

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

**Approved by local Board of Education on:**

**LEA Superintendent's Name:** Dr. Jeffrey S. McDaris

**LEA AIG Contact Name:** Catherine P. Childress

**Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on:**

**Revision Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on:**

Transylvania County Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, July 2009). 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 transition to the new AIG Program Standards, every LEA participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2013-2016. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

***For 2013-2016, Transylvania County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Transylvania County Schools Vision for local AIG program: Philosophy & Mission**

Transylvania County Schools' gifted education document is a comprehensive K-12 plan, which reflects the school system's Mission Statement, as well as its fundamental beliefs and strategic priorities:

The Mission of the Transylvania County Public Schools is to prepare students to become caring and productive citizens in an ever-changing society through the shared responsibility of students, parents, educators, and the community.

Toward that end, we believe that:

- All children can learn; however, they learn differently, and we must understand and value those differences
- High expectations will result in high achievement
- Through the shared responsibility of students, teachers, parents and the community, we can reach our goals
- Children are our most important resource
- All children deserve a safe, comfortable, attractive and inviting atmosphere that fosters learning
- All educators, students, and parents deserve respect
- Minds and hearts are the focus of education

Our commitment, then, is to meet the educational needs of all students, and, through this plan, especially those who are academically or intellectually gifted and who require differentiated educational services beyond those provided by the regular education program.

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

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$174894.00</b>	<b>\$54338.00</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**

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

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

**Rationale:** By annually articulating and disseminating the procedures for AIG student identification, we will make all stakeholders knowledgeable of AIG characteristics, thus ensuring that academically and intellectually gifted students be recognized and then served appropriately. Upon review of the current AIG enrollment, we recognize that some populations are under-represented in our program. We also recognize the importance of accurate identification; therefore, we educate all stakeholders about AIG characteristics and identification. Thus we will encourage all stakeholders to consider nominating students whenever previously unrecognized characteristics of giftedness may become more evident.

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

**Description:** Transylvania County Schools makes available to all stakeholders the AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures and timetables electronically on its website and traditionally in brochures and newsletters. Parents of enrolling and current students receive this information at each school's initial Open House or orientation meeting. Within the first quarter of each school year, AIG Specialists give a presentation to each faculty further detailing the screening, referral, and identification. New teachers are particularly targeted with this information at the new teacher orientation. The Director of Federal Programs will also present this information to all administrators and school board members during their annual administrators' retreat.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence: -**

District and school websites provide information on screening, referral, and identification processes for all grade levels

Brochures and newsletters (updated annually) for parents and community members

PowerPoint (or other presentation materials) and minutes from administrators' retreats, new teacher orientations, and faculty meetings

Data/results showing all 4th graders screened for possible placement (e.g., with CogAT Screener)

Parent Handbook

### **Other Comments:**

### **Practice B**

Employs multiple criteria for AIG student identification, including measures that reveal student aptitude, student achievement, or potential to achieve in order to develop a comprehensive profile for each

student. These measures include both non-traditional and traditional standardized measures that are based on/in current theory and research.

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

**Rationale:** Serving the needs of AIG/IG students means considering each child as a unique individual whose needs change over time. Transylvania County Schools uses multiple pathways for identification and responsively tailors AIG service options. Recent North Carolina Legislation (Article 9B) mandates the identification and service of Intellectually Gifted in addition to the Academically Gifted student. This process of identifying and serving the Intellectually Gifted is still evolving and will be addressed more thoroughly in the 2016 AIG Plan. Any unresolved or questionable placements may be referred to the Administrative AIG Team that meets monthly for discussion and recommendation.

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

**Description:** The AIG team reviews multiple criteria for inclusion, relying on the results of measures of achievement, aptitude, or potential to achieve.

**Transylvania County has developed ONE pathway for Intellectually Gifted Placement:**

1. 98%-tile or higher on an aptitude test
2. Combined with a gifted checklist that is reflective of their cultural, and/or ethnic/linguistic background

**Pathways for Placement**

**Pathway 1 for Reading and/or Math**

Student must meet criteria 1,2, 3, and/or 4 (in the same academic area as aligned with CogAT) and 5 to qualify

1. 95% or higher on Verbal and/or Quantitative battery of CogAT scores
2. 95% or higher classroom scores in specific subject aligned with CogAT scores
3. WAA (Well Above Average) on AIMSweb MCOMP and MCAP and/or
4. WAA MAZE on AIMSweb or lexile score two or more full years above grade level
5. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

**Pathway 2 to Reading**

Student must meet criteria 1 and 6 and at least three of criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5

1. 92% CogAT (Verbal)
2. 93% or higher classroom averages in Reading/English Language Arts
3. Average score of 85% or higher on the highest level on Gifted Characteristics checklists from teachers and parents and students (when applicable)
4. WAA (Well Above Average) or AA (Above Average) scores on AIMSweb MAZE for two consecutive benchmarks
5. Student portfolio includes high quality writing and work samples, written teacher recommendations, projects, motivation checklists

6. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

### **Pathway 2 to Math**

Student must meet criteria 1 and 6 and at least three of criteria 2,3,4,and 5

1. 92% CogAT (Quantitative) or 90% on the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
2. 93% or higher classroom average in math
3. Average score of 85% or higher on the highest level on Gifted Characteristics checklists from teachers, parents, and students (when applicable)
4. WAA (Well Above Average) or AA (Above Average) scores on AIMSweb\* MCOMP and MCAP for two consecutive benchmarks
5. Student portfolio includes high quality writing and work samples, written teacher recommendations, projects, motivation checklists
6. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

\* or comparable assessment

### **Pathway 2 to Placement in Reading and Math**

Student must meet criteria 1 and 6 and at least three of criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5.

1. 92% CogAT (Verbal and Quantitative sections) or 92% on CoGAT verbal and 90% on the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
2. 93% or higher classroom averages in ELA and Math
3. Average score of 85% or higher on the highest level on Gifted Characteristics checklists from teachers, and parents, and students (when applicable)
4. WAA (Well Above Average) or AA (Above Average) scores on AIMSweb\* MCOMP and MCAP and/or MAZE for two consecutive benchmarks
5. Student portfolio includes high quality writing and work samples, written teacher recommendations, projects, motivation checklists
6. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

\*or comparable assessment

### **Procedures for students in 8th grade or above:**

Mass screening will be on the basis of eighth grade EOG scores or Common Core at the 95th percentile or better in reading and/or math. Names of students who have not previously been identified as AIG and who have outstanding EOGs or Level IV on Common Core Exams and classroom performance will be forwarded by the middle school to the AIG Specialist.

In the event that a non-traditional screening instrument suggests evidence of an under-represented or economically disadvantaged student has AIG potential, the AIG coordinator will evaluate that student for inclusion.

Counselors will screen for high performing students (grades 9-12) on the basis of any scores given at the secondary level (i.e. ACT, EOC and Common Core). Names of students will be given to the AIG Specialist for data collection. Students whose records indicate academic/intellectual giftedness will have a referral completed by the AIG Specialist and a counselor and submitted to the school's TAG team and the procedures for placement will be followed.

### **Transfers for all grades:**

When an identified academically/intellectually gifted student enrolls, the school TAG should be informed by the enrolling school staff member. A request for AIG records should be made immediately to the sending school. Students transferring into Transylvania County from another LEA in North Carolina may be screened and placed in an AIG program on the basis of prior placement. Students transferring from out of state will follow Transylvania County's initial procedure for referral, screening, testing and possible placement for the AIG Program.

Instruments/tools used to aid in student identification may include but are not limited to the following:

- CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test)
- North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests
- Common Exam Scores
- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test
- Bright Horizons Gifted and Talented checklist
- Report card grades
- AIMSweb for grades 4-8 (Reading & Math)
- AIMSweb for math grades K-3
- Reading 3-D for grades K-3
- Appropriate identification checklists of giftedness characteristics

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

TAG Team minutes  
DEP folders  
AIG Plan  
Surveys

### **Other Comments:**

### **Practice C**

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

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

**Rationale:** As Transylvania County Schools become more culturally and ethnically diverse, we strive to provide fair access to the AIG Program for all students whose gifts may not be immediately evident; this includes students who are culturally or ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, highly gifted, and/or twice exceptional. Transylvania County will use the Naglieri, nonverbal assessments, Bright Horizons checklists, or other tools providing more cultural or linguistic validity.

### **Goals:**

1. Use appropriate checklists and/or surveys for screening and identification of

under-represented populations within our school system. AIG specialists are continuously researching new checklists as they become available to better screen and identify these populations.

2. Inform faculty in the fall of each school year of characteristics for AIG students in the underrepresented populations.
3. Consult quarterly with the ELL teachers to identify students who place out quickly from the ELL program for possible screening.
4. Analyze annually the demographics of each school's population in comparison with the AIG population for possible discrepancies in our screening and referral of under-represented populations

**Description:** The AIG program of Transylvania County Schools uses both non-traditional and traditional measures in the screening, referral, and identification process of potentially gifted students.

The following measures may be used:

- CogAT Screener for 4th grade students
- CogAT Abilities Test
- AIMSweb/Reading 3D assessments (3-8)
- Naglieri and other nonverbal assessments
- Motivation checklists
- Gifted characteristics checklists

The TAG Team at each school will analyze demographic information each school year. The AIG Specialist will then focus on screening and/or identifying under-represented students through data collection from classroom teachers, ELL teachers, activity teachers (e.g. art, music, and foreign language), guidance counselors, and other professional personnel in the school setting or from parents. Transylvania County does identify students as twice exceptional through an ongoing process of observation, IQ scores, and teacher recommendations. To provide information about the identification process in a student's and/or parent's native language, the AIG Specialist will consult and seek help from the ELL teachers.

Since the best assessment is based on multiple measures that are both non-traditional and traditional, the data gathered should include classroom assessments that demonstrate evidence of superior work.

Some examples of non-traditional measures are:

- Teacher and/or parent referrals with anecdotal notes accompanying the referral
- Bright Horizons Gifted Behavior Scale
- Input, observation, and data collection from the ELL teachers
- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test
- Native Language Based checklists, as available

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

AIG Plan  
DEP folders  
List of accepted tests

**Other Comments:**



### **Practice D**

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

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

**Rationale:** Each school in the Transylvania County School System follows the same policy and procedure for screening, referral, and identification of AIG students. AIG personnel will receive support and direction at the beginning of each school year so consistency is monitored, practiced, and maintained. AIG Specialists will also meet monthly to discuss and review students screened and referred to ensure consistency across both the grade spans and the differing schools.

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

**Description:** Transylvania County Schools is comprised of four elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools, and one alternative school. Because of our small size and funding limitations, it is necessary that some AIG staff be shared between schools. While student populations vary among the schools, we experience enough crossover to warrant creating and ensuring consistency in AIG screening, referral, and identification across all schools in the district.

During the first quarter of school each year, AIG Specialists will meet with all faculties at their respective schools and will use the TCS website to inform all professional staff of the common screening, referral, and identification procedures.

Each AIG Specialist will use the same presentation materials during their professional development in-service with their respective schools. All form letters, identification checklists, individual nomination and placement forms will be consistently used across Transylvania County Schools. Documentation will be kept in the AIG/DEP folder for each student.

At each monthly meeting, AIG Specialists will bring 10% of their identified folders to be audited by another AIG Specialist. Revisions and corrections will be noted and initialed by the AIG Specialist reviewing the records.

Each AIG Specialist develops a spreadsheet of students who have been screened and referred, but not identified and sends the information to the receiving school at the beginning of each school year.

The identification process will be posted on each school's website as well as on the county's website.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Presentation materials  
Transylvania County's AIG Documents and Forms  
Spreadsheet of referrals  
Website  
DEP Folders  
Minutes of monthly AIG meetings

### **Other Comments:**

### **Practice E**

Establishes written policies that safeguard the rights of AIG students and their parents/families, including informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

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

**Rationale:** Recognizing that safeguarding the rights of AIG students and their parents/families cannot be taken for granted, Transylvania County Schools AIG program annually publishes and reviews written policies. These policies establish the procedural rights of AIG students and parents including informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfer from other LEAs as well as procedures for resolving disagreements.

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

**Description:** TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS - DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES  
ACADEMICALLY/INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED

Transylvania County Schools holds that the Academically/Intellectually Gifted Education Plan, its goals and objectives, identification process, and all service delivery options should be clearly communicated to parents. A collaborative relationship between home and school will enable the student to maximize his/her academic potential in a supportive, nurturing environment; however, in the event a parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the school's Team for Academically Gifted (TAG), the following procedures\* are established to resolve the disagreement in a quick and precise manner so that the student's educational program is not overly disrupted.

#### STEP ONE: Appeal at School Level

- A. The parent/guardian may request a conference with the school's Team for Academically Gifted to present concerns. This request shall be submitted in writing (DP Form 1); however, the parent/guardian may elect only to provide written request without presenting in person.
- B. This conference shall be scheduled within ten school days upon receipt of written notice and a review decision made in writing within five school days of the conference.
- C. At this conference, all information is reviewed and shared with parent and minutes are recorded.

#### STEP TWO: Appeal at System Level

- A. The parent/guardian may request a conference with the system-level Team for Academically Gifted. This request shall be submitted in writing within five school days of the local school decision, and a conference scheduled within ten school days upon receipt of the written request. The school's TAG chairperson and the child's teacher, the principal and /or other appropriate individuals may be invited to the conference in addition to the parent/guardian.
- B. During the conference, additional information may be requested from the child's

teacher(s), the parents, or the school-level TAG. Written minutes of this conference are kept by TAG.

- C. The system-level TAG shall give their decision in writing within five school days.

\*See G. S. 115C-150.7(b) 7 and G.S. 115C-150.8.

#### STEP THREE\*: Mediation

- A. The parent/guardian may request mediation by a neutral third party. This request shall be submitted in writing to the AIG coordinator within five school days of the system-level TAG's decision.
- B. It is the responsibility of the school system to identify and compensate a mutually acceptable mediator.
- C. The mediator selects the format the mediation session will follow.
- D. The goal of the mediation will be a written agreement signed by both parties in good faith.
- E. In the event that mediation does not resolve the disagreement, parents may continue with the due process procedures.

\*Optional

#### STEP FOUR: Appeal to the Local Board of Education

- A. If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the system-level TAG and/or mediation has not rendered a satisfactory solution, a written request (SPI) may be made to the local Board of Education: Transylvania County Board of Education, Transylvania County Schools, 225 Rosenwald Lane, Brevard, NC 28712.
- B. This request should be made within five days of the system level TAG decision. The appeal then will be placed upon the agenda of the next Board of Education meeting.
- C. The Board will review the concern. The Board may request further information from the parent, the child's teacher(s), the school and/or system TAG, the principal, and the AIG Coordinator.
- D. The Board shall make a decision in writing within ten days of the appeal.

#### STEP FIVE: Appeal to State (115C-150.8 Reviews of Disagreement)

In the event that the local grievance procedure fails to resolve the disagreement, then the state level grievance procedure would be implemented.

- A. The parent/guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of the review shall be limited to:
  - 1) whether the local administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as a academically or intellectually gifted student, or
  - 2) whether the local plan has been implemented appropriately in regard to the child.
- B. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall make a decision that contains findings of fact and conclusion 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.

The AIG plan itself spells out the written policies safeguarding the rights of students and parents, including informed consent regarding identification and placement or non-placement and transfers from other LEAs. There are written procedures within the handbook for resolving disagreements and for filing due process (see attached)

#### Transfers

When an identified academically/intellectually gifted student enrolls, the school TAG should be informed by the enrolling school staff member. A request for AIG records should be made immediately to the sending school. Students transferring into Transylvania County from another LEA in North Carolina may be screened and placed in an AIG program on the basis of prior placement. Students transferring from out of state will follow Transylvania County's initial procedure for referral, screening, testing and possible placement for the AIG Program.

#### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

AIG Plan  
Policies on Schools' and County's Website  
Parent Handbook  
Procedure for referral, screening and placement

#### **Other Comments:**

#### **Practice F**

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

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

**Rationale:** Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, Transylvania County Schools will initiate a new process for screening for referrals and testing for the AIG Program. With North Carolina EOG Scores not being available at the end of the 2013 school year, we have chosen to conduct a mass screening of 4th graders in the fall of each year. The screener will be used to identify a population of potential students to individually test for possible placement in the AIG Program. The TAG Team at each school will review the data and determine further action.

Recognizing that serving the needs of AIG students means considering each child as a unique individual whose needs change over time, Transylvania County Schools uses multiple pathways for identification and responsively tailors AIG service options to each student through an annual review process.

#### **Goals:**

1. Purchase screener prior to the 2013-14 school year and administer screener for all 4th graders in the fall of the 2013-14 school year. (e.g. CogAT Screener)
2. Develop brochures by the beginning of the 2013-14 school year that explain referral, identification, and placement into the AIG Program. These brochures will be available online

with hard copies available at each school.

3. Purchase the online CogAt for individual testing prior to the 2013-14 school year

**Description:** In the fall of each school year, AIG Specialists will administer the screener to all 4th grade students. For other grade levels the TAG Team will determine the pool of students who will be referred to the AIG Specialist based on data gathered from compilation of checklists and/or surveys along with standardized test scores and classroom grades to identify which students will take the individual CogAT Test or Naglieri, as deemed necessary. Being in the pool automatically deems that other criteria such as behavior scales, motivation, and teacher recommendation will be considered.

Transylvania County has developed ONE pathway for Intellectually Gifted Placement:

1. 98%-tile or higher on an aptitude test
2. Combined with a gifted checklist that is reflective of their cultural, and/or ethnic/linguistic background

### **Pathways for Placement**

#### **Pathway 1 for Reading and/or Math**

Student must meet criteria 1, 2, 3, and/or 4 (in the same academic area as aligned with CogAT) and 5 to qualify

1. 95% or higher on Verbal and/or Quantitative battery of CogAT scores
2. 95% or higher classroom scores in specific subject aligned with CogAT scores
3. WAA (Well Above Average) on AIMSweb MCOMP and MCAP and/or
4. WAA MAZE on AIMSweb or lexile score two or more full years above grade level
5. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

#### **Pathway 2 to Reading**

Student must meet criteria 1 and 6 and at least three of criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5

1. 92% CogAT (Verbal)
2. 93% or higher classroom averages in Reading/English Language Arts
3. Average score of 85% or higher on the highest level on Gifted Characteristics checklists from teachers and parents and students (when applicable)
4. WAA (Well Above Average) or AA (Above Average) scores on AIMSweb MAZE for two consecutive benchmarks
5. Student portfolio includes high quality writing and work samples, written teacher recommendations, projects, motivation checklists
6. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

#### **Pathway 2 to Math**

Student must meet criteria 1 and 6 and at least three of criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5

1. 92% CogAT (Quantitative) or 90% on the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
2. 93% or higher classroom average in math
3. Average score of 85% or higher on the highest level on Gifted Characteristics checklists

from teachers, parents, and students (when applicable)

4. WAA (Well Above Average) or AA (Above Average) scores on AIMSweb MCOMP and MCAP for two consecutive benchmarks
5. Student portfolio includes high quality writing and work samples, written teacher recommendations, projects, motivation checklists
6. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

### **Pathway 2 to Placement in Reading and Math**

Student must meet criteria 1 and 6 and at least three of criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5.

1. 92% CogAT (Verbal and Quantitative sections) or 92% on CogAT verbal and 90% on the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
2. 93% or higher classroom averages in ELA and Math
3. Average score of 85% or higher on the highest level on Gifted Characteristics checklists from teachers, and parents, and students (when applicable)
4. WAA (Well Above Average) or AA (Above Average) scores on AIMSweb\* MCOMP and MCAP and/or MAZE for two consecutive benchmarks
5. Student portfolio includes high quality writing and work samples, written teacher recommendations, projects, motivation checklists
6. TAG team approval after all data and information gathered and submitted to team

\*or comparable assessments

### **Procedures for students in 8th grade or above:**

Mass screening will be on the basis of eighth grade EOG scores or Common Core at the 95th percentile or better in reading and/or math. Names of students who have not previously been identified as AIG and who have outstanding EOGs or Level IV on Common Core Exams, and classroom performance will be forwarded by the middle school to the AIG specialist.

In the event that a non-traditional screening instrument suggests evidence of an under-represented or economically disadvantaged student has AIG potential, the AIG coordinator will evaluate that student for inclusion.

Counselors will screen for high performing students (grades 9-12) on the basis of any scores given at the secondary level (i.e. ACT, EOC and Common Core). Names of students will be given to the AIG Specialist for data collection. Students whose records indicate academic/intellectual giftedness will have a referral completed by the AIG Specialist and a counselor and submitted to the school's TAG team and the procedures for placement will be followed.

### **Transfers for all grades:**

When an identified academically/intellectually gifted student enrolls, the school TAG should be informed by the enrolling school staff member. A request for AIG records should be made immediately to the sending school. Students transferring into Transylvania County from another LEA in North Carolina may be screened and placed in an AIG program on the basis of prior placement. Students transferring from out of state will follow Transylvania County's initial procedure for referral, screening, testing and possible placement for the AIG Program.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Student DEP folders containing initial written consent for review of data  
Minutes and records of Due Process challenges  
Student folders containing the annually renewed DEP and written consent for placement  
The local AIG Plan  
Board of Education Policy Manual  
Brochures of Pathway 1 & Pathway 2  
Parent Handbook  
Letters & Forms  
DEP Checklist

**Other Comments:**

**Standard 2: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction**

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

**Practice A**

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

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

**Rationale:** While North Carolina's adoption of the Essential Standards and Common Core Curriculum increases the rigor of instruction and raises the expectations of content mastery for all students, Transylvania County Schools recognizes that AIG students still need teachers to differentiate instructional methods and curriculum in order to meaningfully address each student's advanced abilities.

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

**Description:** The primary means of addressing an AIG student's needs is differentiation of North Carolina's Essential Standards and Common Core Curriculum coursework within a heterogeneously grouped classroom.

Transylvania County Schools, in grades K-8, employs intervention groups. During this time, students are grouped according to ability and receive direct instruction according to their needs. Also available to students are project based learning through enrichment and extension opportunities such as Science Fair, Math Fair, Battle of the Books, Project TIME, Science Olympiad, Odyssey of the Mind, and others. AIG Specialists arrange events, guest speakers, field trips, and other activities in collaboration with regular education teachers.

A number of service options are available to identified students, each of which revolves around the North Carolina's Essential Standards and Common Core Curriculum. Criteria for each of those options

are included below.

### **Early Admission to Kindergarten**

See State Board Policy State Standards for Early Admission to Kindergarten Policy ID number: GCS-J-001 (attached)

### **Grades Kindergarten through Third**

AIG Specialists will identify nurturing groups for grades K-3 classrooms. The AIG Specialist will be responsible for leading enrichment opportunities for the groups with the goal of beginning to identify potential children for AIG screening.

### **GRADE ACCELERATION FOR GRADES K-3 – All of the criteria must be met**

- 98% or higher on individual aptitude test
- 98% or higher on individual achievement test (reading, writing and math)
- . Highest level of performance on local assessments (AIMSweb, 3D or comparable assessments)
- High level performance on student progress report
- Appropriate social development (as assessed by teacher and psychologist)
- Strong independent reader
- Student Interview
- . Teacher and principal recommendations
- Parent approval

### **Service Delivery Options for Grades 4-5**

Flexible Grouping

Subject Grouping

Resource Consultation/Support

Cluster Grouping

Continuous Progress Model

Resource Services

### **Service Delivery Options for Grades 6-8**

Self-selection

Flexible Grouping

Resource Consultation/Support

Cluster Grouping



## Subject Grouping

### **SUBJECT ACCELERATION for Grades 6-8 - All of the criteria must be met**

- Teacher discretion
- Student interest/motivation
- Evidence of independent learning
- Work samples demonstrating mastery
- Parent approval
- Administration approval
- TAG team approval

### **GRADE ACCELERATION FOR GRADES 4-8 – All of the criteria must be met**

- 98% or higher on individual aptitude test
- 98% or higher on individual achievement test (reading, writing and math)
- 98% or higher on EOG or Level IV on Common Core Exams
- Grade of A on student performance (report cards)
- 2 years above grade level on assessments for two consecutive benchmarks in reading, writing, and math
- Appropriate social development (as assessed by teacher or psychologist)
- Strong independent reader
- Student interview
- Teacher and principal recommendations
- Parent approval

## **Service Delivery Options for 9-12**

1. Regular communication between the AIG Specialist and student will include:
  - Annual DEP review and revision
  - Assistance in applying for special schools or special programs
  - Assistance in developing and advocacy for administrative approval of independent study electives
  - Assistance in finding enrichment, exploratory, or extension opportunities
  - Assistance in initiating internships or job shadowing
  - Timely communication of opportunities for gifted students
2. Academic Advisement by counselor and/or AIG Specialist leading to self-selection of courses based on the student's abilities, potential college major, career choice, and interests
3. Learning Environment Options:
  - Honors/Advanced Courses
  - Regular classes
  - Advanced Placement Courses
  - Independent Study
  - Internships

Dual Enrollment  
Online classes  
Special Schools

4. Content Modification Options:

Advanced content  
Computer/internet/multimedia applications  
Independent study  
Curriculum compacting  
Contracts  
Thematic units

5. Special programs (options change annually; the AIG Specialist maintains a list in the AIG Resource Bank)

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

AIG Plan

AIG differentiation documented in lesson and unit plans

Online materials developed by teachers

E-mail records

Presentation materials and attendance rolls for special events

Enrollment in advanced electives and online classes, honors, Pre AP and AP classes

Records of dual enrollment

Records of student transfers to special schools

Documentation of internships and independent study

DEP

Participation in academic activities after school

**Other Comments:**

**Practice B**

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

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

**Rationale:** Our common goal in Transylvania County Schools is to provide challenging and differentiated instructional practices to meet the needs of unique gifted learners. To accommodate students' interests, readiness, abilities, and learning styles, we vigorously plan, review, and revise our program to employ various instructional strategies.

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

**Description:** Regular education teachers as well as AIG Specialists, collaborate to provide a variety of instructional practices such as, but not limited to: Socratic Seminars, simulations, concept mapping, problem based learning, tiered assignments, creative problem solving, AIG projects both within the

school day or as an extension of the school day, independent projects, novel units, and math enrichment. Students in grades 6-12 now have a Chromebook or Netbook which allows greater flexibility in making assignments and in using alternate sources of information for research.

Elementary AIG Specialists team with regular classroom teachers in grades K-3 in order to bring enrichment and extension to the curriculum. The intent is to not only provide enriched activities and projects, but also to give the AIG Specialists an opportunity to nurture those who show signs of giftedness before actual screening processes are employed.

At grades 4 and 5, AIG Specialists use flexible grouping and/or pull-out to enrich and challenge the gifted learners in reading, social studies, science, and math. Pull-outs are always coordinated with classroom teachers so as to align with the Essential Standards and Common Core Curriculum.

At the middle schools, AIG Specialists teach advanced classes related to their area. In sixth through eighth grade, specialists work to enrich and extend the curriculum. Also available in seventh and eighth grade, are advanced courses (Algebra 1, Pre-AP English) which accelerate the subject area.

On the high school level students are able to select classes from a wide range of advanced, honors, and AP courses. Dual enrollment in Blue Ridge Community College, Brevard College, or on-line courses is available to the gifted high school student.

High School content modification may include:

Socratic or Paideia seminars

Supplemental enrichment activities

Exploration of more complex problems

Application of skills/concepts to college or career-level tasks

Specific recommendations for reading, including primary source or historical documents

More challenging/enriching direction in Senior Projects

Application of individually researched material into existing assignments/presentations

Presentation of a greater range of perspectives including historical change, developing aesthetics, cultural diversity, opposing social mores, etc.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

DEPs/IDEPs

Portfolios

Student inventories and surveys

Enrollment records in advanced courses

LEA's AIG Plan

Lesson plans

Records of staff development with emphasis on differentiation

Student Projects

**Other Comments:**

**Practice C**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools understands that enrichment, extension, and acceleration cannot simply be assigning more work to AIG students: quality, not quantity counts. AIG differentiation involves research-based supplemental resources to augment curriculum and instruction.

**Goals:**

1. During the monthly AIG meetings, AIG Specialists will share research based methods and techniques of instructional delivery for AIG students and education in the regular classroom.
2. AIG Specialists will develop a Resource Bank with all teachers that identify websites or teaching resources for gifted learners beginning with the 2013-14 school year and updated regularly, along with updates to faculty during regularly scheduled faculty meetings.
3. AIG Specialists will consult with administrators to develop a differentiation checklist to use during teacher evaluations by second semester of the 2013-14 school year.
4. Parent newsletters providing current research and practices for AIG students.

**Description:** AIG Specialists will meet regularly with school administrators to discuss curriculum needs and share research based methods and techniques at monthly AIG meetings. We, as a system, realize more funding must be provided to the AIG program not only for materials, but also for personnel and staff development. The development of a shared document with all teachers by the AIG Specialists will identify websites or teaching resources for gifted learners and be updated regularly. AIG Specialists intend to plan and present updates to faculty through e-mail, shared documents, and in person at faculty meetings.

Socratic Seminars, simulations, concept mapping, problem based learning, tiered assignments, creative problem solving, critical thinking skills, AIG projects both within the school day or as an extension of the school day, independent projects, novel units, and math enrichment are current best practices supported by research that are integrated into our AIG program as well as the regular education program.

Other best practices in our program include but are not limited to:

Supplemental enrichment activities  
Exploration of more complex problems  
Application of skills/concepts to college or career-level tasks  
Specific recommendations for reading, including primary source or historical documents  
More challenging/enriching direction through Senior Projects and AIG projects  
Application of individually researched material into existing assignments/presentations  
Presentation of a greater range of perspectives including historical change, developing aesthetics, cultural diversity, opposing social norms, etc.

One-to-one computers, novel sets, graphing calculators, software, and science equipment have been purchased to support AIG students.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

AIG Plan  
DEPs  
Lesson plans  
Agendas and minutes of staff development  
Memberships and material inventories  
Student demonstrations and work products  
Shared folder/document of research based resources  
Differentiation Checklist  
Newsletters

**Other Comments:**

**Practice D**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools believe that an effective education must foster students' development of 21st century skills and mastery of 21st century content. As a result, the AIG program cannot focus solely on traditional academic skills or intellectual domains.

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

**Description:** Transylvania County is committed to producing globally competitive students. In order to achieve this, we will continue to develop rigorous curriculum and instructional methods. Among those needing continued development are the inclusion of global awareness in our social studies classes, in particular, and generally, across the curriculum.

Character education, the heart of the needed personal skills (adaptability, self-direction, social skills, productivity, leadership, responsibility), will be integrated into all subject areas.

Learning and innovation skills (creative and complex thinking, communication and collaboration) will be developed in the same way. Information, technology, and media skills will be spearheaded through Media Specialists and Technology Specialists at each school and become driving forces in the AIG classrooms.

The use of technology is a priority in our school system. Transylvania County Schools through the Golden Leaf Grant has made available a Chromebook and/or Netbook to all students in grades 6-12. By the end of the 2013-2014 school year, students in grades 3-5 will have this one to one initiative. Transylvania County is making great progress toward paperless classrooms. Computer skills and computer ethics are taught and practiced in each classroom as part of the course requirements. This

also provides teachers a mode to differentiate in an advanced, self-directed manner. These trends will only increase as teachers and students are trained and become more comfortable with technology.

Individual research is becoming a standard practice in many classes. Media Specialists are leading this movement and are emphasizing the student as a producer of knowledge. We expect to see growth in appropriate research skills used by AIG students.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Sample lessons  
Student demonstrations and work products  
Lesson plans

**Other Comments:**

**Practice E**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County understands that students can experience leaps and plateaus in their learning rates, that they can come to the classroom with varying levels of familiarity or comfort with concepts and skills, and that they can achieve mastery with different amounts or types of direct instruction. Recognizing that true differentiation is responsive to AIG students' individual needs, classroom teachers and AIG Specialists monitor student learning through on-going formal and informal assessments in order to make informed instructional decisions.

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

**Description:** Transylvania County uses AIMSweb benchmark tests to determine progress of individual students in grades K-8. AIG Specialists are involved in the analysis of the test results and prescribe instruction for AIG students.

EVAAS is emphasized at grade levels 3-12 to analyze data from standardized testing in order to identify AIG students who might not be showing growth. AIG Specialists and regular education teachers track the academic growth of AIG students through scores on EOG, Common Core Exams, EVAAS, and AIMSweb and provide interventions, as necessary.

Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, Reading 3-D will also be implemented for the primary grades.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Disaggregated test scores  
DEP  
Report cards  
AIMSweb  
Pre/post assessments

ACT/SAT scores  
EVAAS report  
Minutes from grade level meetings where benchmarks and EVAAS are discussed

**Other Comments:**

**Practice F**

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

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

**Rationale:** Local self-assessments, as well as input from AIG Specialists, indicate that providing for the social and emotional needs of AIG students has been relatively weak. In light of that assessment, the AIG program will develop strategies to improve curricular and instructional practices that address the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

**Goals:**

1. AIG Specialists and counselors will plan and implement strategies to support the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. These strategies can be shared with parents and teachers through newsletters throughout the year.
2. In elementary and middle schools, AIG Specialists and counselors plan instructional units that address topics pertinent to gifted learners (What Does It Mean to Be Gifted, perfectionism, elitism, learning styles etc.). In high school, the AIG Specialist will plan or coordinate informational sessions and facilitate follow-up support.
3. AIG Specialists will recommend personal counseling for AIG students if deemed necessary.

**Description:** A number of initiatives are in place to support the emotional and social needs of all children through affective curriculum. These are based on close working relationships between AIG Specialists, classroom teachers, and students, allowing AIG Specialists to impact selection of literature, to design projects and activities for gifted learners, and to differentiate study skills, time management, organizational strategies and personal and social coping skills. Counselors, at the elementary and middle school levels, address issues through whole group instruction or pull-out for gifted students. At the high school, counselors visit classrooms to guide research of career options and/or preparation for college, to give information on financial aid and scholarships, and to help students make a four-year plan for high school. AIG Specialists and counselors offer an "open door" policy for students who need one-to-one sessions.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Unit plans  
Lesson plans  
Newsletters  
Student journals  
DEP

4-year plans for high school students

**Other Comments:**

**Practice G**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools cultivates and develops the potential of young students through an intentional and scheduled nurturing program for grades K-3. AIG Specialists in collaboration with classroom teachers and parents will identify a pool of students in each grade level. AIG Specialists will work with these identified groups on a regular basis providing enrichment or enhancement activities.

**Goals:**

1. By second quarter of each school year, teachers in K-3 and AIG Specialists will identify a pool of students who need to receive nurturing. Formal and informal assessments can both be used as a means of identifying this pool of students.
2. AIG Specialists, working with classroom teachers, will plan strategic units and lessons to address the needs of these students and will meet these students on a regular basis in a pull-out enrichment format.
3. AIG Specialists will create a database to follow these students throughout their primary grades to ensure appropriate instruction and differentiation are being offered for the child to be as a successful student.

**Description:** Elementary AIG Specialists meet with each teacher in K-3 to assist those teachers in meeting the needs of potentially gifted learners. They may provide whole class or flexible grouping instruction. The intent is to cultivate and develop the potential of K-3 students through purposeful and intentional activities and differentiated curriculum and instruction. The classroom teachers and AIG Specialists work together to ensure strategies are in place within the regular classroom to provide enrichment and enhancement activities for the gifted learner that foster creativity, thinking skills, and curiosity. This practice allows teachers to observe students who might potentially be identified as AIG. In addition, the AIG Specialists will provide direct services to these nurturing groups in grades K-3 to promote critical thinking skills, foster creativity, and encourage curiosity.

AIMSweb is currently used to chart progress and to identify any child who might need a more challenging curriculum. Reading 3-D will be used for K-3 students in the 2013-14 school year to chart reading progress. Children in the early grades may elect to participate in school Math and Science Fairs or in contests sponsored by various organizations.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

List of identified students for the "nurturing" pool

Lesson plans

Database of K-3 nurturing groups

List of AIG students that participate in extracurricular activities such as Math/Science Fairs or Battle of



the Books

**Other Comments:**

**Practice H**

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

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

**Rationale:** Recognizing that collaborative efforts are necessary to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction, Transylvania County Schools both requires and facilitates meetings among AIG personnel and other professional staff.

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

**Description:** Classroom teachers, other specialists, and AIG Specialists share the responsibility of meeting the needs of the gifted learner. Teachers are able to share information about curriculum and students through e-mails and shared documents. AIG Specialists attend grade level or subject area meetings as well as meet with individual teachers as needed. AIG Specialists meet monthly with the AIG Coordinator to discuss concerns and share information.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Minutes from grade level meetings  
Minutes from AIG meeting  
E-mails  
Shared documents

**Other Comments:**

**Practice I**

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

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

**Rationale:** Through the stakeholders' meeting and survey conducted this school year, it has become clear that parents hold a misconception about the Transylvania County AIG Program and its delivery of services to students, especially after elementary school years. Our intent is to better communicate our services by delineating and publishing not only identification/referral methods and service delivery, but also the annual DEP review process and other key transitional activities.

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

**Description:** Transylvania County has maintained documents that identify the differentiated curriculum and service delivery options. The AIG Specialists make recommendations for revising and improving necessary documents. The documents clearly state service plans for gifted students. AIG Specialists host an orientation meeting or individual DEP meetings at the elementary level during the first semester of each year to discuss these plans and to confer with parents about the plan. Parents sign the document for the year, but are informed that the plan can change as needed. Plans are reviewed at the end of the year and decisions are made to determine the delivery of AIG services and needs of the students for the coming year.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

DEP

Attendance list for Open House/AIG Night

Documents

Parent Handbook and Glossary

School's and County's website

**Other Comments:**

### **Standard 3: Personnel and Professional Development**

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

**Practice A**

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

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

**Rationale:** The role of the AIG Coordinator is to guide, plan, develop, implement, and monitor the AIG plan in Transylvania County. The AIG Coordinator works with AIG Specialists to review and revise the local plan and is an advocate for gifted learners before the school superintendent and the local school board.

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

**Description:** As a small county with a small student enrollment and funding limitations, a full time director for AIG education cannot be justified. At present, the Director of Federal Programs also assumes responsibility for the AIG Plan.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** A complete job description and teacher credentials are on file at the central LEA office.

**Other Comments:**

**Practice B**

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

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

**Rationale:** As defined by the Transylvania County job description, AIG Specialists are engaged in tasks that explicitly address the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of AIG students.

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

**Description:** AIG specialists at each school are employed to deliver AIG services to identified or potential AIG students. Their responsibilities include:

- Screen and test potential AIG students
- Maintain current and proper documentation for AIG students
- Communicate with parents
- Collaborate with parents, students, teachers to develop an appropriate DEP
- Chair local school TAG
- Coordinate with classroom teachers, counselors, Media Specialist, and Technology Specialists to provide needed and appropriate services for gifted learners
- Deliver accelerated coursework to AIG students
- Track academic growth of AIG students
- Work with administrators to determine monetary needs of AIG program
- Collaborate with other AIG Specialists to revise and improve services to AIG students and to ensure continuity of services from school to school and consistency in practices across the district
- Pursue personal professional development
- Make parents and students aware of opportunities for gifted students
- Aid AIG high school students with college and scholarship applications

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

- Teaching schedules
- DEP folders
- Examples of communication with parents
- Lesson plans
- Attendance at AIG meetings (local, district, state)
- CEUs

**Other Comments:**

**Practice C**

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

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

**Rationale:** Local self-assessments and input from AIG Specialists indicate a need for additional training for all personnel who work with AIG students. Classroom teachers desire more training with identifying gifted students, and most importantly, with how to differentiate instruction and curriculum in the regular classroom. Our county is experiencing a growth in the number of students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, as well as economically disadvantaged students; therefore, all teachers need training in identifying potential AIG students in under-represented populations.

**Goals:**

1. Expand online presence which will include an AIG Resource Bank for teachers
2. Meet monthly to share resources and links to make available the same information to all faculty members in Transylvania County Schools
3. Present characteristics of AIG students to faculties at the beginning of the school year.
4. Advocate for professional development for faculties on differentiating instruction for classes with a wide range of aptitudes and abilities.
5. Present to faculty members delivery options, differentiation of instruction and resources on a regular basis.

**Description:** AIG specialists will create an on-line access which will include an AIG website and Resource Bank for teachers. AIG specialists will meet together monthly, along with the AIG Coordinator, to share resources and links to make available the same information to all faculty members in Transylvania County Schools. An emphasis will be placed on characteristics of AIG students, characteristics of under-represented populations and available delivery options available along with differentiation of instruction for regular education teachers.

AIG Specialists will present information to faculties, at the beginning of each school year, concerning student screening, referral, identification and delivery of service options to AIG students. In addition, regular presentations will be conducted at each school which will include a range of delivery options, examples and models of differentiation of instruction, resources and links for teachers to access. AIG specialists, as well as other faculty members, will promote and ensure the continuous advocacy of this much needed resource.

The AIG Coordinator will present at the Administrators' Retreat annually. Included with this presentation will be the 2013-16 AIG Plan or most recent revisions, the needs of the AIG Program, the needs of our AIG students, and the need for more professional development on differentiation of instruction in all classrooms.

ILTs and new faculty members will receive a presentation at the beginning of the school year scheduled by the AIG coordinator. AIG specialists will assist with the workshop. Included in this workshop will be characteristics of AIG students, characteristics of under-represented populations, AIG identification and placement procedure, delivery of service options, examples and models of differentiation of instruction within the regular classroom, and resources for teachers.

On a regular basis, AIG Specialists will discuss AIG concerns or provide new and relevant information on AIG resources at school faculty meetings. A strong need exists for more professional development

on differentiation of instruction for all students, including the AIG spectrum. AIG specialists will advocate for this need to be met at each school and for the Transylvania County School District.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Minutes of monthly AIG Specialists meeting  
Webpages  
Resources and links provided to teachers  
Faculty meetings agendas  
Administrators' Retreat agenda along with presentation  
Workshop agenda

**Other Comments:**

**Practice D**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County's goal is to place AIG students with teachers who have met the LEA's professional development requirements or who have AIG licensure.

**Goals:**

1. Maintain a list of licensed AIG teachers, National Board certified teachers, Pre- AP or AP trained teachers and teachers with formal training in advanced/accelerated content.
2. Determine teaching assignments annually based on those credentials, licenses, certification, or formal training.
3. In elementary and middle school, cluster AIG students with AIG certified teachers and/or NBCT teachers as school schedules and teacher assignments are made in the summer. During the high school registration process, students are encouraged to self-select challenging courses.
4. Maintain a current list of teachers who wish to obtain AIG licensure or who are working on licensure, Pre-AP or AP training, or other formal training in delivering advanced/accelerated content.

**Description:** Local self-assessment indicated that faculty and parents believed there were not enough personnel for the AIG program in our county. The AIG Coordinator and AIG Specialists have discussed the issue with the local superintendent, personnel director, and secondary and elementary supervisors, who are aware of and sympathetic to this situation, but also recognize this is a funding issue that is difficult to resolve in a slow economy. The AIG Coordinator will continue to advocate for more funds for the AIG program in Transylvania County.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

List of AIG certified personnel and AP trained instructors  
Attendance at professional development classes for AIG/AP  
CEUs earned by individual teachers  
College credit earned by teachers working toward AIG/AP licensure

**Other Comments:**

**Practice E**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County knows an effective and successful education program has faculty and staff who are knowledgeable in content, best practices for instruction, curriculum, lesson planning and meeting the social and emotional needs of students. Relevant professional development of all staff is the means by which faculty and staff are trained in current ideology and practices. Professional development opportunities are planned with input from staff and faculty and align with the local AIG goals and district initiatives.

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

**Description:** Transylvania County Schools has on-going programs of professional development and will continue to offer these opportunities to meet the needs of teachers, both in regular classrooms, exceptional classrooms, and teachers of the gifted. AIG Specialists will collaborate with lead teachers, district leadership and school-level administrators to identify and develop programs of professional development. Examples may include, but are not limited to, North Carolina's Essential Skills and Common Core Curriculum, Training in Math and Reading Foundations, Marzano's "Classroom Instruction That Works", EVAAS, "Identifying Underrepresented Populations", and "Closing the Gap". These are all relevant to AIG program standards that have been initiated and will be continued.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Syllabi

Documentation of attendance

CEUs

Surveys or input from teachers concerning professional development needs

**Other Comments:**

**Practice F**

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

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

**Rationale:** At a time when more and more changes are taking place in the field of education, professional staffs are challenged to stay abreast of the factors shaping day to day instruction in the classroom. As rapidly as these changes are coming about, teachers who work with AIG students must be trained and retrained through relevant professional development as to what standards students must meet and what are the best practices to ensure 21st Century skills and content are addressed in

advanced classes as well as adhering to the Common Core Curriculum.

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

**Description:** North Carolina and Transylvania County's emphasis on 21st Century skills and content as well as adoption of the Common Core Curriculum are driving forces as professional development opportunities are developed and implemented.

The North Carolina's use of the McRel Teacher Evaluation System assesses each teacher's leadership, ability to create a positive learning environment, knowledge of content, and ability to provide an appropriate education for students in the classroom. Adherence to the Common Core Curriculum is the guide for teachers to encourage students to become more globally aware. Knowing and applying these skills require educators who are lifelong learners and who actively participate in professional development.

AIG Specialists have been involved in professional development that established vertical and horizontal alignment in the K-12 curriculum. Continuing professional development will address current issues in the field of gifted education and provide tools and techniques for classroom teachers and AIG Specialists especially with differentiation of instruction.

AIG Specialists access on-line classes in addition to traditional college classes. They locate current research and practices in gifted education and then share this information with teachers. Because students in Grades 6-12 now have personal computers to use in the classroom or at home, teachers of gifted students can promote and require individual research and provide more differentiated assignments.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Syllabi  
RAs and CEUs awarded  
Attendance sign-in sheets

**Other Comments:**

**Practice G**

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

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

**Rationale:** Recognizing that developing, implementing and refining AIG services require collaboration among AIG Specialists and other teachers, Transylvania County Schools provides resources and time for AIG-related professional development.

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

**Description:** The AIG Coordinator will conduct regular meetings for AIG Specialists. Every meeting will

provide opportunities for comments, questions, or concerns. AIG Specialists are invited and welcomed to grade level meetings as advocates of the AIG program within their respective schools. As funding allows, AIG Specialists are encouraged to attend district and state AIG meetings. AIG Specialists participate in professional development on hybrid workdays. Our expanding technology, such as e-mail and shared documents, has allowed for greater collaboration and communication between AIG personnel and regular education teachers. AIG Specialists also participate and are encouraged to lead in their Professional Learning Communities within their schools.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

District AIG Plan and School Improvement Plans  
Minutes from AIG meetings and grade level meetings  
Agendas and minutes from School Improvement Team meetings  
Individual school schedules  
Participation in professional development  
Samples of shared documents or e-mails

**Other Comments:**

## **Standard 4: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community**

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

**Practice A**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools delivers AIG programs and services which are comprehensive of the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted learners. During our self-assessment, AIG Specialists recognized a more consistent, focused delivery of services could be provided to the K-3 gifted students. Students in other grade levels are identified and receive a variety of service deliveries based on their academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs.

**Goals:**

1. By second quarter of each school year, teachers in K-3 and AIG Specialists will identify a pool of students who need to receive nurturing. Formal and informal assessments can both be used as a means of identifying this pool of students.
2. AIG Specialists, working with classroom teachers, will plan strategic units and lessons to address the needs of these students and will meet with these students on a regular basis in a pull-out enrichment program.
3. AIG Specialists will create a database to follow these students throughout their primary grades to ensure appropriate instruction and differentiation are being offered for the child to be a successful student.



**Description:** AIG Specialists, regular classroom teachers, and counselors, along with parents, will identify students in grades K-3 for nurturing opportunities. Enrichment and/or enhancement classes are taught to the identified group on a rotational basis by the AIG Specialist who observes students for gifted characteristics. Students in grades 4 and 5 will receive direct instruction from the AIG Specialists. At the middle school level, accelerated or advanced grade and course options exist. Advanced courses in language arts and mathematics are taught in seventh and eighth grade to both identified and nurtured students on a daily basis. Honors and AP classes at the high school level consist of both identified and nurtured students. We also have dual enrollment in college classes at the high school level which provides these students with additional intellectual stimulation opportunities.

Social and emotional needs of gifted learners are different from the normal population. Thus, we offer a number of extra-curricular programs and activities to promote their intellectual engagement, creativity, and their social interactions at all grade levels. Various clubs, competitions, teams, trips, productions, and projects give gifted learners an opportunity to engage with both gifted and regular education students in a non-academic setting.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Student schedules  
School calendars  
Monthly logs  
Local AIG Plan  
Documentation of invitations sent  
Enrollment records for events and activities

**Other Comments:**

**Practice B**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools has aligned its AIG programs and services with each area of the AIG identification, goals, and resources so as to best meet the needs of the gifted learner.

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

**Description:** Our program goals:

1. Define a process for student nomination, procedures for identification in reading and/or math and nurturing opportunities that ensure all students needing differentiation are served.
2. Create a pool of students through mass screening in fall of 4th grade
3. Use multiple indicators to establish and apply identification guidelines
4. Provide nurturing opportunities that focus on meeting the needs of under-represented populations

Currently we provide an array of services that meet the needs of gifted students:

1. Develop a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) for each identified student which matches his/her needs and abilities with appropriate AIG services.
2. Develop an Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) for students with specific individual needs such as twice identified, underachieving, or ELL.
3. Ensure that the curriculum for gifted students is aligned with and extends the North Carolina Essential Skills and Common Core Curriculum.
4. Develop and implement high-quality curriculum that is supported by research-based models appropriate for gifted students.
5. Beginning in middle school, a variety of advanced classes become available to AIG students. It should be noted, though, that those programs are not restricted to AIG students.

To support the social-emotional development of gifted students we:

1. Provide training in specific social/emotional needs of the gifted
2. Develop scope and sequence for affective curriculum
3. Provide support for parents

Current practices to facilitate communication, cooperation, and collaboration among educators, parents, students, and community

1. Integrate system wide professional development on extending and refining thinking skills and differentiation to help all teachers meet the needs of the gifted.
2. Provide professional learning opportunities
3. Maintain regular communication with parents and community through websites, newsletters, email and conferences

To provide adequate and appropriate resources for implementation of the gifted education program plan we:

1. Provide adequate staff for individual schools
2. Encourage AIG licensure, and National Board certification, Pre-AP, AP training, or training in teaching advanced or accelerated content for classroom teachers
3. Provide research based instructional resources and materials

We evaluate the various components of the AIG program to facilitate continuous improvement:

1. Invite all stakeholders to participate in surveys to evaluate AIG services.
2. Compile data from surveys for the AIG county committee to evaluate current services
3. Schedule monthly meetings with the AIG Coordinator and teachers to focus on current research and evaluate and improve services

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

DEP

Local AIG Plan

Surveys

Student portfolios

Lesson plans

Minutes from monthly meetings

**Other Comments:**

### **Practice C**

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

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

**Rationale:** During the 2013-16 revision process, AIG Specialists expressed the need to discuss concerns and resources regarding personnel and program delivery of AIG services. A meeting with the Central Office was held to communicate the concerns for consistency with delivery options and availability of AIG Specialists.

#### **Goals:**

1. AIG Coordinator will meet monthly with Director of Elementary and Secondary Education, Director of Human Resources as well as Superintendent to advocate for additional AIG Specialists to serve the needs of our gifted learners.
2. AIG Coordinator will meet monthly with principals to assure AIG program is administered within the school according to the guidelines specified in the AIG Plan.
3. AIG Specialists will communicate the goals of the AIG Program and ensure that AIG services are integrated within the whole school's instructional program either at monthly faculty meetings or in shared documents.

**Description:** The focus of both system-wide goals and the AIG Program goals is to meet students' academic needs, expand technological skills, emphasize the student as producer, not consumer of information and show growth in performance so that students can become productive citizens and life-long learners. Differentiation to foster this is part of the school improvement process.

The North Carolina Essential Skills and Common Core Curriculum is implemented throughout the system. The gifted program provides differentiation and enrichment to the prescribed curriculum.

The AIG specialists are working to strengthen ties with the School Guidance departments in order to meet the social and emotional needs of students and to focus more attention on underachieving gifted students.

AIG Specialists serve on School Improvement Teams to advise and advocate support for the AIG Program and students. AIG Specialists will report regularly to regular education staff through either faculty/grade level meetings or provide written resources or shared documents of activities or ideas to implement for gifted learners.

#### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

School Improvement Plans  
Meeting minutes (faculty and administrative)  
DEPs and IDEPs  
K-12 Service Options  
Shared documents

#### **Other Comments:**

### **Practice D**

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

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

**Rationale:** Our 2013 stakeholders' meeting and surveys indicated one aspect in the AIG program to improve was better communication with school personnel. The AIG Specialists have developed a presentation that will be delivered to each school's faculty within the first two months of each school year. This presentation includes information about the delivery of differentiated services and instruction, regulations related to gifted education, identification and placement procedures and the local revised AIG Plan for the 2013-16 school year. Identification and placement procedures will be posted on our website along with hard copy brochures which are available to all teachers, school administrators and staff.

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

**Description:** At the beginning of each school year, AIG Specialists will meet with faculty and support staff to inform them of the regulations related to gifted education and to give details of the local AIG program and AIG Plan and to explain the delivery of differentiated services at the particular school. The AIG Specialist at each school will develop and maintain on-line access which provides all of the above information.

DEPs are written collaboratively with AIG Specialists, regular education and parental/student input to best serve the needs of the student. The student's teacher(s) is/are given a copy of the DEP and/or electronic access.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Dates of informational meetings  
Notes or presentations made to school faculties  
Websites  
DEPs  
Parent Handbook with Article 9B

### **Other Comments:**

### **Practice E**

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

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

**Rationale:** Communication between elementary and middle school AIG Specialists as well as middle and high school AIG Specialists is vital to AIG students making a successful transition. The

communication, both through meetings and e-mails, will ensure that transitions are handled effectively, and ensure that students are appropriately identified and served continuously.

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

**Description:** DEP folders are passed from one school to the next in a timely manner. DEP folders are available to AIG Specialists at the beginning of each school year.

AIG teachers and Specialists work together to provide at the receiving school an orientation program to inform stakeholders of the services that will be provided and to answer questions about similarities and differences in the program delivery. Included in these presentations are the service delivery options and discussions of the emotional needs of the gifted student at each grade level. Opportunities to meet these needs and concerns become a point of emphasis in these meetings, particularly at the middle schools.

Elementary AIG Specialists make plans for rising AIG students to visit the middle school in the spring before their move to sixth grade. These students meet with the AIG Specialist in the transition school and are encouraged to ask questions about the program. High school AIG Specialists meet with rising 8th graders in the spring before transition to discuss the AIG program at the high school and to survey students of their interests, strengths, and needs and then use those responses to develop an appropriate DEP.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Minutes of monthly AIG meetings lead by the AIG Coordinator  
Minutes of spring meetings indicating transition discussions/planning  
Dates of student/parent information nights along with presentations and/or artifacts

**Other Comments:**

**Practice F**

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

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

**Rationale:** Providing a vibrant AIG program for Transylvania County Schools is an effort that involves many stakeholders. Our school system recognizes and encourages regular education teachers, special education teachers, other specialists, instructional staff, parents/families and administrators to actively participate in planning and providing for a differentiated program and services for gifted students.

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

**Description:** AIG Specialists meet with regular education teachers to discuss the AIG program and to assist teachers with identification of possible AIG students. They serve as a resource as teachers plan and implement differentiation in the classroom. AIG Specialists can assist with differentiated instruction through team teaching, cluster grouping, or pull-out groups.

AIG specialists will continue developing an AIG Resource Bank for teachers' use providing information, links and instructional tools to facilitate differentiation, identification and planning for the personal/social/emotional characteristics and needs of gifted learners.

The DEP/IDEP is a collaborative effort between the AIG Specialists, regular education teachers, other specialists, families, and TAG. DEPs are developed early in the school year so services can begin quickly and effectively.

Greater collaboration between families and AIG programs will be emphasized in the annual development of the DEP where parents will be encouraged to ask questions, explain their child's needs and attributes and/or volunteer to support the program.

There will be an open invitation to parents/guardians on each school's AIG webpage for opportunities to become involved in their student's education.

AIG Specialists will inform parents about possible enrichment programs for AIG students.

Parents and faculty participate in a yearly Stakeholder's Survey. The results are analyzed and used in the modification and revision of the AIG plan. A county-wide stakeholders' meeting involves parents, faculty and AIG Specialists in an open discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the AIG program.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

District/school AIG websites  
District AIG brochure  
Lesson plans  
Meeting minutes

**Other Comments:**

**Practice G**

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

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

**Rationale:** Our self-assessment data as well as the AIG Specialists' anecdotal evidence indicate that more work can be done to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students. This effort will require AIG Specialists, counselors, regular education teachers and parents/families working together to identify the social/emotional needs of our gifted learners and identify strategies to meet these needs throughout the student's school years.

**Goals:**

1. To provide an effective, proactive counseling program for helping gifted learners develop positive self-image
2. To provide necessary staff development for counselors, AIG personnel, other support staff, and/or Tier Team members
3. To increase the occurrence of independent work in the areas of a child's giftedness

4. To increase the presence of AIG students in school activities with both other AIG and regular education students

**Description:** In order to develop the academic and intellectual potential of the gifted learner, social-emotional development must be highly operable and well integrated. Some generalizations may be made but are seldom applicable to any one gifted learner. Generalizations of the gifted learner include:

- Perception of greater personal freedom
- Value cooperative and democratic forms of interactions though are less willing to compromise
- Tend to be more independent and less conforming
- Often show leadership abilities in community projects and concerns
- Generally aware of morality and justice at an earlier age
- Prefer intellectual peers to chronological age peers  
(Source: Growing Up Gifted by Barbara Clark)

These children require help in learning to accept themselves as they are and to appreciate the ways in which they are both similar to and different from others. In response to that need, the AIG program will foster their development in this area through the following:

- Staff development offered to teachers and counselors in the system, including an overview of the local plan, characteristics/behaviors of the gifted learner and strategies for differentiation in the regular classroom
- In their work with gifted learners, AIG Specialists will focus on creative problem solving, leadership opportunities, independent projects, community service, goal setting, teamwork and decision-making strategies
- Time and opportunity will be scheduled for the AIG Specialists, school counselors, and community-based resources to meet with gifted learners for counseling, clubs and activities, academic advisement and general support for individual student success
- AIG Specialists, counselors, administrators, and/ or teachers will schedule time for parent meetings where questions regarding student expectations, special programs, career exploration, 4-year career development plan, scholarship options and recommendations, dual enrollment opportunities, college selection and special opportunities are explained

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Specialized training for counselors and other people working directly with AIG students will be offered  
Agendas and attendance rosters

**Other Comments:**

**Practice H**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools articulates and implements a process for acceleration and placement options when an appropriate body of evidence indicates that such a practice is warranted for an individual gifted learner. This practice is not needed except in the case where differentiation of instruction or enrichment/enhancement is not meeting the needs of a highly gifted student. By the 2013-14 school year, schools will have access to the policy on Credit by Mastery. This will provide guidelines with forms and will provide clarification for implementation for high schools.

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

**Description:** When acceleration procedures are deemed an appropriate step for elementary and middle school AIG students, the following procedure is in place:

### **Early Admission to Kindergarten**

See State Board Policy State Standards for Early Admission to Kindergarten Policy ID number: GCS-J-001 (attached)

GRADE ACCELERATION FOR GRADES K-3 – All of the criteria must be met

- 98% or higher on individual aptitude test
- 98% or higher on individual achievement test (reading, writing and math)
- . Highest level of performance on local assessments (AIMSweb, Reading3D or comparable assessments)
- High level performance on student progress (report cards)
- Appropriate social development (as assessed by teacher and psychologist)
- Strong independent reader
- Student Interview
- . Teacher and principal recommendations
- Parent approval

GRADE ACCELERATION FOR GRADES 4-8 – All criteria must be met

- 98% or higher on individual aptitude test
- 98% or higher on individual achievement test (reading, writing and math)
- 98% or higher on EOG or Level IV on Common Core Exams
- Grade of A on student performance (report cards)
- Appropriate social development (as assessed by teacher or psychologist)
- Strong independent reader
- Student interview
- Teacher and principal recommendations
- Parent approval

SUBJECT ACCELERATION for Grades 6-8 – All criteria must be met

- Teacher discretion
- Student interest/motivation
- Evidence of independent learning
- Work samples demonstrating mastery
- Parent approval
- Administration approval
- TAG team approval



Credit by Mastery (CBM) will apply to high schools once clarified and approved by the State Board of Education.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

The written procedure for acceleration  
Minutes and agendas from related meetings  
Record of student accelerations  
Documentation of counselor/student support  
Parent Handbook

**Other Comments:**

**Practice I**

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

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

**Rationale:** Because our schools are focused on serving the needs of all students to help make them successful, productive citizens, Transylvania County Schools provides services for traditionally under-represented AIG populations, including culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, highly gifted and twice-exceptional

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

**Description:** The AIG program provides services to any K-12 student who shows the need for academic differentiation. The practices articulated in this AIG plan are followed in determining those students who demonstrate the need for such services. Instruments that may be used include the following:

- The Bright Horizons Gifted Scale
- Cognitive Abilities Test or other standardized aptitude tests
- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test
- North Carolina End-of Grade Tests, Common Core Exams, or other standardized achievement tests
- Teacher observation and recommendation for primary students

Students are observed in grades K-3 for preliminary, informal identification. The AIG specialists will complete a checklist of potential primary students. Beginning in the fall of 2013, all fourth graders will be screened. This procedure reflects sensitivity to equal opportunity for all. In grades 4-8, all students' standardized test scores are reviewed by the AIG Specialist at each school in an effort to ensure that equal opportunity for consideration is provided to all.

Classroom teacher's recommendations can create an additional pool of applicants for further assessment, particularly for those children whose life opportunities may obscure giftedness, a condition common in under-represented populations.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

DEPS/IDEPS

Data relating to under-served populations

Nonverbal Naglieri Ability Test

Bright Horizons Gifted Scale results

Disaggregation of test data

**Other Comments:**

**Practice J**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools offer a variety of extra-curricular programs and activities designed to enhance and develop the needs and interests of AIG students.

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

**Description:** Extra-curricular activity information is provided to students to explore their creative, academic and leadership potential. Skills and talents that might otherwise go untapped have much potential in to be being developed through extra-curricular challenges they would not typically encounter in the school environment.

Activities provided and suggested for students may include but are not limited to the following:

A variety of sports programs

Elementary and middle school Battle of the Books Competition

Super Saturdays at UNC-Asheville

Envirothon

Math Competitions

Math/Science Fair

Governor's School and Summer Ventures

Duke University Talent Identification Program

High school organizations for creative writing, debate, Quiz Bowl, fine arts, Republicans/Democrats, book clubs, Health Occupations, DECA, Future Farmers, Odyssey of the Mind, and drama

High school Senior Projects

High school internships or independent study

High school Legislative Page program

High school VIZ Youth Leadership Program

Annual high school writing or art contests

HOBY Leadership seminars

Academic enrichment camps at public and private universities

National Young Scholars

Activities such as these mentioned encourage teamwork and leadership skills as well as responsibility

and discipline. In addition to helping teach real world skills that encourage life-long interests, extracurricular activities allow students to boost their self-esteem as they learn.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Pictures, video, newspaper coverage

Brochures and notices provided to students for extra-curricular activities

**Other Comments:**

**Standard 5: Partnerships**

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

**Practice A**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools has long encouraged and practiced partnership and communication with parents/families and the community. This practice extends to stakeholders with ties to the AIG program to ensure the most appropriate services are provided for the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of our gifted students.

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

**Description:** School and home share common goals to meet the academic, social and emotional growth of our AIG students. Both want students to develop their gifts, talents and creativity as well as learn and practice appropriate social skills and to develop a positive self-image. Educators and parents want students to become lifelong learners using critical thinking and problem solving skills. Throughout the year, AIG Specialists communicate with parents to discuss DEPs and other relevant issues. Parent meetings are held early in the year to discuss the AIG program and how it works in the individual school. Parents can freely ask for individual conferences with AIG personnel. AIG Specialists work at their schools to ensure all personnel understand how AIG students can be best served. These specialists serve on school-based committees representing the AIG perspective in planning schedules, placement of students in classes and professional development.

Each school has a Team for the Academically Gifted (TAG) to facilitate the identification of students and to help develop DEPs. Concerns about AIG students or the AIG program are shared and discussed at TAG meetings. At the high school level, the AIG Specialist works with the guidance counselor(s) to communicate with parents through e-mails, phone calls, and parent meetings.

Parents are encouraged to join PTO, to volunteer for field trips, to help in such activities as Battle of the Books or Science and Math fairs. They become involved when students participate in job shadowing or career days. They may be asked to be guest speakers or to allow students to serve in internships with them. Each year, parents are encouraged to complete stakeholder surveys and parents of AIG students are invited to a county-wide stakeholder's meeting.

Transylvania County Schools share information about the AIG program in several other ways. Individual school website or the district website conveys information about the identification, placement and service delivery to gifted learners. Handbooks with the same information are available to parents. Newsletters and brochures are another way of relaying important information. If requested, the AIG Coordinator can speak to community groups. The local newspaper features an education page which posts news about student achievement.

As our use of technology grows, all AIG Specialists use e-mail to communicate with parents. High School AIG Specialists also use e-mail to communicate with students, who all have a district-provided laptop and a student e-mail account. These regular communications allow the AIG Specialist an efficient way to inform parents and students about upcoming events or available opportunities for AIG students.

In the high schools, the AIG Specialist, guidance counselor(s), and other student support staff are active liaisons between the school and community. Through their community contacts, they communicate and even create opportunities for students to serve on local advisory boards, to have internships or job shadowing experiences, to participate in community and business development projects, to volunteer with community-based service organizations, and to mentor or tutor younger students through church-based or civic service clubs.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

- Websites
- Brochures
- Newsletters
- Newspaper articles
- Samples of e-mail
- Attendance at parent meetings
- TAG minutes
- Record of volunteer hours maintained by each school

**Other Comments:**

**Practice B**

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

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

**Rationale:** In order to strengthen and promote a positive image of the local AIG program, Transylvania County shares information with parents and families regarding all aspects of our plan and policies relating to gifted education.

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

**Description:** AIG Specialists at each school work keep parents and families and other stakeholders informed about the nature and needs of giftedness, as well as relevant policies and practices during the school year, Specialists meet with parents to develop DEPs and IDEPs as well as discuss other issues.

Each AIG Specialist will create and maintain a webpage that informs the community of all relevant information, including contact information, program descriptions, and other current information. The webpages will be accessible through links on both the district and individual school's website. AIG Specialists will continue to use e-mail, brochures, and newsletters as a means of communicating information to parents in a timely manner.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Parent Handbook  
Website  
2013-16 AIG Plan  
Newsletters  
Brochures  
Samples of e-mails  
Minutes of SIT meetings

**Other Comments:**

**Practice C**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County Schools take pride in its efforts to involve a diversity of stakeholders in the development, implementation and monitoring of school programs including the AIG program. By doing this stakeholders feel they have an important role in improving schools and become advocates for our school system.

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

**Description:** School Improvement Teams involve a diverse group of community members who can give a wide perspective of views concerning strengths and weaknesses in our program. The AIG program is evaluated in these regular meetings. Students, teachers, and administrators assisted in developing and evaluating the AIG program through meetings at each school. In addition, each elementary, middle, and high school has a Team for the Academically Gifted (TAG). Students and/or parents participate in DEP and IDEP meetings annually or more often as needed. Community members and parents volunteer in various capacities such as with field trips and Battle of the Books, or may serve as judges or mentors for Senior Projects. Each school has an active PTA/PTO which serves the school in any number of ways. The feedback from a yearly survey concerning the AIG plan was used in developing and making necessary revisions to the existing plan.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Survey results  
Minutes from stakeholders' meetings for plan revision  
Suggestions from Stakeholders' Satisfaction Survey  
School Improvement Plans  
2013 – 2016 AIG Plan

**Other Comments:**

**Practice D**

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

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

**Rationale:** AIG Specialists know that AIG students desire opportunities beyond the classroom. These specialists inform parents and students about opportunities as they become available.

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

**Description:** The Transylvania County Schools' AIG Program informs parents, families, and the community of opportunities available to the AIG student. The Transylvania County Schools' AIG Program recognizes that open communication among these groups is critical for the success of all students. Every effort is made to communicate with parents and families about possible opportunities for their AIG child. AIG Specialists share news about opportunities through brochures, letters, and e-mail.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

District websites  
AIG Specialists' webpages  
Samples of brochures, letters  
Acceptance letters from organizations sponsoring opportunities

**Other Comments:**

**Practice E**

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

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

**Rationale:** The ultimate educational goal for AIG students is that they find fulfillment outside school and after their K-12 schooling is complete. Transylvania County Schools partners with parents/families, institutions of higher education, local businesses and industry, and other school and community stakeholders and resources to give all students, including AIG students, opportunities to transform their high school learning into the first steps of lifelong learning. Through its partnerships, Transylvania County Schools gives all students opportunities to develop both meaningful experiences in and skills applicable for higher education, career paths, and civic roles.

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

**Description:** Parents of gifted students often enjoy sharing their interests and talents and are excellent speakers for seminars and programs. Also, they frequently have contacts in the community who are

valuable resources. AIG Specialists invite parents and other community members to meet with students to enrich a lesson or unit.

As noted in Practice A, high school AIG students benefit from the extensive network of contacts established between the AIG Specialists, guidance counselors, and other student support staff, including the Workforce Development Coordinator and professionals in the local community, local businesses and industry, local/nearby colleges and universities, as well as other institutions. Through their community contacts, they not only arrange presentations by guest speakers, but they also communicate and even create opportunities for students to develop skills outside of the school day. High school students have opportunities: to serve on local advisory boards, to have internships or job-shadowing experiences, to participate in community or business development projects, to volunteer with community-based service organizations and to mentor or tutor younger students through church-based and civic service clubs.

Blue Ridge Community College allows qualifying high school students, including AIG students, to enroll in college courses for credits applicable toward both high school and college graduation. In the past, Brevard College has offered this opportunity. Transylvania County Schools is actively seeking to rebuild the relationship with Brevard College in order to provide this opportunity again.

Transylvania County Schools partners with Brevard College to ensure that all students, including AIG students, are prepared for college level writing demands by arranging for Brevard College English faculty to grade students' Senior Project Research Papers. Transylvania County Schools likewise partners with the local community to ensure that all students, including AIG students, are prepared for workplace communication demands for public speaking by using adults from the community to grade students' Senior Project Presentations.

Blue Ridge Community College invites all Transylvania County juniors and seniors, including AIG students, for College Day. Guidance counselors and other support staff arrange similar field trips to Western Carolina University and UNC-Asheville. Through these trips, all participating students learn about the university environment, observe classes, and can make informed decisions about whether to enroll in the college transfer program at Blue Ridge Community College or to apply directly to their choice of universities.

Transylvania County Schools partners with VISION Transylvania, a community-based leadership program to promote informed civic volunteerism. VISION Transylvania annually offers 25 high school juniors enrollment in VIZ Transylvania, a youth leadership development program which teaches collaboration, communication skills, self- and community awareness and healthy living. Participants go on to use these skills in service projects within Transylvania County.

High school AIG Specialists partner with the Transylvania County Schools Workforce Development Coordinator to arrange job-shadowing and internships for interested AIG students, ensuring that those students gain relevant experiences in their possible college majors or career fields.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Lesson plans, agendas

DEP notes indicating high school students' participation in internship, job-shadowing, community/civic projects and dual enrollment choices

**Other Comments:**

## **Standard 6: Program Accountability**

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

### **Practice A**

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

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

**Rationale:** During the 2012-13 school year, the AIG Coordinator and AIG Specialists have developed a revised AIG plan describing our local program in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy. Our local Board of Education will approve the plan before it is submitted to SBE/DPI for review

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

**Description:** The AIG Coordinator and AIG Specialists were given the task of revising our local AIG plan. The team began meeting early in the year to discuss the 2013 - 2016 plan and ways it needed to change. Each school did a local self-assessment; strengths and areas of improvements were summarized using the results. A stakeholder's survey was sent to each parent of an AIG student. These responses were analyzed with a resulting summary for each school as well as a county summary. AIG stakeholders were invited to a county-wide meeting for an open discussion of our program. The results from each of these actions were used as the starting point for revision.

At the regular AIG meetings, AIG Specialists offered their opinions and suggestions as well as those offered by staff and faculty. This open discussion was fruitful as the plan was being developed. Personnel attended district AIG meetings to hear from in-depth information about each goal and practice and used this information as a means of writing and refining our plan.

Many hours of discussion, writing, revising and editing have produced a plan that will be implemented in 2013-14. The Plan will continually be reviewed and revised annually, as needed, to best serve our gifted learners.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Approved 2013 – 2016 AIG Plan

**Other Comments:**

### **Practice B**

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



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

**Rationale:** Because legislation and state policies can change, as can local needs, Transylvania County Schools will monitor the effectiveness of the 2013-16 AIG Plan and program.

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

**Description:** AIG Specialists, under the supervision of the AIG Coordinator will audit AIG records monthly. At each monthly meeting, time will be devoted to auditing 10% of each school's DEP/IDEPs. Corrections and revisions will be made to ensure compliance. Annually the AIG Coordinator will summarize the monthly results to identify specific areas of improvement and promote areas of strength.

The implementation of the local AIG Plan will be monitored by the principals, lead teachers and AIG Coordinator and Specialists. Any concerns from any of the stakeholders (including teachers, parents or students) will be addressed. The local stakeholders' survey is available for comment in the spring of each year.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Minutes from monthly AIG meetings  
DEP/IDEP  
Audit summary from AIG Coordinator  
Stakeholders' Survey

**Other Comments:**

**Practice C**

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

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

**Rationale:** All funds from PRC 034 are allotted and used exclusively for AIG education.

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

**Description:** The PRC 034 funds are monitored by the AIG Director, the Directors of Elementary, Middle and Secondary Education and the Finance Officer. Procedures are in places to ensure funds are spent appropriately

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Budget printouts and expenditure sheets

**Other Comments:**

### **Practice D**

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

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

**Rationale:** AIG Specialists, along with the TAG team at each school will collect, analyze and share data related to AIG students' performance. This data is used to plan for needed interventions and to expand opportunities for gifted learners.

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

**Description:** Transylvania County Schools uses data of student performance as a means for targeting and planning for interventions or for offering additional opportunities to gifted learners. Standardized test data is disaggregated for each school and is available to the AIG Specialist. With EVAAS and other technology predictors, the AIG students can be targeted as a group to indicate performance needs. AIMSweb data for math and reading is compiled three times a year for grades 4-8. The Specialist can use this data to track growth of individual AIG students and plan intervention, as needed. High schools use the SAT, ACT, EOC, Common Core Exams and AP test scores as a way of tracking student growth. If a high school student is identified as a possible drop-out, he/she can be referred to the high school TIER team, Student Advocate and/or district level support staff. These efforts are to help the student complete high school.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Annual drop-out records  
Disaggregated test data  
Recommendations from RTI Tier Teams  
Individual data results maintained by AIG Specialists  
AIMSweb data for each AIG student (grades 4 – 8)  
EVAAS data for AIG students  
Student Advocate's referrals

### **Other Comments:**

### **Practice E**

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

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

**Rationale:** In order to monitor the representation and retention of under-represented populations in the local AIG program, the TAG Team at each school will analyze demographic information each school year. Current data reveals that ethnic and economically disadvantaged students are under-represented in the AIG program.

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

**Description:** The AIG Specialist will focus on screening and/or identifying under-represented students through data collection from classroom teachers, ELL teachers, activity teachers (e.g. art, music, foreign language), guidance counselors, and other professional personnel in the school setting or from parents. Transylvania County does identify students as twice exceptional through an ongoing process of observation, IQ scores and teacher recommendations. Consultation with ELL teachers will help communicate the identification process and AIG characteristics observed in students to parents and to teachers in the native language of the parent and/or student.

The LEA will annually review enrollment in upper level classes and actively seek to increase participation of under-represented populations. AIG and regular education teachers will be trained in the use of screening instruments as a means of identifying potential AIG students.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Disaggregation of demographic information from each school

Minutes of TAG meetings

Checklists used to identify potential students

AIG Headcount indicating increase in representation of under-represented populations by end of the 2013-16 AIG plan

Student work samples from potential AIG student

**Other Comments:**

**Practice F**

Maintains current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students

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

**Rationale:** Principals, lead teachers, grade level and/or department chairs make informed decisions about teaching assignments and student schedules with relevant data that is provided by the Transylvania County Schools Human Resource and Personnel Office. All five AIG Specialists are either certified or currently working on AIG certification.

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

**Description:** The Director of Human Resources and Personnel maintains data regarding teacher credentials and licensure information and ensures that teachers are highly qualified in the area in which they are assigned.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:** The Human Resource and Personnel Department generates and updates a complete list of certified personnel and their credentials

Professional development credits are tracked by the HR Department

**Other Comments:**

### **Practice G**

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

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

**Rationale:** In reviewing our self-assessment for the revision of the 2013-2016 AIG Plan, it was evident our program needs an intentional effort to form an advisory committee for Transylvania County Schools to better serve our gifted learners.

### **Goals**

1. At orientation meetings in the fall of the year, AIG Specialists will extend an invitation to parents, teachers, and students (when applicable) to serve on an advisory committee to review all aspects of the local AIG program to best meet the needs of the AIG learner considering our present personnel and resources.
2. Each school will form an AIG Advisory Committee consisting of parents, teachers, students (when applicable), and community members.
3. Establish an advisory committee for Transylvania County consisting of community members, parents/families of AIG students, representative of diverse populations, in the program, teachers of the gifted, and other professional staff to review all aspects of the local AIG program annually and make recommendations for program improvement and/or revision to the AIG Plan.

**Description:** Each school will be asked to select appropriate representation that reflects the school's demographics. Potential participants will be invited to attend an initial meeting and set a plan of action for the first year.

### **Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Invitations to participate, agendas, and minutes of meetings will be maintained by the Director of AIG Education.

A survey will be conducted at the end of each school to assess the progress of the group and to guide development plans for the following year.

### **Other Comments:**

### **Practice H**

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

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

**Rationale:** Because the day-to-day workings of service delivery are vital to the successful implementation of the Transylvania County Schools AIG Program, we seek regular feedback from students, parents/families, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the quality and effectiveness of the local AIG program.

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

**Description:** Information is gathered from stakeholders specifically about the AIG program through surveys, school meetings, parent-teacher meetings and informal meetings. Parent conferences, which are held regularly, are also a source of detailed and frank feedback.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

DEP meeting notes  
Data from surveys  
Minutes from yearly stakeholders' meeting

**Other Comments:**

**Practice I**

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

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

**Rationale:** Because multiple stakeholder groups have insightful perspectives that complement--or even supersede--testing data, Transylvania County Schools reviews and revises the local AIG Plan and program based on multiple sources of data for continuous program improvement.

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

**Description:** AIG Specialists and the AIG Coordinator will meet monthly to discuss AIG related issues, voicing any concerns regarding the plan or its implementation and making suggestions for improvement. The AIG Coordinator attends county principals' meeting and asks for input about the AIG program. In the spring, a stakeholders' survey is sent out to all parents/guardians of AIG students and to all faculty at all schools. Parents have an opportunity to rate aspects of the program and can make written suggestions. Faculty have the opportunity to rate aspects of the program that they see, make suggestions to improve service delivery from the AIG Specialists and identify areas in which they'd like more information or further training. The AIG Specialists and Coordinator will use initial feedback from the stakeholders' survey to develop a timetable and appropriate forums (such as open meetings) for further consideration or investigation of concerns. The AIG Specialists and Coordinator will conduct research, as needed, to address concerns effectively as they revise the AIG plan, should it need revision. Revisions will be presented in a draft form for comment/review prior to being implemented. Revisions will be officially published on the district website and submitted to the NC Department of Public Instruction.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

AIG Plan revisions  
Minutes from monthly AIG meetings  
Stakeholders' survey  
Analysis of stakeholders' survey  
Minutes from stakeholders' meeting

**Other Comments:**

**Practice J**

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

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

**Rationale:** Because we are a public school system dedicated to maintaining a strong, supportive relationship with the community, Transylvania County Schools seeks to disseminate all data from evaluation of its AIG program to the public. The public may readily access this information from the school district website.

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

**Description:** Evaluation of the local AIG program includes stakeholders in assessing the program's implementation of AIG Standards. The results of that assessment include comprehensive data on curriculum and instruction, staff development, stakeholder engagement and partnerships. Currently, Transylvania County Schools has data from stakeholder satisfaction surveys preserved on-line and accessible from the district's web site, where it is used for school and program improvement planning. Target respondents are parents, teachers and students.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Annual reports of evaluation will be posted on school and district web sites  
Newsletters and brochures will be developed and available at school and district offices.

**Other Comments**

**Practice K**

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

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

**Rationale:** Transylvania County values and protects the rights of AIG students and parents through established policies, procedures and practices

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

**Description:** Written policies, procedures, and practices have been identified in Standard 1, Practice F. These have been approved by the local Board of Education and are identified in the Parent Handbook.

**Planned Sources of Evidence:**

Parent Handbook  
Written AIG Plan  
AIG presentations given to faculty at beginning of each school year  
Records of any grievances maintained by AIG Coordinator at county level

**Other Comments:**

**Glossary**

See Attached Glossary

**Appendix (optional)**

AIG Parent handbook.pdf (Appendix)

BOE Sig Page.pdf (Local Board Approval Document)

AIG Attachments.pdf (Other Forms)

Forms

**Glossary (optional):**

## Glossary

**Academic Advisement** - Personalized student assistance is provided by AIG staff and/or guidance counselors during the high school years. This advisement focuses on course selection, student motivation, community and school services, testing, college acceptance, scholarships, special schools, and career goals. The teacher makes frequent contact with both student and parent.

**Academic Placement Courses** - The Advanced Placement Program, sponsored by the College Board, offers capable high school students the opportunity to take college-level courses and to receive college credit or advanced placement through examination. Teachers receive AP training and follow a course description established by the College Board.

**Advanced Enrichment Clusters** - Advanced enrichment clusters are opportunities at elementary and middle school levels for students who have participated in an enrichment cluster to continue to work in more depth on the same topic or theme.

**Balanced Heterogeneous Grouping** - Students are assigned to groups without regard to achievement level.

**Cluster Grouping Within a Class** - A cluster group of academically/intellectually gifted students are assigned to a regular heterogeneous class and receives appropriate differentiated curriculum. The group remains together only for a specific time, instructional unit, or academic subject. This practice is a collaborative effort between the AIG Specialist and the regular education teacher.

**College Courses** - College courses are taught by college personnel following that institution's syllabus. The classes may be held on the campus of the college, the high school, or at another site. Students may earn both high school and college credit.

**Concurrent (Dual) Enrollment** - This option allows students to be enrolled in two levels of schooling at the same time. Students remain at one level for much of their study and attend another level for a specific course or period of time. This is an appropriate option for secondary students who enroll in courses at post-secondary institutions. Through dual enrollment, students may receive college credit for courses taken middle school students, enrollment is for specific classes only.



**Continuous Progress Model** - An individual plan is designed to meet specific needs of a student, assessing strengths and needs, and evaluating growth over a period of time.

**Credit by Mastery (CBM)** – This will apply to high schools once clarified and approved by the State Board of Education. Forms and guidelines will be available beginning in 2013 – 2014 school year.

**Contracts** - Learning contracts are agreements made between teacher and student that allow students to work independently on either accelerated or enriched materials related to a unit of study.

**Cross Grade Grouping** - Students of different grade levels are grouped according to skill level for specific instruction.

**Curriculum Compacting** - Curriculum compacting is modifying or streamlining the regular curriculum in order to eliminate repetition of previously mastered material, upgrade the challenge level of the regular curriculum, and provide time for appropriate enrichment and/or acceleration activities while ensuring mastery of basic skills (Reis and Renzulli, 1985). During compacted time, students may pursue activities in their classroom, media center, or special resource center.

**Differentiated Instruction** - Differentiated instruction incorporates Individual learning abilities and different levels of content and skill.

**Early Admission** - Students enter elementary, middle, high school or college earlier than their peer group. Specific criteria are established for this option at each level. High school students opting for early admission to college assume all financial responsibility.

**ELL** - This acronym refers to English Language Learners. An ELL student is one whose primary language is not English.

**Enrichment Clusters** - Enrichment clusters are groups of students who come together during specially situations. Clusters are organized around major disciplines, interdisciplinary themes, or cross-disciplinary topics.

**Flexible Grouping** - Teachers group students within the regular classroom according to interest and/or ability.

**Grade Acceleration** - Students move ahead one or more years, skipping levels in the normal sequence of promotion. This has traditionally been used successfully with highly gifted students as a method of acceleration. Specific guidelines are followed by the school and parents for this option.

**Honors/Advanced Courses** - Honors/Advanced courses cover traditional content at an advanced level with emphasis on issues and themes related to topics. Although no specific criteria are established for entry and enrollment is open, students must meet rigorous course standards to be successful.

**Independent Study** - This approach is used as a way to either accelerate or enrich learning. Students displaying content mastery and having a special interest may contract with the teacher for an independent study project. This works best for students, who are self-directed, have strong interests, and who have a clear idea of what they would like to investigate. The teacher serves as a resource person and meets periodically with the student to assess progress. Independent study may also be used at the secondary level as a course in which students work independently and come together periodically to share experiences in a seminar or as an independent study done outside school.

**Individualized Program** - Students continue to participate in regular class activities while still having opportunities to work independently on higher level tasks or areas of interest.

**Internship** - A student gains knowledge and experience by working in a selected career field.

**Learning Centers** - Specially designed workstations for an individual or groups to provide content enrichment and/or interest development. They may be located in regular classrooms, media centers, or resource rooms.

**Mentorship** - Students having strong interest in specific topics are assigned an adult with a similar interest who serves as a resource person.

**Resource Consultation/Support** - Support is provided to the student through the services of an AIG Specialist or other support personnel.

**Resource Services** - Students go to the resource person for independent projects and enrichment.

**Responsiveness to Instruction (Rtl)** - Rtl is a multi-tiered framework which promotes school improvement through engaging, high quality instruction. Rtl employs a team approach to guide educational practices, using a problem-solving model based on data, to address student needs and maximize growth for all.

We believe in...

- Shared responsibility by all stakeholders including educators, families, students, and community partners.
- Developmentally appropriate academic and behavioral growth for all students.
- Continuous reflection on and improvement of instructional practices and learning environments.
- Intentional partnerships with families, community members, and stakeholders.
- Comprehensive implementation through systematic and purposeful approaches and leadership.

**Critical Components**

- Shared Responsibility
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Assessment
- Family & Community Partnerships
- Sustainability and Leadership

**Self-selection** – With advisement from the AIG Specialist and/or guidance counselor, students choose appropriate courses for electives and/or their four year plan.

**Seminar** - Students study original documents or other works and convene for discussion in a seminar setting. Emphasis is on acquisition of knowledge, development of skills, and gaining insights into works being studied.

**Special Programs** - Special Programs include contests, competitions, and special opportunities available to students to help them develop their abilities and interests. While none of these activities are limited to AIG students, many of them provide expressive outlets and opportunities for them to expand their interests and explore future careers.

**Special Schools** - North Carolina offers The School of Math and Science and The School of the Arts at no cost to high school students. Admission to these schools is on a competitive basis for those students meeting entrance criteria.

**Subject Grouping** - Students are grouped for specific subjects based on their aptitude and/or performance. Grouping may not be limited to identified academically/intellectually gifted students, but may include other high achievers..

**Subject /Course Acceleration** - Based on assessment, students receive instruction in a specific subject or skill at a higher level with another group of students, yet remain with their peer group for the remainder of their instruction.

**TAG** – Team for Academically Gifted, consisting of regular education teacher(s), AIG teacher and administration.

**Thematic Units** - Thematic units deal with information from various disciplines based theme such as conflict, power, patterns, etc. Because a thematic unit provides the opportunity to deal with content at a highly abstract level of sophistication, it is an appropriate way to modify curriculum for academically/intellectually gifted students.

**Appendix (optional):**

AIG Parent Handbook.pdf (*Appendix*)

BOE Sig Page.pdf (*Local Board Approval Document*)

AIG Attachments.pdf (*Other Forms*)