admission.doc (*Appendix*)
Appendix C- Alternative Assessment-Pathway 3 Selection Form.doc (*Appendix*)
Appendix D-ParentHandbook-DueProcess.pdf (*Appendix*)
Appendix E-Curriculum Document Examples.doc (*Appendix*)
Appendix F-AIG Director Job Description.doc (*Appendix*)
Appendix G- Professional Development Plan.docx (*Appendix*)
Appendix H- Roles and Responsibilities.docx (*Appendix*)
Appendix I- AIG Curriculum Coordinator Job Description.doc (*Appendix*)
Appendix J- Acceleration.docx (*Appendix*)
GLOSSARY.doc (*Appendix*)