

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

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 13-AUG-19  
**LEA Superintendent's Name:** Barry Collins  
**LEA AIG Contact Name:** Michael Elder  
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Onslow County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

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

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

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

**Onslow County Schools Vision for local AIG program:** Providing excellence in gifted education services which meet the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted and potentially gifted students.

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

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$1463680.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

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## **Standard 1: Student Identification**

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

### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** Screening and referral are welcomed and encouraged at all grade levels. Screening and referral most often lead to consideration for identification from third grade through seventh grade, however, referrals are appropriate and accepted at all grade levels. The goal of screening and referral is to match students with services and to determine an area(s) of identification if appropriate.

Screening is the process by which existing data is analyzed to reveal students who are performing or have the potential to perform academically at advanced levels. In the screening process, AIG specialists, counselors, teachers, and school staff will examine existing achievement data to include mClass, TRC, DIBELS, k-2 math assessments, benchmark testing results, Beginning of Grade (BOG), End of Grade (EOG), End of Course (EOC), ACT, and other state or nationally normed testing results. Classroom performance may also be considered as an indicator during the screening process.

Qualitative or descriptive data may also reveal possible referrals during the screening process. Anecdotal evidence, observational data focused on gifted behaviors, and/or portfolio samples may help reveal signs of giftedness.

Referrals may be submitted for a child by anyone (a student, a peer, a parent, a coach, a teacher, a counselor, an administrator, etc.). A formal referral is completed using the Onslow County Schools AIG Referral Form which can be found on the website or obtained from an AIG Specialist or district AIG coordinator. The referral is most often submitted to the AIG Specialist, but can also be submitted to the school principal, school counselor, or district coordinator of gifted services. This referral alerts the school AIG specialist (or contact at the high school level) to begin the screening process.

Schools may also decide to work with district gifted services leadership to coordinator sweep-screening of students (typically using an aptitude assessment).

Typically, nationally normed measures of aptitude and achievement, scales of motivation, and samples of class work are used to develop a profile of a student. This data set is then used to determine the most appropriate placement. Assessments are given within testing windows during each semester.

### **Practice B**

Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels that provides multiple opportunities to reveal a student's aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve. The criteria

may include both qualitative and quantitative data in order to develop a comprehensive learner profile.

**District Response:** AIG identification is the result of a review of data gathered during the screening and referral process.

Onslow County Schools gifted services has multiple pathways as described here:

Referrals: Anyone can nominate a student for AIG testing. The classroom teacher must complete and sign the AIG1 (Referral). The AIG 1 Referral asks the teacher to compile some data on the child including a motivation scale and current performance indicators. If the referring person is not the classroom teacher, he/she is given a motivation scale to complete as well. At this point, the AIG Match Team will determine if further assessment is needed. The AIG Specialist will sign the AIG1 (Referral) document and begin a confidential folder for the child.

In rare cases, typically when a student's performance is in the bottom quartile or when the student has been tested recently, the Match Team may decide not to move forward with assessment. The coordinator of gifted services will be made aware of all cases where the Match Team decides that further assessment is not necessary. The box "No Evaluation" should be checked on the AIG 1 Referral form. If a parent or child disagrees with this decision, they may follow the appeals process outlined in the Procedures to Resolve Disagreements document.

If the Match Team determines that the student should move forward with assessment, an AIG 2a or AIG 2b (Consent for Evaluation) form must be sent home to the parent in order to proceed with testing. If a consent for evaluation is not received, evaluation should not take place. In rare cases, the coordinator of gifted services may be asked by the AIG specialist to sign consent. In these rare instances, extenuating circumstances may be considered and documented by the coordinator of gifted services and evaluation may proceed. The gifted specialist will schedule the evaluation based on testing windows approved by the coordinator of gifted services.

In an effort to match a student with appropriate identification and service delivery, the following designations are recognized based on the criteria listed alongside each below:

\*All aptitude or achievement tests must be approved by Onslow County Schools gifted services

Intellectually Gifted (IG): 97-99th percentile score on a Non-Verbal Aptitude Test (no other indicators present)

Academically Gifted in Reading (AR):

92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Verbal Aptitude test score and 92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Reading Achievement test score.

Or

92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Nonverbal or Composite Aptitude test score and 92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Reading Achievement test score.

Or

Three out of four of the following:

92nd-96th percentile on a Nationally Normed Verbal, Nonverbal, or Composite Aptitude test score;

92nd percentile or higher on a Nationally Normed Reading Achievement test score;

Motivation score at an acceptable level;

10/28/2019

Two out of three (Level 5 Reading EOG/EOC (92nd percentile on BOG; Classroom grades averaging >90%; Qualifying reading portfolio)

Intellectually Gifted Reading (Power School Designation AR)

97th percentile or higher on a Nationally Normed Verbal Aptitude test with no other indicators at a qualifying level

Academically Gifted in Math (AM)

92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Quantitative Aptitude test score and 92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Math Achievement test score.

Or

92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Nonverbal or Composite Aptitude test score and 92nd-99th percentile on a Nationally Normed Math Achievement test score.

Or

Three out of four of the following:

92nd-96th percentile on a Nationally Normed Quantitative, Nonverbal, or Composite Aptitude test score;

92nd percentile or higher on a Nationally Normed Math Achievement test score;

Motivation score at an acceptable level;

Two out of three (Level 5 Math EOG/EOC; Classroom grades averaging >90%; Qualifying math portfolio)

Intellectually Gifted Math (Power School Designation AM)

97th percentile or higher on a Nationally Normed Quantitative Aptitude test with no other indicators at a qualifying level

Academically Gifted (Reading and Math) AG

To qualify as Academically Gifted in both areas (Reading and Math) and to be designated as AG, a student must meet the criteria to qualify as gifted in reading and the criteria to qualify as gifted in mathematics using any of the pathways.

Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI)

To qualify as Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI), a student must have at least a 92nd percentile on both reading and math on an approved achievement test and the student must have a score of 97th percentile or higher on the Verbal and Quantitative sections on an approved aptitude test.

A composite score may be used on a case by case basis at the discretion of the AIG Match Team.

The intent of the multiple pathways is to accurately identify as many students as possible and to help determine the most appropriate service delivery model.

After all data is collected and the most appropriate designation is identified by the AIG Match Team an AIG 4 Decision form is completed. If a student does not meet the qualifications for gifted services, and AIG 5b or 5c Gifted Evaluation Results form is to be sent home in a sealed envelope for parents to review. Copies of these forms will be placed in the student's confidential AIG file and the data will be entered into the secure electronic file. The student's paper file will be filed with Did Not Qualify (DNQ) files and a green DNQ form will be placed in the child's cumulative folder alerting all parties that the child has been tested and that results are in a separate, confidential file.

If a student does qualify for gifted services, an AIG 5a Consent for Placement form is to be completed and the AIG Specialist is to meet with classroom teachers (and others if appropriate) to complete the AIG Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) (grades k-5) or AIG Academic Blueprint (grades 6-12). The AIG Specialist will send home the AIG Invitation to Conference form and keep a copy for the student's record. Upon initial placement, parents should be met with individually to explain testing results and the AIG 5a Consent for Services as well as the DEP or Academic Blueprint should be reviewed (and revised if necessary) with parents. All data will be entered into the secure electronic file. The file must then be reviewed by a Match Team and/or the coordinator of gifted services. The student information and data will then be entered into the student information management system, PowerSchool. Finally, the AIG specialist will place a blue notice in the student's cumulative file which states that the student has a confidential AIG folder on file.

All testing results, in a summary sheet format, shall be shared with the coordinator of gifted services or his designee for review.

No gifted labels shall be removed from a child unless done so by the coordinator of gifted services after consultation with the school match team. The practice of "de-gifting" will not be used except in rare instances where very special circumstances can be documented.

These pathways are being examined and may be modified during this 2019-2022 AIG plan cycle. If they are, an update will be shared with senior level district leadership and posted to the gifted service's website. Additionally, any changes will be shared with the NC Department of Public Schools Divisions of Advanced Learning and Gifted Education through the interim report.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Using the Onslow County Schools 2018 Spring AIG Headcount as a data source, one can see representational discrepancies across ethnic groups. Black students comprise 19% of the overall district population, yet only 8% of the gifted population. Hispanic students comprise 15% of the overall district population, yet only 10% of the gifted population. In contrast, Asian students are 1% of the overall district population, but 3% of the gifted population. White students are 56% of the overall population, but 70% of the gifted population. It should be noted that the population of students of two or more races and American Indian students are less than 1% of the overall and AIG population. Also, students of two or more races appear to be equitably identified.

The gifted services team will continue to review screening, referral, and identification practices to make identification more reflective of the school system overall demographics.

Data will be reviewed and disaggregated annually over the summer and shared with specialists and stakeholders. Practices which need to be refined will be explored and addressed. Professional learning will be identified and offered where needed to help ensure accurate referrals. Gifted services will also explore developing a more intentional talent development model to allow more students the opportunity to develop their skills and abilities especially at the K-2 levels.

Gifted services will also explore local norms (district and school level) to determine feasibility.

Partnering with other district initiative and divisions (Title One and English Learners especially) will continue to be a priority.

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Gifted services has developed several resources to help ensure that policies and practices are carried out consistently across Onslow County Schools. Identification flow charts allow specialists to use consistent criteria for identification. Match Teams at the school level help ensure that multiple adults are reviewing data for placements. District level random folder checks help ensure that students rights are protected and that practices are consistently implemented. A greater level of school visitation and internal auditing of identification and service delivery will be an area of focus during this plan cycle.

An introductory presentation, "AIG 101" will be shared by AIG specialists with all staff to help with referrals as well as service delivery. This presentation includes behaviors to watch for, identification criteria, resources for instruction, and other information helpful to classroom teachers and school staff members.

All data for students screened will be entered into the secure database. This serves as a backup for each student (identified or not).

A Microsoft One Note Notebook serves as a shared resource for each AIG specialist. This notebook contains all information related to the identification process including to-do lists before/during/after testing, testing plans and procedure forms, identification forms, placement flow-charts, and other resources.

Gifted services will also explore entering identification criteria into PowerSchool for each identified AIG students.

#### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Gifted Services utilizes a variety of media formats to ensure that any interested parties are aware of the procedures for screening, referral, and identification. Gifted services maintains pages on the district website ([www.onslow.k12.nc.us](http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us)). On the website resources for students, parents, community members, specialists, teachers, and others are posted and updated regularly. The current AIG Strategic Plan is posted on the website, made available at each school site, and printed upon request. Procedures for identification are outlined in a flow chart which is accessible via the website. This flow chart outlines typical identification practices. Additionally, a brochure outlining gifted services and practices for identification is made available to schools for

display and to parents either via the website or in printed form at school meetings.

Annual updates on identification practices are provided to district staff, school administrators, school counselors, and others via district-level meetings. In addition, AIG specialists update teachers and parents via meetings, websites, and other forms of communication.

A video outlining the identification process will be added to the district website. In addition, periodically, articles will be shared through district news about how to refer a child for gifted testing.

Gifted services will work with English Learner services (and other agencies if needed) to translate materials as needed to meet the needs of our community.

To ensure the successful transition between schools, elementary AIG specialists meet with middle school AIG contacts/specialists to review the needs of gifted learners who are transitioning. This includes explaining which students are identified as gifted and in which areas. For each fifth-grade student, a vertical articulation sheet will be completed and shared with the middle school to document each gifted student's talents (academic and otherwise).

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Each child who is screened, referred, and/or tested for gifted services will have a confidential folder created. For students who are placed into gifted services, a blue notice will be placed in the cumulative folder alerting anyone with access to that folder that the child has an AIG confidential folder. Similarly, a green notice will be placed in the cumulative folder of any child who is screened or tested but does not qualify for gifted services.

Gifted placement and services are specified on forms which are used across Onslow County Schools. Copies of these forms are made for parents following DEP meetings. These forms are reviewed annually with parents to ensure that they are communicated clearly and effectively.

At the elementary and middle school level, an AIG specialist is assigned at least two days per week. This allows for consistent review with teachers, parents, and families. The expectation is that families are met with at least annually and communicated with regularly. Confidential folders are to be updated annually.

At the high school level, a gifted contact is trained and provided an additional work payment. This contact will help work with students and their Academic Blueprints as well as serve as a liaison between parents and district gifted leadership.

Regardless of grade level, at any initial placement meeting, a full copy of the file is to be given to parents. This entire AIG file includes copies of DEPs, testing results, and any other data used in the decision-making process. At annual DEP conferences, copies should also be provided to parents of any updated paperwork.



**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Establishing guidelines or "look fors" to help teachers and others in the screening process

AIG Services 101 Presentation Updated

Sweep Screen in more schools (consider districtwide)

Flow charts for each school printed and available for teachers

AIG Match Teams utilized for all placement decisions

Review of data to examine trends in students in talent development, those screened and identified

Local Norms

**Sources of Evidence:** Identification Documents

Match Team Notes

Demographic Data by Year

Random Folder Check Data

One Note Notebook

Website with Identification Information

Vertical Articulation Sheets (Fifth to Sixth Grade Transition)

AIG Specialist Schedules

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

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

### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** At the elementary level, gifted specialists work with district and building level leadership to establish a vision and goals for gifted services at the school. AIG specialists work with classroom teachers and school staff members to deliver services both directly and indirectly to students. At the start of each school year the AIG specialist completes an AIG Annual Agreement Form in consultation with each school principal and the district coordinator of gifted services. The AIG Annual Agreement outlines the vision, mission, and goals for the school and the AIG Specialist. Further, the AIG Annual Agreement states how the specialist will divide time across all grade levels and at what percentage. The recommended percentage is approximately 70% of time with identified students/teachers and 30% of time with talent development. The AIG Annual Agreement serves as a guide and a means to protect services to students throughout the school year. The AIG Annual Agreement is to be submitted to the coordinator of gifted services by September 15 each school year.

In cases where cluster grouping is utilized, both pull-out and inclusive services are appropriate for students. Services may include content replacement, enrichment, acceleration, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving, and other such services.

In addition, each summer, an AIG curriculum development team will meet to develop units of study which all gifted elementary students will experience. These units will be based upon a common theme or vision that is unique to each school year. These units will be utilized where pull out services are delivered, but services may also include other instructional tasks.

In cases where cluster grouping is not utilized, pull out services will be the method of direct service. In Onslow County Schools, elementary cluster grouping is defined/clarified in Standard Four: Practice D of this strategic plan. AIG specialists also meet with grade level teams to plan academic units of study, to examine student assessment results, to support the Data Teams process, and to help address the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Further, AIG specialists work with school counselors and other school leaders to develop services addressing the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Whole grade acceleration may be considered on a case-by-case basis where a student's needs may best be met with chronologically older children. Iowa Acceleration Scales are recommended and can be obtained by principals or gifted specialists from the coordinator of gifted services.

More common is the practice of subject acceleration. In some cases, the appropriate level of content

may be at an advanced grade level in one subject area, but not in all subject areas. In these cases, a student may individually (or in a small group) be moved to a different grade level for instruction for part of the school day in that content area. Testing considerations should be discussed with the testing coordinator as this depends on local and state policies.

At the middle school level, gifted specialists balance their time between supporting teachers in planning and data analysis with meeting with students individually and in small groups. Gifted specialists at the middle school level will work in collaboration with school counselors, classroom teachers, parents, and student to create Academic Blueprints which help guide course selection for each identified AIG student beginning in the sixth grade. The Academic Blueprint allows the specialist and others to develop enhanced programs to support the interests, special talents, and strengths of gifted students. By sharing interests, personal goals, and accomplishments through the Academic Blueprint, all staff can get to know the whole gifted child. Gifted specialists work with school counselors and other school leaders to develop services addressing the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

During the previous plan cycle (2016-2019) it was determined that services are best delivered by staff at the high school rather than a dedicated gifted specialist. Gifted services will support the additional work of two staff members at each high school. Gifted services at the high school level include, but are not limited to, supporting advanced course work (Honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Career and College Promise, Advanced Career and Technical Education). In addition, gifted services provides additional funding to support teachers in AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) which helps schools establish a college-ready culture. Teachers can receive additional training and support in how to help develop the whole gifted child through AVID. This includes organizational skills, collaboration, reading and writing, and advanced inquiry. Gifted services will work with school contacts and school counselors to develop programs and services to meet the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. High schools offer many interest-based groups. Where possible gifted services will seek to support clubs and initiatives that target the needs of gifted learners.

High school courses being offered in middle school is a common practice. Students should be offered the opportunity to take high school courses which meet their readiness levels. At any time that a student is enrolling in a high school course in middle school, the full trajectory through the twelfth-grade year should be charted on the student's Academic Blueprint.

Another form of subject acceleration is found as college courses are offered while students are in high school happen. This practice occurs in two distinct ways. First, Advanced Placement courses are offered in face-to-face as well as online formats at each high school. Advanced Placement courses can result in a student earning college credit if he/she completes the course and achieves a qualifying score on the AP exam. AP exams are paid for by the state of North Carolina. Gifted services will support AP teachers as the budget allows with classroom materials and support for attending summer institutes. In a similar way, Jacksonville High School is the host to the International Baccalaureate (IB) program for Onslow County Schools. Students can also earn college credit by taking IB courses and reaching qualifying scores on the affiliated exams. The IB Diploma and the AP Capstone are available at several Onslow County high schools. The IB Diploma is available at Jacksonville High School. The AP Capstone is available at Richlands High School and Northside High School. Each of these designates that a student has completed a series of advanced courses and achieved high levels on examinations. Each program is eligible for controlled enrollment. Controlled enrollment means that students who would otherwise attend a different Onslow County

high school can apply to attend one of these high schools to be a member of the IB Diploma cohort or the AP Capstone cohort.

A second way that high school students can earn college credit during high school is through Career and College Promise (CCP). High school students may take college classes at Coastal Carolina Community College during their junior and senior year. The courses are specified based upon college transfer pathways. These courses offer students a chance to earn dual credit. This means for these courses, the student earns both the high school graduation credit as well as the college credit at the same time. More information can be found in the high school course selection guide on the Onslow County Schools website ([www.onslow.k12.nc.us](http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us)) or by contacting a high school counselor.

As an enrichment and extension offering, Onslow County Schools gifted services offers chess instruction and tournaments from second through twelfth grade. Chess instruction uses several resources but primarily is based on the work of Michael Kusen. Chess is used as a way both to serve gifted students, but also as a way to screen for potential in children.

Summer camps are offered for gifted children in elementary grades and middle school. At the elementary level, an outside group currently offers a week of summer camp that is facilitated by gifted services. Additionally, a middle school camp for rising 7th-9th graders was created during the 2015-2019 AIG plan cycle. This week-long camp has been named "Cognicon." The themes of this camp vary from year to year, but are focused on service learning and helping gifted middle schoolers explore their gifts.

One gap in summer camp offerings happens as students finish 5th grade. During this plan cycle, gifted services is planning on developing a summer camp opportunity for 5th graders which will include elements that help students transition from elementary to middle school. Other summer camp opportunities may be explored at all levels as well.

At all grade levels, students' Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) and Academic Blueprints are to be used to guide the match between identification and services. Both potential and achievement will be used in determining appropriate placement and service delivery.

In addition to providing services to students who are identified as gifted and those in talent development, gifted specialists serve as resource personnel to classroom teachers, curriculum developers, liaisons with the district, and deliverers of professional development. In each of these roles, the gifted specialist works to ensure that adults are equipped to meet the needs of gifted learners.

While gifted specialists serve a critical role on school campuses, students spend most of their time with classroom teachers. Therefore, investments are made both in specialists and in the professional learning and resources of classroom teachers.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** District level leadership works to ensure that gifted students and services are considered in each instructional and programmatic decision. Gifted services works to enhance

district initiatives and to create learning environments and opportunities which are supportive of the Onslow County Schools District Instructional Framework. The Instructional Framework is comprised of four main areas: Planning, Instruction, Assessment, and Culture. These areas specifically speak to addressing the needs of all children including gifted students. Further, the Instructional Framework has led Onslow County Schools into the Data Teams process. As initiatives are implemented, the impact on gifted children and programming is considered.

Gifted services is connected to other areas within the LEA including professional development, planning, and instruction. When topics for professional development are solicited (three times each year), AIG leadership and specialists work collaboratively to determine what district-wide professional development or school-based professional development should be offered. AIG is part of the Onslow County Schools district and school leadership teams. This includes representation on the district leadership team, Core Council. By being a part of Core Council, natural connections are made between divisions (elementary services, secondary services, exceptional children services, career and technical education services, Title One services, etc.). Gifted specialists are part of school-based leadership called the Instructional Support Team.

On an annual basis, Onslow County School Board policies are reviewed to ensure impacts on gifted services are considered.

AIG specialists develop instructional units for use both by specialists and classroom teachers based on the conceptual planning framework which is encouraged across the county.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** One key element of the Onslow County Schools Instructional Framework is the Data Teams process. In Data Teams, teachers of a common grade or subject meet together to pre-assess students using a brief, common formative assessment. Based on the results of the common formative assessment, teachers are then able to accelerate instruction for students who are ready and support students who need help. The Data Teams process is centered around the concept of differentiating instruction. This differentiation should occur both within the classroom and, at times, result in flexible grouping across classrooms. As Data Teams are implemented with increasing levels of fidelity, the instructional needs of gifted learners should be even better addressed.

Cluster grouping is requested at the elementary grades and is outlined in this plan with Standard Four Practice D.

Each year EVAAS growth data is shared from a district perspective as well as for each school. EVAAS growth data reveals trends which indicate that our gifted students are not growing academically at the rate that is expected. For this reason, a greater focus on flexible grouping, rigorous educational experiences, and support for teachers and specialists will be an increased focus.

### **Practice D**

Informs all teachers, school administrators, and support staff about delivery of differentiated services and instruction for AIG students, regulations related to gifted education, and the local AIG program and plan.

**District Response:** Informing all staff members about the options available for gifted learners and the needs of gifted learners is both critical and a challenge.

Gifted specialists and leadership in Onslow County Schools utilizes a variety of resources to inform teachers, parents, and community about gifted services. An AIG Services Brochure is provided to schools and is made available to parents at initial placement meetings and annual reviews. A beginning of the year PowerPoint with details about gifted services has been prepared and is available for each gifted specialist to use with their school as they see fit. The presentation includes information about identification and differentiation.

At the elementary and middle school level, gifted specialists will provide classroom teachers with lists of gifted students. At the high school level, gifted contacts will prepare and share lists of students by class.

Gifted specialists provide information to parents about service delivery options at each school site during annual reviews of Differentiated Education Plans (Academic Blueprints at grades six through twelve). Annual reviews serve as a key method of communication.

Gifted services leadership and specialists will maintain a website with resources including those related to differentiating instruction ([www.onslow.k12.nc.us](http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us)).

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** At the start of each school year, classroom teachers are provided with lists of gifted students who will be in their classrooms. These lists are given to teachers by gifted specialists or contacts. Teachers are provided the opportunity to review confidential information, especially where special circumstances are present.

Progress reports are provided at least twice a year to parents of elementary school students. These reports outline progress toward annual goals.

When students transition from elementary to middle school, the elementary gifted specialist prepares a Vertical Articulation Sheet for each student. This form outlines each student's strengths and interests as well as areas where the student may need additional support.

When students transition from middle to high school, the middle school gifted specialist will compile a report for the high school counselor and/or AIG contact which will outline the high school courses that students have taken, information about an individual (or groups of) student's interests and desires

based upon Academic Blueprints.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will be exploring the possibility of offering a summer camp or experience focused on the transition from elementary to middle school as well as from middle school to high school.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** When identified and at some point during each school year, elementary students experience a unit focused on understanding themselves as a gifted learner. These units focus on the social and emotional attributes of most gifted learners.

All gifted specialists are an integral part of the Instructional Support Team at each school site. Instructional Support Teams are the primary support personnel to building level leaders at their school site. This collaborative group includes AIG specialists, literacy facilitator, Exceptional Children's coaches, digital learning and teaching facilitators, and others. Gifted specialists are important members of Professional Learning Communities at the school site and at the district level to assist in the planning and sharing of ideas to meet individual students needs at each grade level. Each of these groups works to develop systems that support the academic as well as the social and emotional needs of learners.

An AIG Middle School website with strategies and resources to meet the social and emotional needs of the AIG students has been created.

Gifted services communicates with school counselors through district meetings regarding the AIG plan and needs of AIG students. The collaboration with school counselors and other student services personnel allows for the development of strategies and processes to support the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. During this new plan cycle, enhancing these resources and ensuring they are available to each school site will be a priority.

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** In Onslow County Schools, gifted services works to ensure that all students are offered services that match their needs. Gifted services works closely with building level leadership to develop acceleration plans for students and other options for highly gifted students.

At the elementary level, Onslow County Schools will continue to provide the information concerning early admission to kindergarten based on NC General Statute (115C-364). Information regarding this process can be found on our website ([www.onslow.k12.nc.us](http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us)). Achievement and Aptitude results at the 98th percentile on an assessment administered by a NC licensed psychologist along with letters

of reference and other observations are required by state policy. District staff works along with parents and building level principals to implement this process.

AIG specialists at each elementary school work to make sure that all students are connected with opportunities that are matched to their needs either academically or social/emotionally. Elementary schools have an AIG specialist at least two days per week. Where subject acceleration is appropriate, the gifted specialist will work with building leadership and classroom teachers to help support a child in acceleration. More common is compacting curriculum. When curriculum is compacted for a student, more time is available for the child to work on advanced content or in a passion area. Gifted specialists will work with classroom teachers to design tools and resources to determine when compacting is appropriate and what work students will do as a result of compacting.

At the middle school level Secondary AIG specialists work to make sure that all students are connected with coursework opportunities or other opportunities matched their needs academically, socially, and emotionally. While the Data Teams process is being implemented districtwide to help accelerate instruction where needed, gifted services will seek to provide resources to help classroom teachers meet the instructional needs of students who grasp content more quickly than others.

At the high school level advanced coursework is often found in the form of honors courses, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, and Career and College Promise (CCP) courses. These courses offer accelerated content with high expectations for students. However, it is also important that instruction in these courses is appropriate for the age of the learner and that differentiation occurs in order to respond to the needs of learners.

The process for Credit-by-Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) is shared on the district website ([www.onslow.k12.nc.us](http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us)). The process is reviewed with school counselors and administration on a regular (at least annual) basis at district level meetings. School counselors are to share information related to CDM with students at the school level.

When a gifted student is grade accelerated and/or when a student exhibits extraordinary needs an additional plan will be added to the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). An individual plan will be developed in these cases in order to protect the students short- and long-term needs. During this plan cycle, graphics will be made to help make the options for acceleration more clear to students and families.

### **Practice H**

Implements intentional strategies to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities for under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional. These strategies may include talent development efforts.

**District Response:** Gifted services is working with two main initiatives to create a more comprehensive talent development model across all classrooms k-12. Onslow County Schools supports AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) district-wide. AVID supports the philosophy of college readiness school-wide for all children. AVID provides us with a structure for talent development k-12. Gifted services will partner with other divisions to provide support for



professional learning related to AVID.

At the high school level, Onslow County Schools is partnered with the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) to create broader access to advanced coursework at several high school sites. Through this partnership, teachers receive additional support in content understanding and resources. Teachers of math, science, English, and computer science receive the opportunity to attend summer content and pedagogy professional learning. Additionally, teachers of Advanced Placement courses in these areas receive summer and year-long support. This initiative also brings support to students in the form of several Saturday study sessions. These sessions target the most challenging content of each course. Schools participating in this initiative are moving the courses to a yearlong format in order to spread the learning out across a longer time frame. NMSI supports broadening access to and support within high-level coursework. During this AIG plan cycle, gifted services will work to develop ways to make the work of the NMSI initiative sustainable.

Gifted services will partner with English Learner services to watch for students who are acquiring language at an accelerated rate. These children will be provided with additional supports and assessed for gifted services as appropriate.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** A wide variety of extra-curricular and academic enrichment events are made available to students across Onslow County Schools. These events encompass a variety of areas and are annually evaluated for effectiveness and how they align with students' interests and needs.

Some of the extra-curricular programs and events include Honor Societies (with service learning components), athletics, Academic Derby, Science and Engineering Fair, Battle of the Books, Odyssey of the Mind, Robotics, Math Counts, Science Olympiad, Multiplication Bee, Spelling Bee, Debate, Geography Bee, Rotary Academic Challenge, Civic Oration, Chess, CTE Trades Day, and others.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will partner with other district staff to create an academic enrichment resource guide. This will allow families to view and choose from the various options.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Review of Annual Agreement with Specialist and Administration

Review of Cluster Grouping Report with Elementary Specialist and Administration

AVID Professional Development and Alignment with Gifted Professional Learning

Transition Fifth to Sixth Grade Camp or Experience

Transition Eighth to Ninth Grade Camp or Experience

Professional Development focused on Aligning the Instructional Framework with AIG Services

AIG Social-Emotional Units Enhanced and Quantity Increased

Graphics to Make Acceleration Options More Visible and Clear

Academic Enrichment Event Resource Guide

**Sources of Evidence:** AIG Annual Agreement Documents

Shared Curriculum Resources in OneNote Notebook

Instructional Support Team (IST) Participation and Agendas

Cluster Grouping Report

Data Teams Training and Use

Academic Blueprint (6-12)

Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Career and College Promise (CCP)  
Participation and Success

Summer Camps

Instructional Framework

AIG Progress Reports

AIG Vertical Articulation Sheet (Fifth to Sixth Grade)

Social-Emotional AIG Units

Early Admission to Kindergarten Documents

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery Documents

National Math and Science Initiative Participation

AVID Professional Learning

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

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

#### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** A mindset that embraces differentiation is critical to the success of gifted learners. Professional development and coaching are offered for teachers in order to equip them to meet the needs of gifted students. Differentiation can occur in the regular classroom by modifying the learning environment, the content being delivered, the process used for instruction, and/or the products which gifted students are expected to complete. AIG Specialists will support classroom teachers both in planning as well as instruction. Staff members are expected to pre-assess students to determine current levels of performance and to adjust instruction in order to meet students where they are. Pre-assessment and adjusting instruction align with the district-wide focus on the Data Teams process.

Enrichment offerings are held both at the school and district level in order to allow students to pursue areas of intense interest and to challenge themselves. In these enrichment events, ranging from Science Olympiad to Battle of the Books, gifted students are engaged in learning with their cognitive peers. Gifted services will continue to support and advocate for maintaining effective enrichment events as well as exploring additional offerings as they match student interest and need.

Extending the standards can, at times, be effectively done within the classroom by varying content, process, or product, while in other cases, pull-out services may be more appropriate. Co-teaching with or coaching by the AIG specialist can be an effective means for serving gifted learners. AIG specialists in consultation with building level leadership and AIG students/families will build Differentiated Education Plans (DEP) and/or AIG Academic Blueprints which reflect the needs of each student.

Acceleration occurs in two primary forms. First, content acceleration is considered for students when a body of evidence indicates that a student has mastered the majority of the content for any given course. Content acceleration can occur within a class or may require a student's schedule to be adjusted so that he/she can be in a different content course. This decision should be made by building level administration in consultation with the gifted specialist. Content acceleration, if deemed appropriate, should be reflected in a student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP).

Second, grade level acceleration may occur when a student's body of work and readiness indicate that he/she would benefit from advancing to the next grade. Gifted specialists will administer the Iowa Acceleration Scales for any gifted student who is being considered for grade acceleration. The results of the Iowa Acceleration Scales along with the overall body of evidence will be considered by building level leadership in determining if grade acceleration is appropriate. If grade acceleration is

considered or used for a student, this will be reflected in his/her Differentiated Education Plan (DEP).

In elementary grades, cluster grouping allows gifted students to be with a small number of cognitive peers throughout the school day. This allows for adjustment of instruction for small groups based on common needs.

Elementary curriculum leads will be provided with extended employment during the summer months to create (or modify) shared units of study which will be used across elementary school settings.

At the middle and high school level, often subject acceleration is the preferred method of meeting students' academic needs. However, even within a classroom where all students have been accelerated, differentiation is still a need.

The Onslow Virtual Academy as well as the North Carolina Virtual Public High School can be a further option to allow for accelerated opportunities in a web-based setting. Further, virtual options from the North Carolina School of Science and Math can also provide similar advanced opportunities.

Each student's area of identification along with present level of performance will be considered when making decisions regarding differentiation. Area(s) of identification will not be the sole determining factor but will advise the decision-making process.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** Onslow County Schools district leadership has led the effort to identify Priority Standards. By focusing on Priority Standards, teachers are working with the standards that can more quickly show that a student, or group of students, has a strong grasp on content. This allows for the opportunity to compact the curriculum while still focusing on the most important standards. Gifted services seeks to provide learning experiences that are conceptually-based and project-based where possible. Further, when service learning or work-related connections can be made, those will be prioritized.

Gifted services allocates financial support for gifted specialists and schools to help provide resources and/or enhance the learning experience for students. These funds can be used to support the needs of the gifted specialist, the classroom teacher, or others supporting gifted learners.

Onslow County Schools utilizes Ready, Set, Onslow and the Kuder interest and skills inventories for students in grades 6-12. Using this online platform will allow for greater pairing of opportunities with student interests.

Gifted services will support teachers in the compacting of the curriculum and creating rich learning experiences. Differentiation strategies or learning environments advocated for and supported by gifted services include, but are not limited to: choice boards, self-directed learning, tiered instruction,

non-linguistic representations, mastery learning, learning contracts, Socratic Seminars, Philosophical Chairs, problem-based learning, project-based learning, place-based learning, jigsaws, workstations, concept attainment, leveled texts, book clubs, and guided math.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Across Onslow County Schools a number and variety of resources have been purchased to support planning and instruction. Evidence-based resources that are currently available at many elementary schools include Junior Great Books, Jacob's Ladder, and Mindsets in the Classroom.

Each elementary AIG Specialist has been able to purchase resources to share with the entire school based on the needs of the school. Each specialist has his/her own school-specific resources as well as access to shared resources which are generally located in one central location for all teachers. Many resources are cataloged and shared in a Microsoft OneNote Notebook. In addition, AIG specialists will continue to share digital and team-created materials through the OneNote Notebook.

During this plan cycle, specialists will help district leadership in deciding what shared resources should be available at each school site. Some items being considered include William and Mary units, USTARS, Engineering is Elementary, Hands-on Fractions, Hands-on Equations, Wendy Conklin Higher-Order Thinking Skills, and Differentiation with Menus.

With the resources that are selected, the curriculum development team will develop shared units which will be used across schools.

With middle school specialists being new roles during the past gifted services strategic plan, shared resources have not yet been a focus. During this 2019-2022 plan cycle, identifying shared resource will be a priority.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Gifted specialists in Onslow County Schools have taken the lead in creating units of study that are rich with real-world contexts that allow critical thinking skills to develop and creativity to be expressed. To enhance and streamline these units and to make them accessible and usable by all specialists, the coordinator of gifted services will designate several specialists to pull together or create units of study which emphasize future-ready skills. These units will be shared with all specialists during a start of the school year meeting and be made viewable to all specialists through the shared Microsoft OneNote Notebook.

Gifted specialists are integral in collaborating with classroom teachers at all grade levels to make sure that skills such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication are integrated into all of their plans for instruction.

There are many opportunities for advanced learners to share their critical thinking and problem-solving skills such as Odyssey of the Mind (k-12), Model UN (9-12), Cognicon (6-8), Chess (2-12), and Science Olympiad (k-12).

Identifying service learning opportunities will be a focus during this current plan cycle. Utilizing AVID instructional strategies including Socratic Seminars, Philosophical Chairs, Reciprocal Teaching, and other collaborative structures will further enhance gifted education.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Strategies such as tiering assignments, compacting curriculum, and flexible grouping are used to better address the needs of gifted students. AIG specialists examine formative assessments and benchmark tools which aid in the development of differentiation strategies for individual students. Data from assessments are used in planning specific target lessons as well as the conceptual units.

In Onslow County, the Data Teams process guides formative assessment and planning for differentiated instruction. Utilizing priority standards with carefully unpacked content, teacher teams create common formative assessments. These assessments are typically given at the pre-mid-and post points for instruction. Data is collected and analyzed in order to adjust instruction and to select instructional strategies for groups of learners with similar needs. This results in flexible learning environments for learning.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Each year, at least one unit of instruction will focus on the unique social and emotional characteristics of gifted learners. The unit will be created (or refined) by the gifted services leadership team during the summer of each year leading up to implementation. Units will focus on topics such as understanding myself as a gifted learner, mindfulness, perfectionism, etc. When first identified, resources such as the Durable Person and the Gifted Survival Guide will be utilized by gifted specialists to help students better understand their gifts.

Gifted services will collaborate with school counselors at all levels, but especially at middle and high school to work with students at risk or who are (or have the potential) to engage in self-harm actions.

Helping students understand the educational path that will lead to the future they vision for themselves can help students meet some of their social and emotional needs as learners. The web-based career and college guidance platform known as Ready, Set, Onslow will be utilized by all gifted students to help them plan a course that leads to the career which aligns with their skills and passion. Further, gifted students will identify post-secondary education plans utilizing this resource. Middle

school gifted specialists and high school counselors will use the reporting features of this resource to connect students with resources and people who can mentor them on their path.

During this plan cycle, the feasibility of implementing an elementary-to-middle and middle-to-high school transition camp will be explored. Easing students' concerns at these key transition points is an area of focus moving forward.

Financial resources will be allocated for purchasing reading materials that provide opportunities for bibliotherapy for students.

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** Gifted services will work to develop more focused shared practices for kindergarten through third-grade students. Most students who are identified are formally tested during the third-grade year (or later).

During the first year of this plan cycle, 2019-2020, several gifted specialists will work to identify what services all k-3 students should receive. As they serve two schools, elementary specialists have limited time to focus on talent development at grades k-3. Therefore, for one year, more if possible within financial resources, several specialists will work collaboratively with one another as well as with their partner gifted specialist who is serving grades 3-5 to determine what talent development is most appropriate. As part of this process, these specialists will be tasked with identifying needed resources and professional learning. Some of these resources may be classroom teachers to use in talent development while others may be for gifted specialists. This action team will report regularly to the larger gifted services team and gather feedback from the full team as well as from parents, teachers, and students where possible. Based on their work and findings, a plan will be put in place for K-3 talent development for the final two years of this plan (2020-2021 and 2021-2022).

It is anticipated that some existing resources such as PETS (Primary Education Thinking Skills) will be used in this process. The PETS program assists teachers in identifying students that might be functioning at a higher level or have the potential to function at a higher level than many of their peers. At the kindergarten level, the gifted specialist may help the classroom teacher by being in consultation regarding PETS and by creating resources as needed. At the first through third-grade level, the AIG specialist may allocate time to visiting classrooms to model the use of the PETS curriculum materials.

It is also anticipated that other resources such as Mentoring Mathematical Minds (M3), USTARS Plus, and/or William and Mary units may be examined.

Further, gifted specialists will help teachers with identifying potentially gifted students and methods for appropriate grouping by assisting with analyzing data from reading assessments, math assessments, and any other data sources available.

Some K-3 students will need more intense services including re-grouping, flex-grouping, or cross-

grade grouping (for example a first grader meeting with the third grade AIG Pull Out group). Subject acceleration (for example, a first-grade student in a third-grade math class) may also be appropriate for some students. Finally, students with intense interests may require enrichment such as Science Olympiad, Science Fair, Emerging Authors, and other such activities.

### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** The Onslow County Schools Instructional Framework allows for straight forward and meaningful connections between the work of gifted services and other instructional staff. Gifted specialists are members of the Instructional Support Team (IST) at their school sites (although not always able to attend all meetings as they are serving students) as well as the district Instructional Support Team (IST). The district Instructional Support Team allows gifted services specialists the chance to network with digital learning and teaching facilitators, literacy facilitators, instructional coaches, and other leadership/support staff members. This creates a more shared understanding of districtwide initiatives and provides a platform for professional learning. Often the professional learning is led by gifted services team members and other teacher-leaders within the Instructional Support Team.

Gifted services specialists collaborate with regular education teachers through professional learning communities (Data Teams) and formal and informal meetings.

Developing stronger partnerships between gifted services and exceptional services will be an area of focus during this planning cycle. This will allow for greater planning and awareness of identifying and meeting the needs of twice-exceptional students.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Onslow County Schools has effectively developed and documented student plans to match the identified needs of AIG students in elementary grades and secondary grades. The elementary document is referred to as the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) while the secondary document is called the Academic Blueprint.

Although it is possible that students are identified at any grade level, students in Onslow County Schools are not typically identified and placed in the AIG program prior to the spring of the third-grade year when formal identification testing and placement occurs. It is at this time that an initial placement meeting will be held for each student meeting the criteria explained in Standard One of this plan. At that time, service options that best fit each student's needs are discussed and the initial Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is created. Exceptions to this would happen for students who



enter through the Early Admission to Kindergarten process. These students are automatically placed within the AIG program. Students who have been accepted for early admission to Kindergarten will have an Individualized Differentiated Plan (IDEP) created and their progress will be followed for grade acceleration if necessary. Students at any age who are enrolled in Onslow County Schools can be recommended for early screening when supporting data warrants the request. This is done on a case by case basis with Onslow County Gifted Services working closely with the classroom teacher, AIG Specialist, school counselor, school administration and other support staff.

Parents of students who have been identified as gifted learners in grades four through six meet annually to review their Differentiated Educational Plan in an individual or collaborative setting. Parents of students who are being placed initially into the gifted program will meet individually with the AIG specialist after the school gifted identification and services team has met. Annual measurable goals relating to the students' strengths and needs should be set at the initial meetings and reviewed annually. After the initial placement meeting, DEP meetings can be held in a large group setting or on an individual basis depending on the needs of the students within that group. However, all efforts to maintain student confidentiality should be made. In developing a DEP, all interested/knowledgeable staff and parents should be involved.

Parents of students who have been identified as gifted learners in grades six through twelve will continue to have annual DEP meetings. The DEP meetings will begin to focus on the program of study (Academic Blueprint) that will be created in collaboration with classroom teachers, school counselors, AIG Services, possibly EC services, parents, and any other interested/knowledgeable staff. This plan should begin with the transition to 6th grade or during the sixth-grade year. The Secondary AIG specialist will ensure that the Academic Blueprint is reviewed annually in preparation for the DEP meeting in middle school. The AIG contact will do the same at the high school level. This will ensure that students have support for the goals that they have set. The AIG specialist /AIG contact and the school counselor will work collaboratively during registration to make sure the six-year plan is being followed and adapted as needed.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will explore the possibility of entering student placement data and service delivery into the student management system, PowerSchool.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Professional Learning connecting Data Teams with Gifted Services

Development of More Shared Resources

Shared Units of Instruction and Tools for Teachers

Academic Enrichment Resource Guide

Enhance Social and Emotional Units

Kindergarten-Third Grade Resources

Kindergarten-Third Grade Framework for Services

**Sources of Evidence:** Cluster Grouping Report

Priority Standards Connected to Gifted Units

Units of Instruction (for Specialists and Classroom Teachers)

Ready, Set, Onslow Career and College Planning Usage

Budget for Supply Support

Social and Emotional Units

Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) (Kindergarten-Fifth Grade)

Academic Blueprint (Sixth-Eighth Grade)

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

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

### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** The Division of College and Career Readiness oversees the AIG program for all sites within the county. The director holds a NC teaching credential, gifted licensure, and administrative degrees. As the roles and responsibilities of College and Career Readiness have grown, the feasibility and need for a part-time coordinator of gifted services will be explored during this current plan cycle.

As one role the Director of College and Career Readiness serves as the coordinator of gifted services. In this role, the coordinator is to provide support to school administrators, AIG specialists, and classroom teachers regarding the most effective means to meet the needs of gifted learners. The coordinator must create an annual budget and provide regular updates to the budget. Decisions regarding the allocation of resources including staffing should be made in consultation with district and school-based leadership while receiving guidance and input from all stakeholders. This is accomplished through regular meetings with specialists and other stakeholders.

In addition, the coordinator of gifted education work to provide clear and comprehensive descriptions and protocols as questions arise. This guidance includes outlining processes for student documentation (confidential files to include Active, Inactive, and DNQ), addressing professional development needs (including those of AIG specialists at opportunities such as the NCAGT conference and university conferences), clarifying identification process, monitoring program services (progress reports, surveys), completing interim reports, and connecting gifted services with other district initiatives.

The coordinator is also responsible for establishing partnerships within the school district across divisions and with external support systems.

The coordinator must participate actively in regional and state meetings, professional development opportunities, and other state initiatives to support gifted programs.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** The roles of AIG-licensed specialists who are funded through state gifted funds

must be focused around lead measures which will most directly affect gifted learners. The Division of College and Career Readiness works with specialists and building level leadership to ensure that clear roles are established and that gifted specialists are fulfilling those roles.

Each elementary school in Onslow County has a gifted specialist serving teachers and students at least two days per week. If funding is available and if a school's caseload indicates additional support is needed, these situations are reviewed on a school-by-school basis. Elementary specialists coordinate the screening, referral, assessment, and placement on their school campus. Elementary specialists provide direct service to students through teaching in classrooms and in pull-out settings. In addition, AIG specialists support the work of teachers and administrators by offering professional development, helping with data analysis, collaborating on lesson/unit creation, and serving in leadership roles. AIG specialists support the overall needs of the school as connected to the needs of gifted learners. In addition, if classroom teachers perform school duties, AIG specialists may also be asked to perform those duties (being mindful that the AIG specialist is in a half-time role at each school).

In support of teachers and gifted students at the middle school level, each middle school will have an AIG specialist approximately two days per week. Secondary AIG specialists will work in coaching roles with teachers. They will provide professional development teachers and school staff as needed. Additionally, middle school AIG specialists will work to maintain and update Academic Blueprints (DEPs) for each identified gifted student. Middle school specialists may work with small groups of students and/or individual students based upon student needs. They will provide support directly to select students through enrichment opportunities and direct instruction where appropriate. Middle school specialists will work collaboratively with school counselors and other school staff to identify and support students in their social and emotional development. Middle school specialists will administer placement testing as needed.

At the high school level, support will be provided by current high school staff. For this work, two members of the high school staff will be provided additional pay. These school staff members may be a counselor, administrator, or classroom teacher. Gifted services will provide professional learning as well as resources. The primary roles of these individuals will be to maintain and update Academic Blueprints, to make students aware of opportunities, to examine at-risk reports, and to work to identify and meet the needs of gifted learners. If placement testing is needed, that will be facilitated by district staff or a member of the AIG team.

AIG specialists will communicate with building/district level leadership, parents, and students through monthly newsletters/updates (print or electronic). In addition, students at the elementary level will be given progress reports at least twice annually to share progress toward goals.

AIG specialists will engage in professional development for their own learning on a regular basis and in addition to the minimum requirements of maintaining NC teaching licensure. Professional development will be a part of continued growth and made available through one or more means (face-to-face, online, or conferences). Gifted specialists are expected to maintain knowledge of current best practices through reading research literature from organizations such as the National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC) and the North Carolina Association of Gifted and Talented (NCAGT). Memberships in these organizations will be paid for each AIG specialist.

In collaboration with building level and district level leadership, each AIG specialist will complete an annual agreement outlining services, delivery methods, a timeline for identification, and other key aspects related to each school site. The annual agreement will be completed and submitted to the

coordinator of gifted services no later than the end of September each year.

### **Practice C**

Establishes specific and appropriate professional development requirements for all personnel involved in AIG programs and services, including classroom teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and school administrators.

**District Response:** Level of understanding of gifted services for various roles across Onslow County Schools are outlined as follows:

#### AIG Specialists:

- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of the Onslow County AIG Plan;
- Share information regarding clustering of gifted students;
- Share information regarding delivery models of AIG services;
- Advocate for appropriate practices for AIG students;
- Articulate and implement screening, referral, and identification practices;
- Share information and work to meet the social and emotional needs of AIG students;
- Understand and share characteristics of dually-exceptional students;
- Share effective scheduling practices with classroom teachers (especially for pull out times);
- Collaboratively plan with teachers of record (connect learning); assist classroom teachers with differentiating the curriculum;
- Share enrichment opportunities;
- Read about and understand current research and practices in gifted education;

#### Classroom Teachers:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the Onslow County AIG Plan;
- Understand effective cluster grouping of gifted students;
- Understand the AIG service delivery models utilized at the school;
- Advocate for appropriate practices for AIG students;
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of screening, referral, and identification practices;
- Understand of the social and emotional needs of AIG students and implementing strategies for working with these students as needed;
- Understand the characteristics of dually exceptional students;
- Understand and implement effective scheduling practices that meet the needs of all students;
- Collaboratively plan differentiated units with AIG specialists;
- Match AIG students with enrichment opportunities

#### Exceptional Children's Teachers:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the Onslow County AIG Plan as it relates to dually exceptional students;
- Understand the AIG service delivery models utilized at the school;
- Understand appropriate practices for AIG students;
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of identification as it relates to dually-identified students;
- Understand the characteristics of dually exceptional students

#### School Counselors and English Learner Facilitators:

Demonstrate a basic understanding of the Onslow County AIG Plan;  
Understand effective grouping of gifted students;  
Understand the AIG service delivery models utilized at the school;  
Understand appropriate practices for AIG students;  
Demonstrate a working knowledge of screening, referral, and identification practices;  
Understanding of the social and emotional needs of AIG students and implementing strategies for working with these students as needed

Administrators:

Demonstrate a basic understanding of the Onslow County AIG Plan;  
Understand effective cluster grouping of gifted students;  
Understand the AIG service delivery models utilized at the school;  
Understand appropriate practices for AIG students;  
Working knowledge of screening, referral, and identification practices;  
Understand and implement effective scheduling practices that meet the needs of all students

As AIG specialists determine the professional learning needs of teachers at their school they will develop or utilize existing resources to ensure staff members have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet students' needs.

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Teachers who have engaged in university-level coursework and earned AIG add-on licensure have credentialed themselves with a level of expertise and focus which allows them to meet the unique needs of gifted learners. Teachers can also demonstrate an understanding of the unique needs of gifted learners by passing the required Praxis exam and adding AIG Licensure to their NC Teaching license.

At the elementary level, cluster grouping of gifted students is the grouping strategy supported by gifted services. The guidelines for cluster grouping are based on the research of Winebrenner, Tomlinson, and others. The model for clustering is to place students in classrooms in small groups where possible. Clustering allows for services to be delivered by the AIG specialist in push in (inclusion) and/or pull out settings. If cluster grouping is not followed, then the AIG specialist will have to provide services in a pull-out setting. Schools will be provided a cluster grouping suggestion report each spring for the following school year.

Guidelines for Cluster Grouping for Elementary Schools:

- Six or fewer students identified in a grade level- all students should be placed in the same class
- No groups of students less than three gifted students
- No groups greater than nine gifted students
- In constructing groups, consider each student's area of identification (AR, AM, AG, IG) and keep all gifted math students together for example
- Consult with AIG Specialist regarding other children who are not identified, but are in Watch and

Wait status (often these students are receiving services)

- Consult with AIG Specialist to assist with third-grade clustering based on Nurtured students Partner with school-based administrators to ensure effective AIG student placement. (e.g. cluster grouping vs. subject grouping)

At the middle and high school level, placing gifted students together based on academic readiness is preferred. Subject-grouping may mean that students need to be cross-teamed especially when students are gifted in one area (math), but not another (reading).

Elementary teachers who are leading cluster grouped classrooms and middle and high school teachers who teach classrooms which are subject accelerated will work to earn AIG Add on Licensure or meet with their AIG specialist or district staff to receive professional development related to serving gifted students.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will work with university faculty to develop professional learning opportunities designed to meet the needs of secondary teachers of gifted students.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Aligning professional development within gifted services and across Onslow County Schools is a priority at all times. Currently, Onslow County Schools is working to strengthen core instruction for all students. This includes establishing a districtwide Instructional Framework. This framework includes expectations for planning, instruction, assessment, and culture within each classroom.

The teacher actions included within the Onslow County Schools Instructional Framework are consistent with best practices for gifted learners as well. Gifted services will support the professional learning associated with the Instructional Framework including the Data Teams process. Through the Data Teams process, teachers identify which students are proficient with specific standards prior to instruction. AIG Specialists can provide work-embedded professional learning focused on meeting the needs of gifted learners through this process. While AIG specialists may not be able to attend each Data Teams meeting, they will work to support teachers as they plan and deliver differentiated instruction. As specialists recognize areas of growth for teachers on teams they support, they will utilize NC AIG Booster Shots as well as other professional development resources to support teachers.

Aligning gifted services with the resources and professional learning associated with AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) will help teachers and specialists to meet the differentiated learning needs of gifted students as well. Funding to support gifted students through AVID will be allocated. AVID will also support a better of understanding of culturally-relevant practices which will be better lead our gifted learners.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Gifted services will set a calendar which allows for the collaboration of gifted specialists at the district level.

Gifted specialists will serve on school and district instructional support teams when appropriate. This will allow specialists to remain connected to school and district initiatives and to provide leadership across the county.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will continue to meet monthly, but also find ways to collaborate either after school hours or utilizing online meeting tools. These times are used for sharing state and district perspectives/initiatives, developing plans for instruction, sharing resources, brainstorming, etc. In addition, as the budget allows, gifted specialists are provided with five days of additional work with a stipend during the summer. Topics for tasks on these days are developed in collaboration with district gifted leadership. Gifted specialists share ideas via email, a Microsoft Team, in a shared One Note Notebook, and during formal and informal meetings.

For specialists who are new to gifted services (at least for the first two years, and preferably for the first three years), specialists will be assigned a mentor to guide them. These mentors will work with new specialists to ensure alignment as well as to help them locate resources and navigate challenges.

Gifted specialists will be provided the opportunity to learn alongside other gifted specialists at events such as university-led professional development and the state gifted conference. A rotation will be used so that specialists have the opportunity to attend every couple of years. After attending professional learning events, AIG specialists will share notes, resources, and thoughts via a shared One Note Notebook. These entries will be used during team meetings as well.

Within the school, AIG specialists will allocate time to collaborate with classroom teachers during Professional Learning Communities as well as during times when classroom teachers are available.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Adding a Part or Full-Time Coordinator of Gifted Services

Increased Number of AIG Specialists

Continue and Increase Number of Teachers in AIG Licensure Cohort

Identify Professional Development Needs and Resources

Clarify Roles and Responsibilities of Each Area Listed on the Levels of Understanding Chart

**Sources of Evidence:** Agendas of AIG Meetings



Standard Operating Procedures and Protocols- OneNote Notebook

Participating in State and Regional Trainings

Budget for AIG Licensure Cohort Participation

## **Standard 5: Partnerships**

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

### **Practice A**

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

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

**District Response:** Gifted specialists will share information at each school regarding the gifted program and how parents can become more involved with programming. This may happen through informational materials given out at open house events or by hosting events specifically for parents of gifted children, such as a Wax Museum, career day, STEM events, etc.

Gifted specialists will encourage parents to volunteer in specific aspects of their programming, for example, chess leads, mentorship, parents sharing about their careers, parents and community members sharing hobbies and passions with students.

Where possible, gifted services will take part in or share information at community events.

Documentation of parent volunteerism will be recorded by each specialist and shared with district leadership.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will explore the idea of a gifted conference for students.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** In order to share information with parents and stakeholders and to gain support for gifted services, district leadership will maintain a website with information related to the gifted program. The website will also give parents and/or community members a way to communicate directly with district leadership.

Each AIG specialist will maintain a publicly viewable web-presence (website, Twitter feed, Facebook Group, etc.). In addition, each AIG specialist will contribute to a district gifted newsletter which will be shared monthly. Stakeholders will be able to opt-in to receive the newsletter monthly or access the newsletter via the district website. This will be an opportunity to share events which have occurred at schools and to invite participation in upcoming events. This will allow stakeholders to view what is happening not only at each school but across the district.

Following the approval of the local AIG plan, a video message will be created and posted to the district website explaining the goals and initiatives of the AIG plan. This presentation will also share information regarding Article 9b and other pertinent policies related to gifted education across Onslow County Schools.

### **Practice C**

Establishes and utilizes an advisory group to develop, implement, and monitor the local AIG program and plan. This advisory group is representative of the diverse populations of the district and is at least comprised of community members, AIG parents and families, AIG teachers, and other instructional and support staff.

**District Response:** Currently, the System Involvement Team of Onslow County Schools serves as the advisory team for gifted services. The System Involvement Team is comprised of local leaders, teachers, parents, school administrators, and district staff.

While the System Involvement Team has facilitated gathering input and feedback for gifted services, an advisory team specifically for AIG has not been in place. This will be a focal point during this plan cycle. This team will begin as a small group comprised of parents, administrators, curriculum leader(s), teachers, and a community member. This team will work to determine what programs and support can be brought to gifted services. As appropriate, the team will add members. This team will meet no less than three times each year.

Each gifted specialist will work with their placement (match) team to set goals for the school site and to advocate for support. This team should meet at least twice annually.

Although agenda topics will emerge and evolve, some topics already under consideration for the district AIG Advisory Team to consider include:

- \*High School and College Opportunities
- \*Transitions from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school
- \*Planning and supporting various academic enrichment events
- \*In-school programming and what's valuable
- \*Consideration of a PAGE group

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** AIG specialists serve as the primary voice for gifted services to parents and students.

District leadership for gifted services will compile articles and information submitted by gifted specialists to share as a newsletter on a monthly basis. In addition to the newsletter, AIG specialists present information to staff members at team meetings, Professional Learning Communities,

professional development offerings, and through email communication. AIG specialists work to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of screening and identification procedures.

District leadership will continue to use the gifted services website and social media to communicate opportunities with families.

Materials on the website can be translated automatically. Other forms will be translated as needed.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** Gifted Services in Onslow County Schools has developed a partnership with the University of North Carolina Wilmington. This partnership allows for the sharing of ideas and resources as well as providing the opportunity for add-on licensure cohorts. As funding allows, district leadership annually recruits teachers who are interested in learning more about gifted education through university coursework.

Each year, Onslow County Schools Gifted Services sends specialists and district leadership to the UNCW mini-conference on gifted education to learn about current practices and trends in gifted education.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will work with Sturgeon City of Jacksonville, NC to examine (and implement if possible) a partnership which would allow more students to attend existing STEM institutes and to possibly develop new opportunities during the school year and throughout the summer.

Gifted services will explore options to secure funding for students to attend preparation courses for International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, and ACT/SAT. If possible, district leadership will seek out businesses or community partners to pay for these opportunities.

### **Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Increase Partnerships and Support (Internal and External)

Increase Volunteer Participation

Build a Presence at Community Events

Establish a Local Gifted Conference for Students

Increase Web Presence (website and social media of district and specialists)

ACT/SAT/IB/AP Support Events and Structures

Sturgeon City Partnership for Summer Opportunity

**Sources of Evidence:** Website

Video Message Discussing AIG Plan Key Components

Match Teams

AIG Agendas

## **Standard 6: Program Accountability**

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

### **Practice A**

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

**District Response:** Annually, gifted services administers surveys of stakeholders. This feedback is used formatively to guide year-to-year work and aggregated to guide AIG Plan development as well.

The 2019-2022 AIG plan as presented here began formal development during the Spring of 2018. At that time, a presentation was made to the Onslow County Schools System Involvement Team. This team is comprised of teachers, administrators, community members, and district leadership. At that time an update regarding gifted services was provided and feedback was solicited.

The Director of College and Career Readiness also attended the annual NC Department of Public Instruction Coordinators Institute where ideas were gathered for plan development. During the summer of 2018, plans were made for the development of this strategic plan. This planning included formal and informal discussions with district leadership and gifted specialists. A calendar for plan development was created which included monthly targets, check-ins, and plans to involve many stakeholders. Unfortunately, Onslow County was significantly impacted by Hurricane Florence during September, October, and into November of 2019. The plan for collaborative development was impacted, however, all previous input was reviewed in the creation of this plan.

During October and November of 2018, AIG Specialists gathered to review the current (2016-2019) gifted services plan and to complete the self-assessment. During this time, specialists gathered in pairs and trios and reviewed the current AIG plan, made notes regarding areas of progress and need, added ideas to the new plan drafting document, and completed the self-assessment for each AIG Program Standard Practice.

Utilizing the notes from this meeting, district leadership created the first drafts of this 2019-2022 gifted services plan. The plan was made available for review by district staff and gifted specialists.

The final plan was submitted the Onslow County School Board for final consideration and approval at their August Board of Education meeting.

Ideally, there would have been more time for additional reviews by stakeholders, but that was not possible during this school year in large part due to the number of days missed as a result of Hurricane Florence. The plan will be reviewed by stakeholder groups and if needed updated during the plan cycle.

Following approval, this plan will be formally submitted to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction via the online APEX system. Review and comment will be provided by NC DPI. This feedback will be used for continuous improvement moving forward.

### **Practice B**

Monitors the implementation of the local AIG program and plan in accordance with current legislation and state policies to ensure fidelity of implementation for all AIG program components.

**District Response:** In order to stay abreast of current news and best practices within gifted education, the AIG Director/Coordinator will attend and participate in Region Two (Southeastern NC) meetings. These meetings are guided by the work of the NC Department of Public Instruction Division of Advanced Learning and Gifted Education and facilitated by regional gifted leaders. In addition, the AIG Director/Coordinator will participate in any webinars/web-meetings led by NC DPI and attend any additional meetings scheduled by NC DPI related to advanced learning.

Throughout this plan cycle, feedback will continue to be gathered from stakeholders through the Onslow County Schools System Involvement Team, via surveys, through formal and informal discussions, and through input provided by the AIG Advisory Team.

The Director/Coordinator of Gifted Services will also meet formally and informally with principals and assistant principals during their monthly instructional meetings.

A distributed leadership model will continue within gifted services. AIG specialists will gather feedback and share at monthly AIG team meetings or more often if needed. This AIG strategic plan will be revisited at least semi-annually to check for progress. Leadership capacity will be strengthened within the team by sharing monitoring and reporting responsibilities.

Gifted services is a part of the Division of College and Career Readiness in Onslow County Schools. The Director of College and Career Readiness will work for and report to the Executive Director of Secondary Services and also share information with the Executive Director of Elementary Services. All of instructional services will be overseen by the Deputy Superintendent for Instruction.

The Director of College and Career Readiness will be a member of the district's Core Council. This will allow for the sharing of the plan and plan progress with leadership across divisions within instruction.

In addition to the above safeguards, the gifted services team will complete informal periodic updates regarding progress toward plan cycle goals and a formal interim report at the mid-point of this plan cycle. All reports, formal and informal will be shared with district leadership. The interim report will be submitted to the NC Department of Public Instruction.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** Each Spring the Director of College and Career Readiness prepares a budget request which is submitted to the Deputy Superintendent of Instruction and then provided to the district Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer creates budget line items based upon the

request and also appoints a member of financial services to oversee the AIG budget.

The Director of College and Career Readiness is responsible for arranging and documenting all purchases. Monthly budget reports are created and reviewed to ensure funds are being used appropriately.

The budget of Gifted Services is created based on priorities within this AIG plan document and needs of gifted students or teacher of gifted students which arise.

The Director of College and Career Readiness works collaboratively with other district leaders to leverage funds to maximize the impact of the Gifted Services' budget.

All funds allocated by the state of NC for gifted services will be utilized to benefit the needs of gifted students and those serving gifted students.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the year in which this plan was drafted, gifted services received funding in the amount of \$1,463,680.00 from North Carolina. Those funds were budgeted in the following way:

\$1,250,186.10 AIG Specialist Salaries and Benefits  
\$7,500.00 Substitutes  
\$13,000.00 Staff Development Participant Pay  
\$10,000.00 Contracted Services (Professional Development)  
\$46,213.90 Workshop Expenses  
\$5,000.00 AIG Specialist Mileage  
\$2,000.00 Field Trip/Guest Speakers  
\$28,000.00 Tuition  
\$32,800.00 Supplies and Materials  
\$19,730.00 Memberships and Dues  
\$10,000.00 Curriculum Development Pay  
\$39,250.00 Additional Responsibility Pay

Based upon the annual needs of the gifted program, amounts will be adjusted. Other funding sources will be advocated for and sought to enhance the services for students and those serving gifted children. The budget will be shared at least twice each year with gifted specialists.

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** In collaboration with the Director of Student Information and the Director of Testing and Accountability, gifted services will gather, analyze, and reevaluate service delivery and instructional options.

Each Spring unofficial and, when available, certified End-of-Course, End-of-Grade, and NC Final



Exam data will be analyzed for the gifted population. This data will be examined at the district as well as the school level. Data will be disaggregated and shared with AIG Specialists during the beginning of the school year meeting (or sooner if available). When EVAAS growth data is available (typically September/October of each year), student growth will be examined and compared to previous years' data. Each specialist will examine data for his/her school and share observations with district leadership. Where trends are evident, schools and/or district leadership will look to make adjustments either to service delivery or instruction.

In addition to traditional measures of success for gifted students, other data points will be collected including the number of students participating in Career and College Promise (dual enrollment with Coastal Carolina Community College), enrollment in AP/IB courses, and achieving qualifying scores on AP/IB exams. In addition, the ACT and/or SAT scores of gifted students will be examined in order to determine if additional supports would be beneficial.

When a student drops out of school, school counselors will be asked to check the student's gifted status and share the student's information with district gifted leadership if the student is gifted. Gifted leadership will seek to determine possible indicators or shared characteristics of gifted students who drop out in an effort to develop early warning indicators and to develop interventions to deter this action with future students. The following numbers give a historical perspective on gifted students who have dropped out of Onslow County Schools:

2015-2016: 2 students  
2016-2017: 6 students  
2017-2018: 6 students

District gifted leadership will work with gifted specialists to determine the appropriate method for sharing data and to locate audiences who would like to view this data.

### **Practice E**

Monitors the representation, performance, and retention of under-represented populations in the local AIG program, including students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.

**District Response:** Gifted services maintains a private database containing the information of all students who are referred for testing including information on how those students performed on testing and the decision regarding placement. This data is analyzed annually by gifted specialists. The data is examined to look at characteristics that are known to the specialist at the time of referral. Data is disaggregated based on ethnicity and can also be cross-referenced with exceptional needs status. This database is organized into charts and graphs each summer and examined as a collective AIG team as well as by each specialist.

Examining trends in referrals and placements will continue to be a focus during this 2019-2022 plan cycle. This will be a focus during monthly AIG Specialist sessions and, when appropriate, in working with principals and building-level leaders.

At this time, data for economically-disadvantaged students is not available to gifted services, so that

data, while valuable, is not able to be analyzed.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** In partnership with the Human Resources division of Onslow County Schools, gifted services receives an annual report of the certification status of each teacher in Onslow County Schools who has earned the NC licensure endorsement for teaching gifted students. A record of these teachers is also shared with principals for use in placing students.

During this plan cycle, gifted services will continue to work to determine what professional learning is necessary and sufficient for teachers who serve gifted students at different grade levels and in different content areas. A database of teachers who have completed local professional development in the past is maintained at the district level by gifted services.

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** Continuous improvement of gifted services is a guiding principle. In order to make informed decisions, data will be gathered through an annual survey of stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, specialists, administrators, community members). This data will be looked at from the district level as well as disaggregated by school. Some items on the survey will remain consistent year to year while others will be added to study specific trends or concerns.

At a minimum of five elementary schools, three middle schools, and three high schools, random focus groups of gifted students will be conducted annually. These focus groups will be conducted with parental consent and will ask students to reflect on their experiences with gifted services and seeking ways to improve service options. Focus groups will be facilitated by the coordinator of gifted services and recorded so that data can be collected.

The AIG Advisory Team will receive all feedback data and/or summaries of data if confidentiality is a concern in order to help guide further plan development.

### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** During the spring of each year and into the summer, gifted services leadership will examine the results from the spring survey, summative assessment data, random student focus groups, AIG Advisory Team input, and informal notes from the previous school year to determine if

any changes need to be made to this AIG plan.

Annually, during the summer or at the beginning of the school year a progress check of gifted services progress toward goals outlined in this plan will be conducted. A checklist of goals and targets will be created based on this strategic plan. Those results will be compiled and kept by the Director/Coordinator of gifted services. These data will be used to guide plan development in an ongoing and summative manner.

At a minimum, an Interim Report will be compiled and submitted to the AIG Advisory Team, gifted specialists, and NCDPI at the mid-point of this plan cycle. That Interim Report may include changes to the goals and/or strategies in this plan document if needed.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** This local AIG Plan, as well as the feedback received from the NC Department of Public Instruction, will be provided to the Onslow County School Board, district leadership, AIG Specialists, and the AIG Advisory Team. Additionally, the feedback will be posted to the Onslow County Schools Gifted Services website for all interested parties.

### **Practice J**

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents and families through established written policies, procedures, and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

**District Response:** Onslow County Schools respects the sensitive nature of student information. In policy and practice, student information is protected.

During the screening, referral, and identification process, parents are intimately involved. Parents must provide consent for testing and are encouraged to provide other information regarding their child. Forms for testing explain the consent which they are providing and then testing administrators and AIG specialists keep parents aware of testing procedures and where their child is in the process. Testing results for those who qualify for services are shared with parents through confidential placement meetings. Testing results for children who do not qualify for services are mailed or sent home to parents with an option of meeting with the AIG specialist to discuss testing and other criteria that were used in the process of determining placement status.

For each student who is tested, results are posted via a secure, online spreadsheet. This helps ensure that if a record is ever misplaced, there is a back-up of the information.

For each student who is recommended for testing and who is tested, a confidential folder is created. For students who do not qualify for gifted services at the time, an "Does Not Qualify (DNQ)" folder is created and stored by the AIG Specialist at the school site. This folder follows the child as long as

he/she is enrolled in Onslow County Schools.

For each student who qualifies for gifted services a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is created (kindergarten through 5th grade) or a DEP-Academic Blueprint is created for each student (grades 6-12). The DEP and all documentation is to be stored in the AIG "Active" confidential folder. As annual DEP meetings are held, updated DEPs and any other pertinent information should be placed in the folder.

Copies of "Active" folders will be made for parents upon request. These folders will be stored in a safe and secure environment. When folders are transferred between schools, a written record of transfer will be made and the AIG specialist will maintain a log of incoming and outgoing records.

If an identified student with an "Active" folder moves out of Onslow County Schools, a copy of the confidential folder should be given to the parent. The original folder should remain with the AIG specialist. The status of the folder will become "Inactive." If the receiving school formally requests records, a copy should be made and provided to the receiving school. The original copy of the folder should remain with the AIG Specialist at the school. When a student leaves Onslow County Schools, the student's folder remains at the school site where the student was last in attendance. Folders remain at the school where the student was last enrolled for five years. After five years, folders are delivered to the coordinator of gifted services to be shredded.

Before graduation, AIG specialists and/or school counselors should ask parents and students if they would like a copy of their AIG confidential folder. Upon graduation, folders should be delivered to the coordinator of gifted services where they will be stored for two years. At the end of two years, these folders will be shredded.

AIG folders (or placement information) will be reviewed by district staff for each initial placement. Annually, prior to transferring records from elementary to middle school, fifth-grade folders will be peer-reviewed and reviewed by district leadership as needed. The same will be true with the transition from middle to high school.

Annually, AIG best practices in terms of sharing student information are reviewed with AIG Specialists. This includes who has rights to know which students are identified as gifted and protecting student names and information when using email. No AIG student names will be shared via email without password security.

For students transferring into Onslow County Schools, gifted services honors the guidance offered in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (<https://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/interstateCompact.cfm>). For students, militarily connected or otherwise, who enroll in Onslow County Schools with a gifted plan, Onslow County Schools honors that plan and the gifted label of the student.

If more data is needed in order to determine appropriate services, additional screening may be conducted with parental permission. However, no child shall lose his or her gifted designation. In rare instances, when agreed upon by parents and the Director of Gifted Services, a child may be retested and the decision to remove a label of gifted may be made only when the parent and the Director of Gifted Service each agree.

In cases where the placement decision of the school-based AIG Match Team is questioned by a

parent, a guiding document has been created entitled, "Procedures for Resolving Disagreements." The steps to work toward resolution of a placement decision or service model disagreement are as follows:

First, the parent should file a written appeal to the school principal within 30 days of being informed of the placement decision.

The building level principal may review the documentation and consult with the school-based AIG team to ensure all possible data points have been considered.

The appeal shall be heard within ten school days of its receipt at a mutually agreed upon time for the parent and the appeal committee. The parent may share additional data/information at the appeal. The appeal committee shall include the appropriate district-level instructional director (elementary or secondary), a principal or assistant principal, district-level coordinator for gifted services or superintendent's designee, gifted specialist, and the school counselor. Each member of the appeals committee has one vote. A secret ballot will be used for voting. A majority vote is needed to change the decision of the AIG Match Team. The committee will inform parents of the decision of the appeals team in writing within ten school days.

In the event that the disagreement is not resolved with a meeting of the Appeals Committee, a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes may be filed.

The scope of review shall be limited to

(i) whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically and/or intellectually gifted student, or

(ii) whether the local plan developed under G. 115C-150.7 has been implemented appropriately with regard to the child. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains findings of fact and conclusions of law. Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, 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.

Attorney's fees are NOT available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

In order to ensure procedures are implemented equitably, an AIG Specialist Handbook has been created. This provides each specialist with guidance regarding student confidentiality as well as other processes.

A Parent Handbook/Brochure has been developed and is made available via the gifted services website as well as at DEP meetings and at school sites. This resource contains information regarding screening, identification, and placement practices, transfer policy, the vision and mission of Onslow County Gifted Services, and contact information for questions and/or concerns.

A student's gifted status may only be officially changed (in PowerSchool or any official platform) by the Director or Coordinator of Gifted Services. Any changes to gifted status must also be shared with

the parents/guardians of the child. It is the general practice to retain the gifted status of a student and to adjust the service delivery to match a student's needs.

In the event that the disagreement is not resolved with a meeting of the Appeals Committee, a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes may be filed.

The scope of review shall be limited to (i) whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an academically and/or intellectually gifted student, or (ii) whether the local plan developed under G. 115C-150.7 has been implemented appropriately with regard to the child. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains findings of fact and conclusions of law. Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, 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.

Attorney's fees are NOT available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Better Survey Questions

Use of Teacher, Specialist, Student, and Parent Focus Groups

At-Risk for Failure Procedures (Including Drop Out Prevention)

**Sources of Evidence:** Survey Results

Regional and State AIG Meeting Agendas/Notes

Interim Reports for Elementary Students

AIG Budget

Data Analysis

AIG Licensed Teachers

Website

AIG Folder Peer Reviews

Procedures for Resolving Disagreements Brochure/Process

AIG Handbook

AIG Microsoft OneNote Notebook

## **Glossary (optional):**

### **Appendix (optional):**

AIG 1 Referral.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG 2a Consent for Evaluation for New Referral.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG 2b Consent for Evaluation for Adding an Area.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG 3 Collection of Data.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG 4 Decision.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG 5a Consent for Services.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG 5b Nonplacement Letter.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG 5c Results Letter Adding Area.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG Additional Motivation Scale.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
Placement Pathways Chart.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1*)  
AIG Months At A Glance (Elem and Secondary).docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:4:5:6*)  
AIG Plan 2019-2022 Points of Emphasis.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:4:5:6*)  
AIG Annual Agreement Final 2018.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:4:6*)  
Application Early admission to Kindergarten\_2019update.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:5*)  
EAKUpdateSpring2019.mp4 (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:5*)  
Early Admission to Kindergarten Brochure\_updateSpring2019.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:5*)  
Early Admission to Kindergarten PPT for video overview\_UpdatedSpring2019.pptx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:5*)  
Elem to Middle School Transition Form.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:3:6*)  
AIG Testing Plan (July 2018).docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:6*)  
Blue Confidential Folder Notice- Active (reviewed August 2015).doc (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:6*)  
Confidential Folder Notice- Inactive (reviewed August 2015).doc (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:6*)  
Green Confidential Folder Notice- DNQ (reviewed August 2015).doc (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:6*)  
Green Confidential Folder Notice- Inactive (reviewed August 2015).doc (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:6*)  
Purple Nurturing Notice for Cumulative Folders (2nd Graders).docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:2:6*)  
AIG Academic Blueprint Grades 6-12.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:3:6*)  
AIG DEP Elementary.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:3:6*)  
AIG Master Results 2017.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:3:6*)  
Document Transfer Letter out of OCS\_Update December 2018.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:3:6*)  
Document Transfer OCS.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:3:6*)  
Conference Invitation Sign Up Online.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1:5*)  
Conference Invitation.doc (*Appendix - Standard 1:5*)  
Identification Flow Chart.docx (*Appendix - Standard 1:6*)  
Instructional Framework Document OCS 2018-19.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 2:3*)  
Instructional Framework Teacher Actions.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 2:3*)  
AVID and Gifted Spring 2019.pdf (*Appendix - Standard 2:3:4:5*)  
Levels of Understanding Personnel.docx (*Appendix - Standard 2:3:4:5:6*)  
High School Service Delivery-Funding Proposal 2019-2020.docx (*Appendix - Standard 2:4*)  
Data Teams Five Step Process Image.PNG (*Appendix - Standard 3:4*)  
AIG Progress Report updated July 2018.docx (*Appendix - Standard 3:5:6*)  
Clustering Suggestion SAMPLE for Schools.docx (*Appendix - Standard 3:6*)  
Gifted Services\_Goals and Roles.docx (*Appendix - Standard 4*)  
Procedures to Resolve Disagreements Brochure (2019-2022).pdf (*Appendix - Standard 6*)  
2019-22 Onslow AIG Plan Approval Document Signed.pdf (*Local Board Approval Document*)

