

Durham Public Schools
Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan
Effective 2019-2022

Approved by local Board of Education on: 27-JUN-19

LEA Superintendent's Name: Pascal Mubenga

LEA AIG Contact Name: Kimberly L. Marion

Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on: 15-JUL-19

Revision Submitted to NC Department of Public Instruction on: 29-AUG-19

Durham Public Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

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

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

For 2019-2022, Durham Public Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

Durham Public Schools Vision for local AIG program: The Durham Public Schools' Office of Advanced Academics will nurture potential (K-12) and open doors of opportunity for students throughout the school community advancing inquiry, fostering growth mindset, promoting transferable skills, and encouraging differentiated teaching and learning environments which allow students to excel in intellectual, academic and personal pursuits.

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

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
\$5122510.00	\$1096693.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Table of Contents

Standard 1: Student Identification	4
Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community	15
Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction	30
Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development	39
Standard 5: Partnerships	48
Standard 6: Program Accountability	53

Standard 1: Student Identification

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

Practice A

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

District Response: The Office of Advanced Academics has established comprehensive and equitable screening, referral, and identification processes through all Durham Public Schools. The DPS Office of Advanced Academic's screening and referral processes include the following for each grade span:

K-2 Grade Span: INVESTIGATIONS:

The Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) specialists work with all students in grades K-2 to provide exposure to and experiences with thinking skills embedded in the curriculum, thereby allowing all AIG specialists to nurture advanced thinking and develop academic talent potential. At the K-1 level, if a student demonstrates the need for services beyond the grade-level classroom environment, the AIG specialist or classroom teacher may refer the child for the AIG identification process to best match the needs of the child for service delivery. In the Spring of the 2nd grade year, DPS uses the CogAT (7th edition) as a universal screener. Additional testing can occur in order to build a more complete profile of student need for differentiated or accelerated services. In addition, teachers, administrators, community members, parents or students can may nominations throughout the school year.

3-5 and 6-8 Grade Spans:

The AIG specialists conduct a broad sweep of the general population in 3rd grade with the Beginning-of-Grade assessment who scored at or above the 85th percentile are referred for the AIG identification process. In each of the grades 3 through 8, students who score at or above the 85th percentile on End-of-Grade tests in reading and/or math are referred for the AIG identification process. In addition, teachers, administrators, community members, parents or students can nominate throughout the school year.

9-12 Grade Span:

The Advanced Academics High School Lead teachers in grades 9-12 will conduct an annual review of all high school students, focusing on achievement on the PSAT, SAT or ACT tests at or above the 90th percentile; achievement on an Advanced Placement tests of a 4 or 5; rank in the top 10% of their grade level; and EOC achievement in area of identification at or above the 85th percentile. Students meeting any of the above criteria will automatically be referred for the AIG Identification process. In addition, teachers, administrators, community members, parents or students can nominate any student throughout the school year.

Practice B

Establishes a process and criteria for AIG student identification at all grade levels that provides multiple opportunities to reveal a student's aptitude, achievement, or potential to achieve. The criteria may include both qualitative and quantitative data in order to develop a comprehensive learner profile.

District Response: DPS' identification pathways are aligned with Article 9B [N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-.8]. Each student referred for the DPS AIG program is reviewed using multiple criteria for student identification. Quantitative (i.e., test scores) and qualitative (e.g., portfolio, evidence-based recommendations) measures that reveal student aptitude, achievement, or academic potential are part of each student's comprehensive profile.

Pathways to Identification by Grade Level Spans

Grades K-1

All kindergarten and first grade students are served by the AIG Specialist at each school; however, if a student demonstrates the need for services beyond that small group instruction provided by the AIG Specialist, the student may be referred for the AIG identification process to best match the needs of the child for service delivery. The pathway criteria for grades 2 - 8 would be followed.

Grades 2 -8 Identification Pathways:

Pathway 1: Aptitude - Intellectually Gifted (IG)

Students who are identified as Intellectually Gifted have met the following criteria:

- Age level composite score at or above the 96th percentile on a nationally normed aptitude/ability test (CogAT, OLSAT, NNAT, etc.)
- Assessment for supporting achievement criteria was below 90th percentile for identification as Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) or Academically Gifted (AG).

IG students will have an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) to support their needs.

Pathway 2: Achievement - Academically Gifted (AG)

Students identified as Academically Gifted in the content areas of math (AM), reading (AR), or both reading and math (AG) have met the following criteria:

- REQUIRED: Achievement on nationally normed test (IOWA, Woodcock-Johnson, etc.) at or above the 90th percentile (composite or subscore in area of identification)

And, one of the following:

- Achievement on State tests (BOG, EOG, EOC) in area of identification at or above the 85th percentile
- Portfolio assessment with a minimum of three performance artifacts* that support the student's advanced ability/ achievement and need for AIG services in that field

*Artifacts can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, showing clear supporting evidence for student identification. Artifacts may include, but are not limited to the following: above grade level work products; student writing reflections; interviews; outstanding achievement outside of the classroom; ESL progressions; evidence-based teacher recommendations; and other standardized assessment measures.

Students who are identified as Academically Gifted (AG) in a specific content field will have a Differentiated Education Plan/DEP unless a strong need for further individualization is required.
Pathway 3: Aptitude & Achievement - Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG)

Students identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted in the content areas of math (AM), reading (AR), or both reading and math (AI) have met the following criteria:

- REQUIRED: An Aptitude test (CogAT, OLSAT, NNAT, etc.) with a composite or subscore score (aligned with area identification) at or above the 90th percentile

And, one of the following:

- Achievement on nationally normed test (IOWA, Woodcock-Johnson, etc.) in area of identification at or above the 90th percentile
- Achievement on State tests (BOG, EOG, EOC) in area of identification at or above the 85th percentile
- Portfolio assessment with a minimum of three performance artifacts* that support the student's advanced ability/ achievement and need for AIG services in that field

*Artifacts can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, showing clear supporting evidence for student identification. Artifacts may include, but are not limited to the following: above grade level work products; student writing reflections; interviews; outstanding achievement outside of the classroom; ESL progressions; evidence-based teacher recommendations; and other standardized assessment measures.

Students who are identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted or AIG in a specific content field will have a Differentiated Education Plan/DEP unless a strong need for further individualization is required.

Grades 9-12 Identification Pathways:

The Advanced Academic High School Lead teachers in grades 9-12 will conduct an annual review of all high school students. Students who have the following criteria will automatically be referred for the AIG Identification process:

- achievement on the PSAT, SAT or ACT tests at or above the 90th percentile
- achievement on an Advanced Placement tests of a 4 or 5
- rank in the top 10% of their grade level

In addition, teachers, administrators, community members, parents or students can nominate a student throughout the school year.

Pathway 1: Aptitude - Intellectually Gifted (IG)

Students who are identified as Intellectually Gifted have met the following criteria:

- Age level composite score at or above the 96th percentile on a nationally normed aptitude/ability test (CogAT, OLSAT, NNAT, etc.)
- Assessment for supporting achievement criteria was below 90th percentile for identification as Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) or Academically Gifted (AG).

IG students will have an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) to support their needs.

Pathway 2: Achievement - Academically Gifted (AG)

Students identified as Academically Gifted in the content areas of math (AM), reading (AR), or both reading and math (AG) have met two of the following criteria:

- Achievement on nationally normed test (IOWA, Woodcock-Johnson, etc.) in area of identification at or above the 90th percentile
- EOC in area of identification at or above the 85th percentile
- Achievement on the PSAT, SAT, ACT at or above the 90th percentile
- Achievement on AP tests of a 4 or 5
- Rank in the top 10% of their grade level
- Portfolio assessment with a minimum of three performance artifacts* that support the student's advanced ability/ achievement and need for AIG services in that field

*Artifacts can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, showing clear supporting evidence for student identification. Artifacts may include, but are not limited to the following: above grade level work products; student writing reflections; interviews; outstanding achievement outside of the classroom; ESL progressions; evidence-based teacher recommendations; and other standardized assessment measures.

Students who are identified as Academically Gifted (AG) in a specific content field will have a Differentiated Education Plan/DEP unless a strong need for further individualization is required

Pathway 3: Aptitude & Achievement - Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG)

Students identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted in the content areas of math, reading, or both reading and math (AI) have met two of the following criteria:

- **REQUIRED:** An Aptitude test (CogAT, OLSAT, NNAT, etc.) with a composite or subscore score (aligned with area identification) at or above the 90th percentile

And, one of the following:

- Achievement on nationally normed test (IOWA, Woodcock-Johnson) in area of identification at or above the 90th percentile.
- EOC in area of identification at or above the 85th percentile
- Achievement on the PSAT, SAT, ACT at or above the 90th percentile.
- Achievement on AP tests of a 4 or 5.
- Rank in the top 10% of their grade level.
- Portfolio assessment with a minimum of three performance artifacts* that support the student's advanced ability/ achievement and need for AIG services in that field

*Artifacts can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, showing clear supporting evidence for student identification. Artifacts may include, but are not limited to the following: above grade level work

products; student writing reflections; interviews; outstanding achievement outside of the classroom; ESL progressions; evidence-based teacher recommendations; and other standardized assessment measures.

Students who are identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted or AIG in a specific content field will have a Differentiated Education Plan/DEP unless a strong need for further individualization is required.

Transfer of Identification Placement Process for Transfers within DPS (K-12)

Students transferring from one school to another within the Durham Public Schools system maintain their gifted identification. The DEP/IDEP will be reviewed to ensure continuity of services or revised to match the service options offered at the receiving school. If a student transfers prior to the fourth quarter of the academic school year, a new DEP will be developed by the receiving school's AIG Specialist and classroom teacher(s) and a conference with the parents should follow in a timely manner.

Placement Process for Transfers Outside of DPS (K-5, 6-12)

Elementary Process

When a student identified as AIG in another district or independent school with a state-recognized AIG program enrolls in a DPS elementary school, the parent/guardian will present all physical information regarding the student's identification for differentiated services to the receiving school. If this documentation is not available by the parent, the AIG Specialist or other designee will contact the student's previous school to request such documentation. Records will be reviewed by the AIG Specialist and the school level AIG Leadership Committee to determine previous differentiated services, then will match service delivery options available at the receiving school to the student's learning needs.

Students will receive temporary services for up to an academic year while the AIG Leadership Committee reviews available records and collects any additional data as needed for students who may not initially meet DPS AIG identification criteria. (This might include observations and/or work samples for students.) If needed, the AIG District Review Team may be consulted to ensure appropriate match of services.

At the start of temporary services, the AIG Specialist will send the parents/guardians a Letter of Temporary Services and Parent Handbook.

Middle and High School Process

When a student identified as AIG in another district or independent school with a state recognized AIG program enrolls in a DPS middle or high school, the parent/guardian will present all physical information regarding the student's identification to the receiving school. If this documentation is not available by the parent or transferred within PowerSchool, the AIG Specialist or other designee will contact the student's previous school to request such documentation.

Students enrolling at the middle and high school level will be placed in academic classes based on their previous achievement history or self-selection of courses.

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Elementary, Middle, and High) Article 29B. § 115C-407.5. Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children.

In accordance with the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children as signed by North Carolina legislators in 2008, is hereby enacted into law and entered into with all jurisdictions legally joining therein in the form substantially as follows:

Article V: PLACEMENT AND ATTENDANCE.

A. Course placement - When the student transfers before or during the school year, the receiving state school shall initially honor placement of the student in educational courses based on the student's enrollment in the sending state school and/or educational assessments conducted at the school in the sending state if the courses are offered. Course placement includes but is not limited to Honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational, technical and career pathways courses. Continuing the student's academic program from the previous school and promoting placement in academically and career challenging courses should be paramount when considering placement. This does not preclude the school in the receiving state from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in the course(s).

B. Educational program placement - The receiving state school shall initially honor placement of the student in educational programs based on current educational assessments conducted at the school in the sending state or participation/placement in like programs in the sending state. Such programs include, but are not limited to: 1) gifted and talented programs; and 2) English as a second language (ESL). This does not preclude the school in the receiving state from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement

Practice C

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

District Response: A greater awareness of the need for high-quality programming to develop talent of students from traditionally underrepresented populations is an ongoing focus for DPS. While there have been improvements in the percentages of ethnically diverse populations identified as gifted in the district, especially among our African American and Hispanic populations, the Office of Advanced Academics continues to pursue more equitable representation that is reflective of the DPS demographics. The development of alternative identification pathways, including utilizing portfolios and non-verbal aptitude testing to determine student need and appropriate service delivery options, has proven to be successful measures.

Working together, the Office of Advanced Academics and the ESL Department provide assistance to AIG Specialists and classroom teachers on recognizing and nurturing ESL students showing traits of giftedness. Practices to increase students nominated and identified should include authentic procedures for evaluation such as portfolios or performance assessment, analyzing subtest scores for strengths, and developing culture-specific checklists and rating scales.

DPS accepts the following quantitative measures administered by the LEA or by a licensed psychologist:

- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
- Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT)
- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- North Carolina End of Grade Tests
- North Carolina Beginning of Grade Tests
- North Carolina End of Course Tests
- Woodcock Johnson IV, Tests of Achievement
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children — Fourth Edition (WISC-IV)
- Other nationally normed standardized tests as approved by the Testing and Accountability Office

With all quantitative assessments, AIG Specialists at each school are responsible for verifying that:

- In accordance with Programs for Exceptional Children, students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be provided with appropriate accommodations and modifications as directed by the IEP
- In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with a 504 Plan are tested as directed by the 504 Plan with appropriate accommodations and modifications.

Non-traditional assessments for consideration of screening, referral and identification may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Performance-based assessments
- Checklists with anecdotal notes
- Portfolios of demonstrated evidence
- Observations with anecdotal notes
- Gifted Behavior Scale Checklists
- Individual work products with evaluation rubrics
- Literacy Assessments
- Anecdotal/Case Studies

AIG District Review Team

To further assist in identifying underrepresented populations in DPS, an AIG district review team is in place. Members, including Director and Coordinator of Advanced Academics and AIG Lead Specialists, give a comprehensive review of nominations using a personalized rubric that is designed to support non-traditional measures to identify students for differentiated service options. The District Review Team meets when there are nominations for review.

Practice D

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

District Response: To ensure consistency within the district, the Office of Advanced Academics provides AIG Specialists with documents (flow chart, FAQs, etc.) that outline the screening, referral, and identification process in DPS. Specialists are involved in ongoing professional learning through monthly PLCs that focus on recognizing the characteristics of gifted/advanced learners with special attention given to culturally-relevant considerations. Barriers that often prevent underrepresented population identification are explored and opportunities for creating change within schools are identified and implemented.

At the school level, AIG Specialists share all information regarding the screening, referral, and identification process using the district created documents (flow charts, FAQs, etc.) to support conversations with classroom teachers, administrators, parents, and students. Topics of bias and barriers to identifying students should be a part of the staff discussion, including a review of site specific data to support improved access to advanced learning programming.

Student referral and screening is an ongoing process occurring throughout the instructional year as AIG specialists work with classroom teachers to monitor students' needs for advanced learning services. Referrals can be made by classroom teachers, administrators, parents, peers, self-identification, or AIG specialists. Referrals can include both qualitative and quantitative data.

Once students enter the referral process, AIG specialists document each student's summary evaluation report and recommendation and share results with the school's AIG Leadership Committee. Documentation is then submitted to the Office of Advanced Academics. The Coordinator for Advanced Academics is responsible for ensuring all processes have been followed appropriately, and upon ID determination will enter all identification information into PowerSchool.

The Office of Advanced Academics will coordinate with the Exceptional Children's (EC) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Departments to provide professional development to assist classroom teachers with recognizing the needs of twice-exceptional (students who show giftedness in one area with learning challenges present in other areas) and English Language Learners. Assisting classroom teachers with recognizing these characteristics of unique learners will allow for more informed attention to referrals for AIG identification and service especially among often-underrepresented student groups.

During the K-2 nurturing services (INVESTIGATIONS), AIG Specialists work with all K-2 students and the associated classroom teachers to create an awareness of student strengths and to determine if more focused services are needed. If students present an identified need based on the INVESTIGATIONS checklist during these early years, referral and screening for identification is available.

Annually, in the Spring, all second grade students in DPS are screened with the Cognitive Abilities Test/CogAT (currently using version 7), which allows for greater use of non-verbal subscores to assist in the increased identification of underrepresented populations often under-identified without non-verbal considerations.

Results from the CogAT are reviewed in depth by the AIG Specialists, giving careful consideration to all

subscores, in addition to the composite score, for students who demonstrate or show potential for advanced cognitive processing. These students are then considered for AIG referral and screening based on their individual student needs. Because DPS has an academic identification pathway (Academically Gifted/AG) that does not require an ability test score, results from the CogAT will not exclude students from further screening.

Students in grades 3-12 are screened annually using quantitative measures such as national or state tests (BOG, EOG, EOC, PSAT, SAT, ACT) and EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment System) indicators, as well as qualitative measures including nominations and referrals, observations, and portfolios of demonstrated evidence.

Partnering with the Office of Equity Affairs and the Office of Research and Accountability, the Director/Coordinator of Advanced Academics will review annually EVAAS predictability results for students in grades 6-12 to assist school based personnel with identifying students who show a need for differentiated services and possible AIG identification.

Practice E

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

District Response: The Office of Advanced Academics acknowledges the importance of clear and accurate information provided for school personnel, parents/families, students and the general public. In order to provide this information in more user-friendly formats, the Office of Advanced Academics will develop the following documents for its various stakeholder groups during this plan cycle:

- A Handbook that includes procedural information on identification, services, etc, as well as information specific to gifted/advanced learners, such as characteristics, social/emotional needs, curriculum accommodations, needs, etc. These handbooks will vary depending upon the intended audience:
 - o Parents & Students
 - o Administrators & District Leaders
 - o AIG Specialists and Classroom Teachers
- Frequently Asked Questions, specific to the intended audience, will also be provided and shared via parent meetings and on the DPS website under the Office of Advanced Academics' departmental profile.
- The Office of Advanced Academics will create and disseminate a video that will address various topics including gifted learning needs as well as how to better identify gifted characteristics in students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds. These videos will be shared in various forums including on the district website, school-specific websites, in parent meetings, in community sessions, etc. The video will include specifics as to the DPS AIG screening, referral and identification processes.

Each school's AIG Leadership Team will be responsible for ensuring school personnel, students, parents and families have referral, screening, identification and service delivery information. Expectations for information delivery include sharing AIG program information at the school's Open

House, sharing AIG process information with school staff at the beginning of each school year and throughout the year in school-wide PLCs, and providing informational materials to parents at the beginning of each year.

The Office of Advanced Academics participates in district wide events, such as Countdown to Kindergarten and the Magnet Fair, which provide the opportunity to talk directly with parents/families, students, and the community-at-large about identification and programming.

Practice F

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

District Response: The processes and procedures for the DPS AIG screening, referral, identification, and service delivery models are shared with families and school staff via handbooks, FAQs, parent meetings, website information, and through individual parent/student conferences. AIG specialists adhere to a consistent checklist to ensure all documentation is completed in a timely manner, shared with parents and other stakeholders as needed, and maintained in the students' individual confidential folders which are created at the beginning of the referral process.

The following forms are maintained in the student folder:

- Signed Consent for Assessment
- Individual Testing Protocols
- Summary Results of Evaluation with parent/guardian signature/s
- Other supporting documents as applicable (portfolio of evidence, student information form, etc.)
- Student's DEP/IDEP with parent/guardian signature/s updated annually

This documentation is shared during the student's annual review with parents/families which occurs within the first 30 days of the beginning of school annually, or as needed, such as during a reevaluation or a student's add-on identification or change in service delivery options.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Continue to develop and refine the Portfolio of Demonstrated Evidence process

Develop and refine the Handbooks for each audience as described in Practice D

Sources of Evidence: AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing) Binders at each school that support programming as outlined in the DPS AIG 2019-22 Plan.

Student AIG Documentation Folders (Testing information, Forms, DEPs, etc.)

AIG/Advanced Academic Leads Handbooks

Disaggregated data from AIG Headcount

Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

Practice A

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

District Response: The DPS Office of Advanced Academics supports the premise that every child should have the opportunity to learn something new or explore a subject in depth and complexity every day.

NC's definition of gifted students clearly states that "academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular education program." This definition supports the MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) model for student academic success including strategies for gifted/advanced learners that allows for faster paced, more complex, greater depth and/or breadth with respect to the curriculum and instruction.

According to the Council for Exceptional Children position paper (2006), "RTI (MTSS) services are 'flexible and fluid, based on student need.' When considering the needs of gifted children, a similar level of flexibility is needed, since gifted children, and particularly twice-exceptional students will not demonstrate high levels of achievement in all areas. A flexible system of continuous and comprehensive services allows schools to meet the needs of gifted students at varying levels of development. In this way, services are less dependent on a student's label and more dependent on a student's need." (p. 3).

The DPS Office of Advanced Academics has established comprehensive services for each grade span as noted below:

Elementary: Grades K-2 INVESTIGATIONS

Service Delivery: The AIG Specialist at each elementary school will work with regular education teachers in K-2 to consistently provide all students, Kindergarten through 2nd grade, integrated lessons built around critical thinking, collaboration, creative thinking, and problem solving. The primary focus is on developing academic potential in all demographic and socioeconomic student groups through the balance of whole group and focused small group instruction.

The goals for program implementation align with the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan with an emphasis on equity as outlined in Priority 1: Increase Academic Achievement, Goal 1A: By 2023, at least 90 percent of all DPS will meet or exceed standards for year-to-year academic growth as measured by the state model, Strategies 4: Develop diverse and robust career pathways for all students and provide increased guidance and resources for equitable access for all students.

Details of how the Office of Advanced Academics is cultivating talent throughout the INVESTIGATIONS program is outlined in Standard 3, Practice g.

Identification: If there is a need for service beyond the focused small group instruction, and a child is identified as AG, AIG or IG, then services will be outlined in the IDEP, and could include the following depending upon the individualized needs of the student:

- Single subject acceleration
- Multi-age academic focus group
- Consultation
- Provided support to the regular education or specialist (EC/ESL) to differentiate curriculum/instruction for the student

Elementary: Grades 3-5

Service Delivery: At each elementary school, AG, AIG, and IG identified students will be served in at least one of the settings described below:

- Pull-out for part of the literacy and/or math block with a licensed AIG Specialist as outlined by the student's area of identification (AR, AM, AG) as noted on the DEP. NOTE: HB986 requires that students who score a Level V on the Math EOG are placed into an advanced level math class grades 4-5.
- Clustered with other students identified in the same academic area in an AIG-licensed teacher's class
- Inclusion (or push-in service) by a licensed AIG Specialist within the regular classroom as part of a flexible group to the extent/degree that there will be an impact on the student's learning (i.e. based on MTSS framework, this type of inclusion would support greater depth and complexity that advances the knowledge, understanding and skills of the gifted/advanced learner)
- Consultation (primarily for IG students recognizing that IG students may have disproportionate aptitude/ability v. achievement performance as outlined on the IDEP)
- Subject and/or grade acceleration (AR, AM, AG & AIG) as deemed appropriate
- Combination of any of the above services

Middle School: Grades 6-8

Service Delivery: In middle school, AG, AIG, and IG identified students will be served via:

- Clustered in advanced English Language Arts and/or Math classes based on identification and/or achievement performance (i.e. HB986 requires that students who score a Level V on the Math EOG are placed into an advanced level math class grades 6-8) with an AIG-licensed teacher and/or one who has met the district's AIG service expectations.

The Advanced Academics Director/Coordinator will work with middle school principals to ensure all AIG identified students are served by an AIG-approved teacher as outlined in Standard 4d.

In addition to the required service noted above, AG, AIG and IG identified students could be served in any of the following settings:

- Pull-out for part of the literacy and/or math block with a licensed AIG Specialist as outlined by the student's area of identification (AR, AM, AG, AIG) as noted on the DEP
- Inclusion (or push-in service) by a licensed AIG Specialist within the regular classroom as part of a flexible group to the extent/degree that there will be an impact on the student's learning (i.e. based on MTSS framework, this type of inclusion would support greater depth and complexity that advances the knowledge, understanding and skills of the advanced learner)

- Consultation (primarily for IG students recognizing that IG students may have disproportionate aptitude/ability v. achievement performance as outlined on the IDEP)
- Subject and/or grade acceleration (AR, AM, AG & AIG) as deemed appropriate
- Elective for gifted/advanced learners that allows for exploration of affective topics, independent studies on a topic of interest, and other enrichment units
- Combination of any of the above services

High School: Grades 9-12

Service Delivery: In high school, according to DPS Board Policy 3300- Student Access to High School Courses, AG, AIG, and IG identified students have a variety of high school courses to which they have access. Honors and AP/IB courses offered in each high school challenge students appropriately in their area of identification or area of interest.

Other opportunities could include any of the following:

- Mentorships
- Dual enrollment at the comprehensive high schools or enrollment at JD Clements Early College or Middle College High School
- Independent studies
- Consultation (primarily for the IG student recognizing that this student may have disproportionate aptitude ability v. achievement performance as outlined on the IDEP)
- Grade acceleration
- CDM (Credit by Demonstrated Mastery)

AP teachers are required by College Board to attend AP course training; however, Honors courses require no special training for the teacher. Therefore, the AIG Coordinator/Director will work with district leadership and high school principals to ensure students in honors level classes are served by a teacher that understands and responds to the needs of gifted/advanced learners as outlined in Standard 4d.

AIG-licensed specialists are employed at every K-8 school and are responsible for overseeing the AIG program implementation and direct support of students. The AIG Specialists also collaborate with classroom teachers, counselors, and other staff members to ensure students' services match their needs. The Office of Advanced Academics believes this collaboration is required to ensure a full continuum of services are provided across the school environment so that gifted/advanced learners' academic and intellectual and social/emotional needs are met.

These collaboration efforts could include:

- Coaching
- Co-teaching
- Consulting
- Resource development and support
- Professional development

There are a variety of models that are used to serve these students well, and using formative and summative data and multiple qualitative and quantitative data points helps staff determine how to meet each student's individual needs.

Practice B

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

District Response: As stated in the above practice, AIG programs and services at all schools are aligned with each area of student identification, as well as aligned with the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan.

2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan:

In 2018, a planning committee composed of 52 members including teachers, parents, faith based leaders, higher education partners, Durham Association of Educators, principals, students, community partners, and central service staff created the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan. The plan includes the following key elements:

- Mission: DPS embraces, educates and empowers every student to innovate, serve and lead.
- Vision: DPS Igniting Limitless Potential
- Core Beliefs: Equity, Shared Responsibility, High Expectations, and Child-centered Approach
- Theory of Action: If the Durham community shares responsibility in the investment of every child using a holistic approach, then we will ensure that resources and opportunities are informed by equity and that we are intentional about setting high expectations for all stakeholders in their role in educating the whole child, as we support and increase the capacity of administrators, teachers, staff, and parents so that they are equipped to support and develop efficacy in instruction and student learning.

The Office of Advanced Academics' intentional focus on equity as outlined in Article 9B that "outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor" is a guiding principle for the program implementation. Using this guidance, Advanced Academics strategic priorities were developed to ensure every student has access to high-quality and rigorous academic programming, thereby ensuring comprehensive programming within a total school community.

For 2019-2022, the Office of Advanced Academics has established three key priorities aligned with the 2018-20123 DPS Strategic Plan. These priorities include:

1. Strengthening equity in academic pursuit that focuses on the individualized need of the student (identified and nurtured),
2. Providing high-quality professional learning opportunities and implementation evidence that focus on supports for student learning and ensures program fidelity, and
3. Increasing program outreach which bolsters collaboration and communication with all stakeholders

The following are the driving questions associated with the three priorities:

1. Equity in Academic Pursuit:

- a. How are we ensuring equitable access for referrals and identification, especially in our often marginalized and underrepresented student groups?
- b. How can we capitalized on elementary talent development structures that have proven successful to build out talent development in the upper grades, including high school?
- c. How do we ensure daily academic growth for every gifted/advanced learner is provided through differentiated services across settings?
- d. How will we provide personalized supports for student academic success?

2. Professional Learning:
 - a. How do we build capacity in AIG personnel to support whole-school impact?
 - b. How do we assist school leaders with strategically including advanced learning strategies in the School Improvement Plan and in PLCs?
 - c. How are we monitoring the implementation of the current AIG Plan to provide outcome measures that ensure program progress and student success? (See Standard 6B).

3. Outreach:
 - a. How will we facilitate collaboration internally (administrators, teachers, staff) and externally (parents, families, community leaders) building stakeholder capacity to support differentiated learning environments and options for gifted/advanced learners?
 - b. In what ways can we be more intentional about refining two-way communication channels that provide academic, intellectual, social, and emotional information and strategies for gifted/advanced learners?

At the district level, the Office of Advanced Academics works across disciplines and departments to coordinate targeted supports for gifted/advanced learners including Exceptional Children, English Language Learners, Curriculum & Instruction, Career and Technical Education, Equity Affairs, and Research & Accountability.

At the school level, the AIG specialist works to connect services based on student need by working with the specific department/discipline support personnel to:

- Identify and engage in strategies to support the academic needs of twice-exceptional students, English Language learners, and children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Collaborate to design differentiated supports building on student strengths while addressing skill gaps;
- Adapt curriculum and instruction, pacing, and/or resources to best facilitate enriched learning environments and opportunities for students who may struggle in one academic area, but excel in another.

DPS leadership and the local Board of Education have continued to provide extensive local funding to provide at least one AIG Specialist in every elementary and middle school, and an Advanced Academic Lead in the comprehensive high schools.

DPS is implementing MTSS to support students learning and the Office of Advanced Academics is aligning its work within this model for student success that includes strategies for gifted/advanced learners that allows for faster paced, more complex, greater depth and/or breadth with respect to the curriculum and instruction.

AIG Specialists will share best practices for gifted/advanced learners during their PLCs and share strategies that can positively impact learning for all students. AIG Specialists will also share with school leaders ideas of how best to include advanced learning into the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Practice C

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

District Response: The Office of Advanced Academics currently works with elementary AIG Specialists to provide flexible grouping strategies that offer personalized services based on student need rather than the identification label. This is one of our areas for strengthening the standard with the goal of establishing more consistent guidance on fluid, flexible grouping strategies which may include qualitative and quantitative data sources, such as interest surveys, pre-assessments, and formative and summative assessments.

Middle and High school supports come in the form of open-access course selection whereby students are self-selecting into more rigorous academic courses. The middle school AIG Specialists and the High School Advanced Academics Leads assist students by:

- a) identifying those with potential who may not have opted into the most rigorous courses,
- b) encouraging course progression based on student interest and/or academic achievement, and
- c) identifying and eliminating barriers so that students across all demographic groups and economic strata have access to higher-level courses (Equity in Academic Pursuit- AIG Priority 1).

Once students are enrolled in advanced courses, the Specialists and Leads also work to develop a community of support across departments and disciplines within the school climate to encourage the academic success of all students, including, but not limited to, study groups, peer mentors, faculty advisor, and academic counseling.

Practice D

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

District Response: DPS has a weekly newsletter (Leadership Weekly) that serves as the primary communication tool between central services and school level administrators. It is the expectation of district leadership that all departments contribute information to ensure effective communication is in place, thereby allowing the Office of Advanced Academics an opportunity to inform school leaders about regulations related to gifted education, the local AIG program, and scheduled events.

The AIG Specialists (K-8) and Advanced Academics Lead Teachers (9-12) meet with school faculty and staff at the beginning of each school year and throughout the school year in PLCs to explain the expectations of the advanced learning program and the characteristics, behaviors, and overall needs of gifted/advanced learners. The AIG Specialists (K-8) will collaborate with the classroom and speciality (EC, ELL) teachers to develop, implement and monitor the DEP.

A district-created Advanced Academics powerpoint is provided for AIG staff to use with staff and families, and is updated annually. The information included in the powerpoint provides consistent expectations and guidance and explains specific regulations related to gifted education at both the state and local levels, such as Article 9B,[N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-.8], the NC AIG Program Standards (State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018), the DPS AIG Plan, and HB986 (advanced math placement). The 'official' powerpoint is translated in Spanish (due to the number of English Language families in the district) and is prominently displayed on the district's Advanced Academics website which allows easy access for all families.

The Advanced Academics website is maintained by the Advanced Academic Director/Coordinator allowing for frequent updates which help to explain and communicate differentiated services, regulations, and the district's local AIG plan.

In addition to the powerpoint available to staff and families, the Office of Advanced Academics will provide handbooks and Frequently Asked Questions for various stakeholder groups, including:

- Student
- Parent/Family
- AIG Specialist
- School Counselors
- Principal/Administrator

Some of the information contained in these materials include:

- Characteristics of gifted/advanced learners
- What it means to be a gifted/advanced learner
- Expectations for gifted/advanced learners
- Social/emotional supports for gifted/advanced learners
- Scheduling support specific to middle and high school gifted/advanced learners
- Flexible grouping planning support
- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery guidance
- Growth mindset
- How to support the gifted/advanced learner, with particular emphasis around English Language learners and children from disadvantaged backgrounds

Practice E

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

District Response: The Office of Advanced Academics' Priority Goal 1: Equity in Academic Pursuit is to ensure equity in academic pursuit which among other things means assisting classroom teachers, school staff, administrators, and parents/families in recognizing gifted characteristics and meeting those needs throughout their K-12 educational experience. One of the success factors that DPS has observed through the years is the support of identified and nurtured advanced learners in the transition

years - 5th to 6th and 8th to 9th. The specific transition supports are detailed below.

Students who transfer schools at any grade level also receive similar supports. When a student leaves one school to attend another within the district, there are procedures in place for communication and transition of important documentation in the AIG file for the student. AIG Specialists work in tandem with the school's Records Specialist to ensure this information is transferred efficiently and effectively.

Elementary and Middle Transition Support:

Each elementary and middle school has an AIG Leadership Committee comprised of teachers from different grade levels, counselors, and other personnel involved in AIG Programming. During these AIG Leadership Committee meetings, the focus is on determining implementation strategies to more comprehensively address AIG programming throughout the entire school.

At the end of each school year, the elementary and middle AIG Specialists participate in the Advanced Academics SWAP Exchange (Students with Advanced Placement). During the SWAP, the sending elementary AIG Specialist serves as an advocate for his/her identified and nurtured students to ensure information is shared at the receiving middle school that will help support the students' academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs. The receiving school takes notes to assist in scheduling the student appropriately, as well as make any other arrangements necessary for each student's success.

DPS middle school administrators and district level content specialists work with the sending elementary schools to plan transition meetings for the rising 6th graders usually in the Spring. Advanced learning options are shared with students and families.

High School Transition Support:

Advanced learning PLCs occur between and among teachers of advanced courses; however, a growth item for the Office of Advanced Academics is to fully implement an Advanced Learning Leadership Committee at the high school level that includes administration and counselors with a focus on addressing Priority 1: Equity of Academic Pursuit.

At the high school level, open houses are hosted for rising 9th graders with a greater emphasis on what it is like to be a high school student rather than service delivery options for gifted/advanced learners. The transition period from middle to high school can be a stressful time for students and parents/families as they embark on their career and/or college pathway; therefore, implementing an Advanced Learning Leadership Committee at the high school level will support 8th grade to 9th grade SWAP (Students With Advanced Placement) Exchange that can better support student placement in advanced classes and understanding the unique needs of the individual student so that supports can be developed to ensure student success in advanced classes.

In addition, DPS offers an AP Summer Scholars Camp for rising 8th through 12th grade students during the summer (4 days) that focuses on knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for advanced level learning. This camp also exposes students to various high school advanced level course offerings across all academic disciplines including CTE courses and college admissions criteria. Advanced Learning Scholars Camp for rising 8th through 12th grade students during the summer (4 days) that focuses on knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for advanced level learning. This camp also exposes students to various high school advanced level course offerings across all academic disciplines including CTE courses and college admissions criteria. Advanced Learning Scholars Camp

for rising 8th through 12th grade students during the summer (4 days) that focuses on knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for advanced level learning. This camp also exposes students to various high school advanced level course offerings across all academic disciplines including CTE courses and college admissions criteria.

Practice F

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

District Response: Providing social/emotional supports for all students is an important component of the 2018-2022 DPS Strategic Plan, Priority 2: Provide A Safe School Environment that Supports the Whole Child. The Office of Advanced Academics has aligned its professional development plan with Strategic Plan Goal 2A* and will address the social and emotional needs of gifted/advanced learners through culturally-relevant PD. Schools are being asked to identify and adopt a research-based cultural framework in every school as well as to create and implement district-wide professional development that supports the effective implementation of cultural frameworks.

Professional development topics will include:

- Restorative practices
- Social-emotional learning
- De-escalation and crisis prevention/intervention
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Reducing implicit bias and racial inequities

Through the Advanced Academics handbooks, the Office of Advanced Academics will provide guidance to schools, administrators and AIG specialists on how to address the unique social/emotional needs of gifted/advanced learners. This work also centers around the MTSS model of creating and implementing tiered supports that provide strategies designed to address students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs that might impede learning and social engagement in the classroom including our gifted and high academic achievers. For example, gifted learners sometimes exhibit perfectionism and often need to be reminded that failure is part of learning. The district MTSS meetings include a member of the Office of Advanced Academics to more intentionally call attention to the needs of gifted/advanced learners.

Each elementary and middle school AIG Specialist facilitates an AIG Leadership Committee which serves as the monitoring group of advocates for gifted programming at each school site. Counselors, other AIG teachers, regular classroom teachers, and other specialists such as EC and/or ESL, serve on this committee to ensure multiple perspectives are influencing and addressing various aspects of the program, including collaborating on the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

Advanced Learning Leadership Committees at the high school level focus on building healthy environments for students, particularly those students who often hide their stressors because they don't want to be perceived as 'less than perfect'. High school committee members are trained to recognize and respond to these often masked stressors, and work to turn the stress into a positive experience for students. This work also focuses on creating opportunities for student leadership. Another pivotal goal

for this group is to continue to develop talent in students throughout their high school experience ensuring that learning deepens and coping strategies are taught so that challenges are seen more as opportunities than detractors, and the learning better prepares students for their next steps in college and/or career.

With high school programming being an area of improvement, the Office of Advanced Academics will collaborate with Student Support Services and the DPS Equity Affairs Office to provide guidance to school counselors that support the unique needs of gifted/advanced learners and thinkers. As the district moves toward a greater focus on meeting all students' social/emotional and behavioral needs, the Office of Advanced Academics collaborates with other district departments (Curriculum & Instruction, Exceptional Children, ESL, Student Support Services) to ensure gifted/ advanced learner needs are considered and included into practice. The expectation for schools is that during PLC meetings, social/emotional and behavioral needs are topics for discussion. The schools' AIG Specialist will be the site-based voice for ensuring the unique needs of gifted/advanced learners are part of the learning planning.

*By 2023, 100 percent of Durham Public Schools will implement research-based cultural frameworks to support the social-emotional health and safety of students and staff.

Practice G

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

District Response: For a few, depth and complexity in grade level curriculum and instruction may not be enough to challenge the student's knowledge, dispositions and skills. In unique cases, subject and/or grade level acceleration may be appropriate.

By NCDPI guidance, [Policy ID Number: GCS-J-001 Administrative Procedures Act Reference Number and Category: 16 NCAC 6E.0105], legislation passed by the 1997 NC General Assembly allows a child who has reached his/her fourth birthday by April 16 to enter kindergarten if he or she demonstrates an extraordinary level of academic ability and maturity.

Early Admission to Kindergarten is provided for students who meet the following criteria:

- score at or above the 98th percentile on either Reading or Mathematics on a standard test of achievement administered by a licensed psychologist
- score at or above the 98th percentile on a standard individual test of intelligence administered by a licensed psychologist
- demonstration of readiness during scheduled interview with the school principal and his/her Early Admission to Kindergarten Committee

Information packets including all forms, State Board Policy, and a flowchart of the Early Admission to Kindergarten process is posted on the district's Advanced Academics' and Office of Early Education websites and made available to elementary AIG Specialists, principals, and front office support staff to share with interested parents.

Acceleration

The Office of Advanced Academics promotes acceleration practices when students demonstrate a need for acceleration. The authors of *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students* define acceleration as "matching the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum with the readiness and motivation of the student." This educational intervention provides students opportunities to accelerate through content-based and/or grade-based acceleration practices, such as single-subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, dual enrollment, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, early entrance to kindergarten/middle/high/college, telescoping curriculum, Advanced Placement offerings, and online learning courses. Multiple research studies have shown acceleration to be the most effective curriculum intervention for gifted/advanced learners having long-term beneficial effects - academically, socially, and emotionally. Acceleration is also referenced in Standard 3a.

Acceleration in Elementary & Middle School:

For subject or whole grade acceleration, the district uses the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) to objectively guide the gifted/advanced learner and his/her family through these opportunities. School administration collaborates with AIG Specialists and classroom teacher(s) using quantitative information obtained through the Iowa Acceleration Scale. Parent involvement is a part of this process, as a meeting with parents provides the committee qualitative information as required in the IAS. Based on the results and other information decided by them, the principal and his/her committee make the decision.

Acceleration in High School:

Under the DPS Board Policy 3305- Advanced College Placement, articulation is given to dual enrollment. The policy states: "To meet the academic needs of high school students, principals are encouraged to permit students to take college courses while they are enrolled in high school. With the principal's approval, credit toward graduation may be awarded for college courses completed. Students taking courses from colleges under the concurrent enrollment plan may not take courses from the college that are offered in the high schools. All students who wish to receive concurrent enrollment, must get permission from the principal before registering for their college classes."

DPS Board Policy 3310 - Release of Students to Attend Community Colleges states: "The Board of Education encourages students to complete high school before seeking admission to a university, college or community college. However, a high school student 16 years of age or older may be permitted to attend appropriate courses at a community college if the Superintendent and principal determine that the student meets legal requirements and has special needs that could best be served by admission to the community college. Such students must be taking at least three high school courses in a traditional schedule or two high school courses in a block schedule and be making appropriate progress toward graduation."

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery allows students to earn credit by participating in a two-phase process by which they can show mastery of the course standards. Procedures and guidelines are in place through collaboration of Research and Accountability Office of State Testing, Advanced Academics, Curriculum and Instruction, Career and Technical Education, and Student Support Services. Information is provided on the DPS website and also communicated during each of the three application periods through middle and high schools. District information sessions educate counselors on the policy, the process, and expectations so they can share with families. Research and Accountability conducts testing training sessions, and Content Specialists design performance tasks evaluated with a rubric for the second phase of the process. Counselors and AIG Specialists assist with

communication and planning with students and families.

In partnership with the DPS Curriculum and Instruction Department, the Office of Advanced Academics closely monitors the implementation of the June 2018 establishment of NC House Bill 986*, keeping detailed records of students served by AIG nurturing and later identified as AG/AIG.

House Bill 986 - Enrollment in Advanced Mathematics Courses Section

*[SESSION LAW 2018-32 HOUSE BILL 986, PART II. Enrollment in Advanced Mathematics Courses Section 2.(a) Part 1 of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes "§ 115C-81.36. Advanced courses in mathematics.]

- (a) When practicable, local boards of education shall offer advanced courses in mathematics in all grades three and higher.
- (b) When advanced courses are offered in mathematics, any student scoring a level five on the end-of-grade or end-of-course test for the mathematics course in which the student was most recently enrolled shall be enrolled in the advanced course for the next mathematics course in which the student is enrolled. A student in seventh grade scoring a level five on the seventh grade mathematics end-of-grade test shall be enrolled in a high school level mathematics course in eighth grade. No student who qualifies under this subsection shall be removed from the advanced or high school mathematics course in which the student is enrolled unless a parent or guardian of the student provides written consent for the student to be excluded or removed from that course."

Practice H

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

District Response: In the 2015-2019 DPS AIG Plan, talent development, particularly in the K-2 grade span, produced significant results in increasing the number of often underrepresented student groups in advanced learning educational services. Five success factors have been identified as strategies that in concert have produced evidence of improved access and opportunity for both African American and Hispanic students in gifted program services. These success factors include:

- Personnel - AIG Specialists in every elementary and middle school; High School Advanced Academic Leads in all comprehensive high schools
- Professional Learning with continual focus on "equity and access"
- Multiple Pathways for Identification that include non-verbal assessments and portfolios of evidence
- Intentionality of Implementing K-2 Talent Development Programming (INVESTIGATIONS) in all elementary schools
- Universal Screening of all Second Graders using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT/Form 7)

Even with the success factors noted above, the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan is very intentional about supporting often marginalized student groups in all educational endeavors. Goal 1C: By 2023, the DPS

four-year graduation rate for students who start with DPS in ninth grade will be at least 90 percent.

The four strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan are as follows:

- Identify barriers to graduation for Black males, and Hispanic males and females.
- Develop a centralized Early Warning Tracking System, beginning at elementary school, that identifies students who are at risk of disconnecting from school.
- Implement systems, structures, and processes related to students and staffing to dismantle barriers to graduation.
- Ensure every student develops their four-year plan upon entry into high school. Regular advisement will be provided and the plan will be revised as appropriate based on multiple data points.

For the 2018-19 instructional year, the racial composition of Durham Public Schools was as follows:

- African-American: 43.8%
- Hispanic/Latino: 31.1%
- White: 19.1%
- Multiracial: 3.5%
- Asian: 2.2%
- American Indian: 0.2%
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.1%

The total number of students on free and reduced lunch was 62.29%, which includes 13 schools with Community Eligibility Provision where no applications are taken (100% free)

With the racial composition of DPS and the enrollment trend of underrepresented populations increasing, the Office of Advanced Academics is aligning the local Plan to support this goal by conducting a focused review of qualitative and quantitative data, such as demographic, socioeconomic (whole school FRL status), gender, performance/growth data as it relates to identified and nurtured students and as those compare to the overall district profile for these subgroups with the goal of continuing to increase students' access to talent development supports and rigorous learning opportunities.

Practice I

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

District Response: The focus of educating the whole child includes opportunities for students to develop their intellectual, social, and moral capabilities alongside growing their academic knowledge. Because gifted/advanced learners are often used to getting good grades, sometimes without much effort, they may be averse to taking risks or trying something new where success does not come as easily. The Office of Advanced Academics supports student involvement in academic endeavors, extra-curricular, sports, and the fine arts to provide opportunities for gifted/advanced learners to further develop their interests and create balance in their academic, social, and emotional growth.

Studies have shown that gifted/advanced students participating in extracurricular outlet gain skills to a different degree than within the classroom. Participation in such programs:

- uncover hidden talents within students
- discover personal interests that may connect to future goals
- create possibilities for students to strive for personal improvement and overcome learning challenges
- build perseverance and resiliency
- further problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration opportunities
- enhance academic study
- refine time management and organization skills
- develop skills outside of the academic realm
- relieve stress and enhance academic study
- creates a sense of teamwork and belonging
- exposure to different perspectives
- conflict resolution

AIG Specialists, teachers, and Advanced Academic Leads encourage students to pursue involvement in opportunities that encourage them to explore new areas of interest or take on challenges, such as:

- Outreach Programs from regional colleges and universities, museums, and other educational foundations
- Service Learning Projects
- Career and Technical Education offerings
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Sports
- School based interest and academic clubs
- Offerings from the North Carolina Association for Scholastic Activities such as Quiz Bowl, Twelve, Quill, Art Showcase, etc.,
- Beta Club, National Honor Society, Junior National Honor Society
- Odyssey of the Mind or Destination Imagination
- Scripps Spelling Bee
- District sponsored academic events such as Math Counts and Science Olympiad
- Duke TIP opportunities
- Battle of the Books (Elementary, Middle, and High School)
- Governor's School

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Targeted professional learning for all teachers throughout the school community to include cultural competency, implicit bias professional development.

Intentional focus on providing high school supports for honors, AP/IB teachers that support the differentiated needs of students from various cultural, ethnic, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Sources of Evidence: Handbooks and FAQ documents for each of the following stakeholder groups:

- Student
- Parent/Family
- AIG Specialist
- School Counselors
- Principal/Administrator

AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing) Binders at each school that support programming as outlined in the DPS AIG 2019-22 Plan.

AIG/Advanced Academic Leads Handbooks

Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

Practice A

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

District Response: “The foundation of gifted education is the belief that student learning should be calibrated to the child’s abilities and interests rather than the child’s age. For high-quality programs and services, this belief becomes a reality through a range of service delivery options to accommodate individual learning differences.” (Clarenbach, J. (2007). All gifted is local. The School Administrator)

The Office of Advanced Academics’ intentional focus on equity of educational pursuit (AIG Priority 1) affirms that gifted/advanced learners must have modifications to their grade level Standard Course of Study that allow them the opportunity to learn something new each day or explore previously known concept at a level of depth and complexity. Learning progress for gifted/advanced students must not be stagnant when proficiency is reached.

In a recent study published in The High Flyer (a collaborative document between the National Association for Gifted Children and the Thomas B. Fordham Institute), consistent evidence showed that an estimate of between 20–40 percent of elementary and middle school students perform at least one grade level above their current grade in reading, with 11–30 percent scoring at least one grade level above in math. In addition, the study also found large percentages of students performing well above grade level.

It is the expectation of district leadership and the Office of Advanced Academics that AIG Specialists, AIG teachers, regular education teachers, along with teachers of Advanced Placement and Honors Courses, have the responsibility to plan, prepare, and implement appropriate differentiated instruction for all students.

At each grade level, curriculum begins with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and, through ongoing assessments to measure student needs, lessons are developed that provide opportunities for ongoing student exploration and learning. As aligned with the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan, Priority 2: Provide A Safe School Environment that Supports the Whole Child*, gifted/advanced learners must be presented with curriculum, instructional strategies, materials and resources that enhance, extend, and enrich using culturally responsive practices.

*By 2023, 100 percent of Durham Public Schools will implement research-based cultural frameworks to support the social-emotional health and safety of students and staff.

In alignment with the NC Department of Public Instruction framework provided for teachers of honors level courses, teachers should define how the content, instruction, materials and assessment differ

from that of a standard level course. According to state guidelines, "curriculum should indicate depth, rigor, accelerated pacing, complexity, challenges and creativity beyond the standard level course."

Advanced Placement (AP) classes offered in DPS are part of a larger program run by the College Board. Participation in an AP class allows students to take a more rigorous course than Honors, giving students the experience of an intro- level college course which could earn them college credit and/or qualify them for more advanced classes in college. According to College Board, research consistently shows that AP students are better prepared for college than students who don't enroll in AP courses. The Office of Advanced Academics promotes acceleration practices when students demonstrate a need for acceleration. The authors of *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students* define acceleration as "matching the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum with the readiness and motivation of the student." This educational intervention provides students opportunities to accelerate through content-based and/or grade-based acceleration practices, such as single-subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, dual enrollment, Credit by Demonstrated Mastery, early entrance to kindergarten/middle/high/college, telescoping curriculum, Advanced Placement offerings, and online learning courses. Multiple research studies have shown acceleration to be the most effective curriculum intervention for gifted/advanced learners having long-term beneficial effects - academically, socially, and emotionally. Acceleration is also referenced in Standard 2g.

Working closely with the Curriculum and Instruction Department, AIG Specialists will work over the next three years to ensure all curriculum unit maps for English Language Arts and Math have enrichments, extensions, and accelerations to be utilized by classroom teachers to best meet the needs of gifted/advanced learners in their classes.

Practice B

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

District Response: The response to meeting the needs of gifted/advanced learners should begin with the unique learning needs of each student as variances in academic abilities, learning styles, and interest exist among gifted/advanced students. It is to this degree of variances that mandate teachers utilize effective instructional practices that directly respond to the differences present in their students or a personalized approach that addresses individual student need

Some of the specific strategies implemented include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Curriculum Compacting
- Simulations
- Tiered Assignments
- Socratic and Paideia Seminars
- Critical Thinking Routines
- Opportunities for choice in content, product, or process
- Project-Based Learning
- Problem-Based Learning
- Inquiry Based Learning
- Learning Contracts

- Independent Studies
- Technology Integration
- Learning/Interest Centers

Practice C

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

District Response: The Office of Advanced Academics has provided a variety of curriculum materials and resources to be used in gifted/advanced services at grade levels, K-12. Materials and resources used should align with and extend the content standards as well as provide opportunities for students to study topics in depth.

AIG Specialists and teachers use collaborative instructional time during monthly PLCs to share resources, incorporate them into grade level units of study, and make connections to the real world. With more evidence-based resources located on the internet, AIG Specialists have greater access to high quality materials that can be vetted for appropriate challenge, depth and complexity, and alignment with advanced curriculum.

During this plan cycle, the Office of Advanced Academics will develop an AIG Specialists' web portal that would serve as a resource library for instructional strategies, curricular/resource suggestions, and exemplar lessons. This site would also house professional development offerings on gifted/advanced learners.

Other resources utilized by the school district that complement the core curriculum include, but are not limited to, the following:

- District designed INVESTIGATIONS (talent development K-2) curriculum
- Making Thinking Visible, Project Zero, Harvard University
- Sandra Kaplan's Depth and Complexity framework
- William and Mary English/Language Arts (Grades 2-8)
- Mentoring Mathematical Minds (Grades 1- 5)
- The Word Within the Word (Vocabulary series for grades 3-8)
- U-Stars (Cultivating potential through science and literacy for grades K-3)
- Novel sets (Grades 2 - 12)
- Jr. Great Books
- College Board resources and Support materials (Grades 9-12)
- Pre-AP strategies (Grades 6-12)
- Variety of online resources promoted by district level content specialists (Grades K-12)

Practice D

Fosters the development of future-ready skills including critical thinking, communication, collaboration,

creativity, and leadership.

District Response: Our ever-changing world and the rapid improvements in technology create a critical need for integrating opportunities for gifted/advanced learners to develop the skills of critical thinking and creativity, while utilizing the skills of collaboration, communication, and leadership. Author Daniel Pink remarked, “The future belongs to a very different kind of person with a very different kind of mind—creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers and meaning makers. These people...will now reap society’s richest rewards and share its greatest joys.” (Pink, Daniel. *A Whole New Mind*. New York: Riverhead, 2006). If students leave school without continuous opportunities to analyze and think critically, to create and innovate, and to collaborate and communicate, they will be underprepared for the challenges of society and the workforce.

The Office of Advanced Academics will provide all AIG Specialists, AIG Teachers, and Advanced Academics Lead Teachers an “Educator’s Guide to the Four C’s”. This document expounds on each of the four C’s, giving definitions and strategies to integrate each skill into all content areas of the curriculum (math, English/language arts, science, history, world languages, the arts, etc.) K-12. Links to additional resources, including rubrics for assessing each skill, and additional resources to be utilized are included in the document.

Elementary AIG Specialists and AIG teachers have been trained in Inquiry-Based Learning. The Middle School Specialists will receive the same training during the 2019-2020 instructional year. Inquiry based Learning provides multiple opportunities for students to engage in the 4 C’s: critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration.

AIG Specialists also integrate thinking skill routines from Harvard University’s Project Zero: Making Thinking Visible, a flexible and systematic research-based approach to blending content learning across disciplines while cultivating the development of students' critical and creative thinking. Each routine provides opportunity for student interaction through collaboration or discussion.

Additional instructional practices such as Project Based Learning and Problem Based Learning contain all future ready skills for gifted/advanced learners.

Practice E

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

District Response: Assessment, both formative and summative, is an integral component of the curriculum and instruction planning process. According to the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, gifted elementary students have mastered between 40 and 50 percent of the school year’s content in several subject areas before the school year begins and, if gifted/advanced learners master skills without needed repetitions, teachers must assess students on a continuous cycle to respond to their changing needs. The data obtained from multiple types of assessments informs decisions about curriculum content, instructional strategies, and resources that will continue to support the growth of gifted/advanced learners.

Teachers use the data to compact curriculum and/or appropriately extend, enrich, or accelerate content for students who have mastered a new skill or concept, while differentiating instruction for students who may need additional time to master a concept/skill. AIG Specialists and teachers understand that being identified as Academically Gifted does not ensure that all concepts will be quickly grasped and at the same time, students who have not yet been identified may show significant strength in an area of study. As referenced in Standard 2a, AIG Specialists and AIG Teachers create flexible, fluid grouping to allow personalized learning for all students.

Another data point considered for differentiating instruction and forming flexible grouping practices is the results from the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) used as the district's universal sweep screen at the second grade level. AIG Specialists have received training on utilizing the results to assist classroom teachers in:

- identifying student potential in verbal, quantitative, and/or nonverbal reasoning
- using the online Interactive Ability Profile Interpretation System to determine characteristics of students for a particular profile, instructional strategies for building upon general strengths and/or weaknesses, and grouping strategies that best meet the needs of the learner
- connecting CogAT profiles with intervention or MTSS teams
- identifying students with high reasoning abilities who require differentiated services.

High School guidance counselors, Advanced Academic Lead Teachers, and high school Principals strategically use ACT, PSAT, classroom performance, EOC, and data provided by College Board to best recommend appropriate courses for students.

Practice F

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

District Response: Social and emotional needs are at the core of well-being for all children and the foundation for academic achievement. Gifted/advanced learners have unique social and emotional needs that may require additional supports. The Office of Advanced Academics has developed a collaborative connection to Student Support Services, working with school guidance counselors to bring awareness of the social and emotional needs of gifted/advanced learners and develop strategies to better meet those needs.

While not all gifted/advanced learners experience one or more of the following, AIG Specialists and teachers should recognize the possible existence and plan for ways to respond:

- asynchronous development which may lead to difficulties with social/peer relationships
- perfectionism
- situational stressors
- underachievement
- pressure from families and/or self
- overexcitabilities

- search for identity
- test anxiety

Instructional settings such as cluster grouping or pull-out services with the AIG Specialist provide gifted/advanced learners opportunities to be with peers who share similar academic abilities, intellectual curiosity, and social and emotional needs.

Knowing that students who hold a growth mindset are likely to attempt challenging tasks and persevere through difficulties, AIG Specialists and teachers explored the books *Growth Mindset* and *Mindsets in the Classroom* based on the work by Dr. Carol Dweck. Visual reminders in the classrooms promote awareness of key understandings and display the qualities of a growth mindset, as well as the "power of yet" when confronted with challenges. Curriculum lessons and seminars will continue to build upon the growth mindset philosophy.

As part of the curriculum development by the Office of Advanced Academics and AIG Specialists, intentional focus is given to integrating books and articles that can be used to address the unique social and emotional issues of gifted/advanced learners with application to cultural relevancy. AIG Specialists collaborate on novels that serve as bibliotherapy for their student or ones who give opportunity for social and emotional issues to be discussed.

Summer programs sponsored by the Office of Advanced Academics extend learning for gifted/advanced learners. SPARK Camp, taught in conjunction with the DPS teachers fulfilling AIG Licensure requirements at Duke University, is for rising 4th - 8th graders with an AIG identification. Students select two courses based on interest to explore during the four day camp.

Another opportunity to extend learning over the summer is through the AP Summer Scholars Camp for rising 8th through 12th grade students. This four day camp, sponsored by the Office of Advanced Academics, focuses on knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for advanced level learning. This camp also exposes students to various high school advanced level course offerings across all academic disciplines including CTE courses and college admissions criteria.

In collaboration with the Office of Duke TIP, rising 4th and 5th graders with an AIG identification are given the opportunity to sign up for three Saturday Summer Adventures in STEM. These courses expose students to topics outside of the regular curriculum which can be explored in depth.

Practice G

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

District Response: Research has shown that interventions develop talent and close performance gaps must start in kindergarten as differences in exposure, learned ability measures, and achievement skills have already taken root. The Office of Advanced Academics recognizes the significant importance of cultivating and developing all students in the primary grades and its impact on future

academic success.

Aligning this knowledge with Advanced Academics' Priority 1: Equity in Academic Pursuit, the AIG specialist at each elementary school will work with all students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade*. The INVESTIGATIONS program allows all elementary AIG specialists to nurture advanced thinking and develop academic talent potential in all demographic and socioeconomic groups in the primary grades. The INVESTIGATIONS program is designed around a three year framework with lessons that blend critical thinking skills, collaboration, creative thinking, and problem solving with grade level curriculum.

AIG Specialists move between whole group classroom facilitation and small group discovery each academic quarter throughout the instructional year. Balancing instruction between whole and small groups allows ongoing opportunities for all students to develop and demonstrate talent. During the whole group lessons, classroom teachers are an integral part of the process. Teachers use an Investigations matrix to record observations of individual students during each lesson. The engagement of the classroom teacher during the INVESTIGATIONS lessons has resulted in teacher expectations of many students transformed as a result of their focused observation of student potential versus student achievement. This collected body of evidence showing outstanding potential displayed by students in areas such as problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity in thought is used to support flexible, small groups facilitated by the AIG Specialist.

*Because DPS does a sweep screen for identification in second grade, schools have formal AIG services in place beginning in third grade.

Practice H

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

District Response: Working closely with the Curriculum and Instruction Department, AIG Specialists will work over the next three years to ensure all curriculum unit maps for English Language Arts and Math have differentiated enrichments, extensions, and accelerations embedded for classroom teacher to utilize. To meet the needs of the diverse learners in classrooms, the Exceptional Children's and English as a Second Language Departments will collaborate to include supplemental resources as well.

In order to reach the wide range of academic and intellectual needs of gifted/advanced learners at all grade levels, collaboration among instructional staff members is imperative. AIG Specialists and High School Academic Leads collaborate with EC and ESL teachers to give specific attention to gifted/advanced learners who are also English Language Learners or twice-exceptional.

Monthly AIG PLCs provide a collaborative time for AIG Specialists to develop lessons and curriculum units that provide supports for gifted/advanced learners. Shared time at the school during grade level or content specific PLCs allow AIG Specialists to further develop and share these strategies to enhance gifted/advanced learning throughout the school day.

To support teachers in refining instructional delivery that meets the needs of gifted/advanced learners, AIG Specialists may model lessons that emphasize best practices, including interest based themes.

At the high school level, Advanced Academics Lead Teachers collaborate with school colleagues, as well as other teachers of Advanced Placement courses throughout the district to ensure consistent rigorous offerings.

Practice I

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

District Response: In accordance with Article 9B [N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-.8], all students identified as Academically Gifted (AG) or Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) will have a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or if required, an Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP). Students identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG) will have an Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP).

Students identified as Twice-Exceptional (area of identified learning difficulty and criteria to meet AG/AIG) can use their IEP as the AIG IDEP; however, collaboration and clear articulation should be made between departments to ensure Twice-Exceptional Students are receiving both EC and AIG services.

The focus of the DEP includes the student's educational needs based on their academic strengths and outlines the services that will be provided to supplement and expand content standards to ensure continued academic gains. The DEP is developed as a collaborative effort between the AIG Specialist or AIG Teacher, at least one regular education teacher from the area of identification who can provide input about the levels of performance in the general education classroom, other educators who may have direct knowledge or special expertise regarding the student (EC, ESL), the parent/guardian of identified student, and the student. Students create skill based goals based on academic, social, and/or emotional needs as part of the DEP.

Initial Invitation to Conference

When a child is identified as AG/AIG/IG, the parents/guardians are notified and invited to attend an Initial Placement Conference to discuss service delivery and develop a Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP)/Individual Differentiated Educational Plan (IDEP) for their child.

The AIG Specialist/Teacher will provide the parent/guardian with a copy of the AIG Parent Handbook which includes the Procedures for Resolving Disagreements. (See Standard 6, Practice j for full information) if students were assessed through sweep screen testing, school wide assessments (BOG, EOG, EOC, etc.) and/or the portfolio process. Parents/guardians of students who had additional measures of aptitude and/or ability received the AIG handbook with the Consent to Evaluate Form. A

parent/guardian may request a review of the plan at any time to assure the student is provided services best matched to student needs.

The parent/guardian receives a copy of the DEP. The DEP should be accessible to each teacher responsible for implementation. In addition, each teacher of the student shall be informed of the specific responsibilities related to the implementation.

Annual Review

An annual review is conducted with parents/families for each elementary and middle school AIG student within the first thirty days of the instructional year to review the student's DEP and ensure appropriate services are matched to student needs. The match of services is based on student progress reports, report cards, standardized achievement test scores, and/or informal assessment data. Parents, classroom teachers, and the AIG Specialist will indicate any change in services on the DEP/IDEP before signing.

During the annual review, any student showing potential or achievement for adding an additional area of identification will be referred for re-evaluation. Consent for re-evaluation may take place at this meeting or at a later date. For example, a student identified in the area of reading has shown the potential or performance to be referred for add-on identification in the area of mathematics.

If the annual performance review indicates that a student is not performing satisfactorily and a change in services may be required, the team and parent/family will collaborate to match service needs or develop an Intervention Plan.

Advanced Academics will continue to work at the high school level to ensure an annual review process is implemented. The annual review will be conducted by a counselor, AP Coordinator, or Advanced Academics Lead Teacher.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Advanced Academics will continue to work at the high school level to ensure an annual review process is implemented.

Sources of Evidence: AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing) Binders at each school that support programming as outlined in the DPS AIG 2019-22 Plan.

AIG/Advanced Academic Leads Handbooks

Segregated data from AIG Headcount

Student DEPs

Framework/Lesson Alignment for INVESTIGATIONS, K-2 programming

Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development

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

Practice A

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

District Response: Durham Public Schools employs an AIG licensed Director/Coordinator of Advanced Academics and AIG licensed Lead Specialists. Working together as the Office of Advanced Academics, they oversee the programs and advanced courses offered in DPS, K-12.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following, to ensure fidelity of AIG programming:

- Develop, lead and monitor the implementation of the district's local Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) plan 2019-22 to improve student achievement and growth, K-12.
- Provide support to DPS schools and district leadership regarding best practices in identification, differentiated curriculum and instruction, and services for gifted/advanced learners.
- Support the implementation of comprehensive programming to support students in higher level and advanced courses to ensure success
- Assist administration, counselors, classroom teachers, and Teaching and Learning Coaches with analysis, interpretation and use of data for instructional program planning which could support student learning discussions during PLCs including results from district, state, and national assessments (EOG, EOC, AP, PSAT, SAT/ACT, Pre-ACT).
- Collaborate with counselors, teachers, and administration to support the needs of all gifted/advanced learners.
- Support principals, AIG Specialists, and Advanced Academics Lead Teachers in providing classroom teachers with strategies for the differentiation of instruction and pre-AP strategies for AP/Honors classes.
- Design, customize and conduct district professional development based on data and needs assessment for gifted/advanced learners.
- Establish and maintain accurate and efficient records, including all budget and personnel reports, necessary for compliance with the Office of Advanced Academics, Durham Public Schools, and in alignment with the NC AIG Program Standards. (State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018)
- Maintain communication with various stakeholder groups through a variety of correspondence means including newsletters for AIG Specialists, correspondence with parents regarding identification referral and identification, handbooks for administrators, etc. (See Standard 1, Practice e)
- Oversee the screening, referral, and identification processes at the district level.
- Communicate and collaborate effectively with district and school leadership to achieve the district vision.
- Provide professional development for AIG programming and implementation including beginning teachers, parent groups, district Teaching and Learning Coaches, grade level PLCs, and whole school faculty sessions. (See Standard 4, Practice e)
- Serve as Advanced Academics liaison between the school system, parents and community.

- Develop and foster collaborative relationships with institutes of higher education, businesses and other community groups.
- Provide leadership for and monitor the implementation of the roles and responsibilities of AIG Specialists and Advanced Academics Lead Teachers.

Practice B

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

District Response: The DPS Board of Education, in support of ensuring equity, access, and opportunity for all students in DPS, have allocated local funds to provide AIG personnel in every school.

Elementary and Middle School AIG Personnel:

Elementary and middle schools each have an AIG Specialist to oversee the AIG program and work directly with gifted/advanced learners to support their academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs. In alignment with the NC Program Standards (State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018) and the current Durham Public School System's AIG Plan, all AIG Specialists in Durham Public Schools will:

- Have AIG Licensure or be enrolled in an AIG Licensure Program with an Institute of Higher Education.
- Oversee the implementation of the district's AIG Plan in the school and meet with school leadership weekly or bi-weekly as determined by administration.
- Adapt 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.
- Employ 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.
- Select and use a variety of research-based supplemental resources that augment curriculum and instruction.
- Foster the development of future-ready skills including:
 - o critical thinking
 - o communication
 - o collaboration
 - o creativity
 - o leadership
- Use on-going assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction and inform flexible grouping practices.
- Create affective curricular and instructional practices which support the social and emotional needs of AIG students.
- Collaborate with AIG personnel and other professional staff, including regular education teachers, special education teachers, ESL teachers, other instructional staff, and administrators, to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.
- Cultivate and develop the potential of young (K-2) students through purposeful and intentional

strategies and differentiated curriculum and instruction. [INVESTIGATIONS - Elementary schools only]

- Attend and participate in monthly AIG Professional Learning Communities which will include the development of differentiated curriculum for gifted/advanced learners.
- Develop and document a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/ families to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.
- Facilitate the school's AIG Leadership Committee which meets monthly to discuss, review, and refine the local AIG program/plan and advocate for the needs of gifted students from all populations at all grade levels.
- Develop partnerships with parents/families and the community that are intentional and meaningful to support the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted students. The AIG Specialist will facilitate the school's AIG Partnership Committee which meets at least quarterly to discuss, review, and refine the local AIG program/plan and advocate for the needs of gifted students from all populations at all grade levels.
- Encourage extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of AIG/advanced learners. This may include coordinating professional learning and/or training for advisors of enrichment activities such as, but not limited to, MathCounts, Spelling Bee, Science Olympiad, Speech and Debate, National Junior Honor Society, and Odyssey of the Mind.
- Implement student screening, referral, and identification processes consistent with the district's AIG plan.
- Maintain accurate and appropriate records related to gifted education procedures which include individual student AIG documentation folders, PowerSchool reviews, and school level AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing) Binders
- Create and implement a plan for regular communication in various forms (i.e. active maintained website, newsletter, email listserv, etc.) with parents and families of AIG students.

High School Advanced Academic Leads:

The responsibilities of High School Advanced Academic Leads include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Conduct an annual review of all high school students, focusing on achievement on the PSAT, SAT or ACT tests at or above the 90th percentile; achievement on an Advanced Placement tests of a 4 or 5; rank in the top 10% of their grade level; and EOC achievement in area of identification at or above the 85th percentile for referral to the AIG Identification process.
- Assist with reviewing the Fall and Spring Headcount
- Assist students by:
 - a) identifying those with potential who may not have opted into the most rigorous courses,
 - b) encouraging course progression based on student interest and/or academic achievement, and
 - c) identifying and eliminating barriers so that students across all demographic groups and economic strata have access to higher-level courses
- Encourage extra-curricular programs and events that enhance and further develop the needs and interests of gifted/advanced learners.
- Develop partnerships with parents/families and the community that are intentional and meaningful to support the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted/advanced students. The Advanced Academics Lead will facilitate the school's Advanced Learning Leadership Committees which meets quarterly to discuss, review, and refine the local AIG program/plan and advocate for the needs of gifted students from all populations at all grade levels.

- Collaborate with AIG personnel and other professional staff, including regular education teachers, special education teachers, ESL teachers, other instructional staff, and administrators, to create supports for gifted/advanced learners.

Practice C

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

District Response: Guided by the Office of Advanced Academics' Priority Goals of Equity in Academic Pursuit and Professional Development for 2019-2022, specific and appropriate professional development offerings are provided for all personnel involved in AIG programming and services. These opportunities include, but are not limited to the following:

District Leadership

- Overview of the DPS AIG Plan as it aligns to the North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted Program Standards (State Board of Education Policy State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018)
- Data to support program monitoring and implementation

Principals and Assistant Principals

- Overview of the DPS AIG Plan as it fulfills the North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted Program Standards (State Board of Education Policy State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018) and aligns to the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan
- Implementation guidance for the DPS AIG Plan in terms of programming specifics that impact programming throughout the entire school (i.e. all elementary K-5 teachers are impacted):
 - o AIG identification and service delivery;
 - o comprehensive programming in a total school community that supports advanced learners and ensures the inclusion of often under-identified demographic and socioeconomic groups;
 - o differentiated curriculum and instruction strategies needed to meet the needs of advanced learners including evidence-based strategies for flexible and cluster grouping;
 - o personnel and professional development systems of support that provide all staff best practices related to developing capacity in all students rather than focusing on their deficits;
 - o monitoring the program effectiveness through multiple different measures, both qualitatively (i.e. classroom walk-through, staff surveys) and quantitatively (student achievement data, growth data, AP potential, etc.).

School Counselors

- Overview and understanding of DPS AIG Plan with a focus on
 - o Strategies for addressing the social and emotional needs of all AIG students (including twice-exceptional and ESL)
 - o Scheduling Practices that meet the needs of AIG students (4 year–6 year plans of study) ensuring

high achieving students, along with AIG students, are given opportunity for taking Advanced Placement Classes

o Knowledge of screening, referral, and identification practices EC and ESL Department – District Leaders and Teaching Staff

AIG Specialists and AIG Licensed Classroom Teachers

Ongoing professional learning and collaboration on the following:

- Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction – appropriate for AIG and high achieving students
- Personnel and Professional Development
- Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community
- Social and emotional needs of AIG students and strategies for working with AIG students
- Current research and practices in gifted education

School Staff to include Teaching & Learning Coaches, ESL & EC teachers, Instructional Assistants, regular education classroom teachers:

- The Office of Advanced Academics will develop and offer a 30-hr online PD credentialing course that allows teachers/staff members who are not AIG-licensed to learn more specifics about the instructional and social/emotional needs of advanced learners (IGNITERS - DPS AIG Local Credentialing Course) Complete description in Standard 4, Practice d)
- Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction – appropriate for AIG and high achieving students and ALL students
- Current research and practices in gifted education
- online modules to support advanced learners with differentiated instructional practices
- whole staff PD
- information shared in PLCs to support advanced learners

Practice D

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

District Response: For almost 15 years, the Office of Advanced Academics has partnered with local Institutes of Higher Education to assist cohorts of DPS teachers in obtaining AIG Licensure. Since that time, over 300 educators have completed the 12 graduate level hours and obtained AIG add-on licensure.

The Office of Advanced Academics works collaboratively with district leadership and principals to ensure the appropriate placement of AIG students and advanced learners with teachers who have AIG Licensure.

Elementary & Middle Schools:

AIG Specialists and members of the AIG Committee collaborate with administration on best practice guidance for clustering identified students and scheduling services to reflect academic needs of the students.

High Schools:

HS Advanced Academics Leads collaborate with administration and school staff on best practice guidance for scheduling students in advanced level courses - Honors and AP/IB -- with a specific focus on ensuring advanced courses are reflective of the student population of the school and district. The Office of Advanced Academics works collaboratively with the Office of Equity Affairs and Research and Accountability to provide HS Advanced Academic Leads and HS Principals with data reports that support increasing access to the most rigorous curriculum and instruction offerings for all students, particularly those from often underrepresented populations, so that barriers to advanced learning options in HS are identified and navigated at the school site level.

Curriculum and Instruction and the Office of Advanced Academics work collaboratively to determine the process for creating and offering DPS Honors courses. In alignment with the NC Department of Public Instruction framework provided for teachers of honors level courses, teachers should define how the content, instruction, materials and assessment differ from that of a standard level course. According to state guidelines, "curriculum should indicate depth, rigor, accelerated pacing, complexity, challenges and creativity beyond the standard level course."

All DPS Advanced Placement teachers participate in a professional development offered during the AP Summer Institute provided by the College Board. AP teachers submit their syllabi through the College Board Course Audit process to be authorized. This authorization must be in place for students to earn AP credit.

The Office of Advanced Academics will develop and offer a 30-hr online PD credentialing course (IGNITERS) to teachers/staff members who are not AIG-licensed. The course is designed to introduce and gain knowledge in the following areas of gifted/advanced learners:

- nature and needs
- social-emotional needs
- methods to differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies
- current research in gifted education

IGNITERS is facilitated by licensed gifted educators, creating capacity among all teachers to develop best practices for differentiating curriculum and instruction to support gifted/advanced learners in the classroom setting. (Office of Advanced Academics' Priorities: Equity in Academic Pursuit, Professional Learning, and Outreach.)

Upon successful completion of the IGNITERS program, participants will earn 3 CEUs and a DPS AIG Local Credentialing Certificate. IGNITERS is not comparable to AIG state licensure and the certificate is non-transferrable to other school districts.

Practice E

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

District Response: The Office of Advanced Academics' 2019-2022 Priorities listed below will guide the professional development plan to build capacity with all staff ensuring continuous program improvement that positively impacts teaching and learning.

- 1) Strengthening equity in academic pursuit that focuses on the individualized need of the student (identified and nurtured),
- 2) Providing high-quality professional learning opportunities and implementation evidence that focus on supports for student learning and ensures program fidelity, and
- 3) Increasing program outreach which bolsters collaboration and communication with all stakeholders

Based upon the surveys conducted with students, school staff and parents, the following items were highlighted as areas to be addressed through professional training, collaboration and/or support:

- Depth and complexity in all classes -- not just AIG/Honors/AP/IB classes
- Greater access to advanced learning opportunities in and outside of the classroom environments, (i.e. How might the school offer more advanced learning extra-curriculars or allow more students to participate in current offerings that foster critical thinking, problem-solving, etc.
- More applied learning opportunities that better connect a student's content knowledge with real-world experiences
- High-quality teachers that can deliver rigorous instruction empowered with differentiation strategies (such as flexible/cluster grouping) that support the diverse needs of all students whether advanced learners or in the regular education classroom setting
- Greater collaboration between the AIG Specialist/AA Lead Teachers and the regular education, ESL, EC teachers to support greater academic challenge in all disciplines and classrooms
- Improved communication with parents of all students that encourages a growth mindset toward learning thereby identifying and developing often hidden talent, capitalizing on student strengths while acknowledging deficits but scaffolding supports so that all students are pushed to the highest achievement level possible (MTSS connection).

The Office of Advanced Academics' annual Professional Development Plan will align to the needs noted above. At monthly meetings with AIG Specialists, professional development is aligned with best practices for gifted students such as project/problem-based learning, twice-exceptional learners, and characteristics/social and emotional needs of gifted learners, and with district goals of increased academic achievement, equity, culturally-relevant teaching and learning, safe schools and family/community partnerships.

The AIG Specialists at the elementary and middle school level and the High School Advanced Academic Leads work collaboratively with school leadership and the Office of Advanced Academics to ensure the practices as described in the LEA 2019-2022 AIG Plan are implemented with fidelity and are reflected in the School's Improvement Plan. Progress monitoring for AIG program implementation and student performance occurs at both the school and district level.

The Director and/or Coordinator of Advanced Academics lead professional development sessions throughout the district including beginning teachers, parent groups, district Teaching and Learning Coaches, grade level PLCs, and whole school faculty sessions. PD sessions include higher order questioning; strategies to facilitate higher level thinking with formatted discussion, summarizing, and

reflective writing; fostering growth mindsets; strategies for differentiating instruction (tiered lessons, choice boards, essential questions); teaching with poverty in mind; and how to conduct equity audits that guide improved access for underrepresented populations.

The Office of Advanced Academics will collaborate with Teaching and Learning Coaches and members of Curriculum and Instruction to integrate best practices for gifted/advanced learners. DPS is embarking on a core curriculum adoption in which the Office of Advanced Academics will connect advanced learning instructional strategies and curriculum resources for enrichment, extensions and acceleration across elementary and middle grade spans. At the high schools, course progression allows for acceleration options; however, the Office of Advanced Academics will collaborate with Curriculum and Instruction to build in depth and complexity in all academic disciplines.

The Office of Advanced Academics will develop and offer a 30-hr online PD credentialing course that allows teachers/staff members who are not AIG-licensed to learn more specifics about the instructional and social/emotional needs of advanced learners (IGNITERS - DPS AIG Local Credentialing Course) Complete description in Standard 4d.

AIG Specialists are afforded the opportunity to attend the annual NCAGT conference, and in addition, AIG Specialist and teachers participate in content specific professional learning within the district and across the state (i.e. NCTies) with a lens toward how to incorporate content-specific strategies in the advanced learning setting.

The Office of Advanced Academics collaborates with AIG Coordinators from across the region during quarterly AIG regional meetings and AIG Coordinator Institutes, and state or national professional conferences such as NC Association of Principal and Assistant Principals, CCES, NCASCD, and NAGC.

Practice F

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

District Response: Advanced Academics holds monthly PLCs for AIG Specialists and AIG Teachers, focused on professional learning to best meet the needs of gifted/advanced students, breaking down barriers that hinder referrals of underrepresented populations, and collaborating on curriculum and best instructional practices. Over the next plan cycle, more intentional focus will be given to establishing opportunities for teachers of Advanced Placement classes time to collaborate.

During school level PLCs and/or professional learning time, AIG Specialists share best practices for working with advanced learners and curriculum components that extend, enrich, and accelerate the core content.

District established professional development days provide additional time for AIG Specialists, AIG teachers, and regular education classroom teachers to work together.

To further assist, the Office of Advanced Academics will develop an AIG-specific web portal whereby

teachers and administrators could access instructional curriculum resources and strategies for supporting advanced learners. The IGNITERS Credentialing course would be housed on this site. Complete description in Standard 4d.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Develop IGNITERS credentialing course that assists all teachers with strategies for differentiating instruction for advanced learners regardless of the setting.

Provide support for principals and teachers to support flexible grouping, acceleration strategies, scheduling challenges that limit potential building experiences for all students.

Sources of Evidence: IGNITERS Credentialing course - Overview of the course, enrollment roster, list of teachers who complete the course

AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing) Binders at each school that support programming as outlined in the DPS AIG 2019-22 Plan.

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

Practice A

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

- * academic and intellectual
- * social and emotional

District Response: In alignment with Priority 4 of the DPS Strategic Plan 2019-2023: Strengthen School, Family, and Community Engagement and Advanced Academics' Priority Goal 3: Outreach - Focus on District Leadership & Community Engagement, the Office of Advanced Academics seeks out opportunities to engage parents/families at the district and school level. While many parents are involved, shifting the mindset from "parent/family involvement" to "parent/family engagement" will lead to stronger partnerships.

Each school K-12 fosters intentional partnerships through individual school AIG Partnership Committees. These committees reflect the diversity of the school and involve stakeholders who share the common goal of advocating for the needs of gifted students from all populations at all grade levels and promoting community engagement around advanced learning.

School AIG Partnership Committees, led by the AIG Specialist and comprised of parents/family members,

- assist in implementing initiatives to intentionally engage parents and the community in meaningful ways that support gifted education. (guest speakers, special projects, mentorships)
- form partnerships with community stakeholders to enhance and gain support for the AIG program, including services and enrichment opportunities. (Environmental Protection Agency, Duke University, Duke TIP, etc.)
- develop and/or assist with parent/ guardian/community information sessions and AIG family events
- serve as a liaison between the school and District AIG Advisory Council

In partnership with the DPS Family Academy and school level AIG Partnership Committees, the Office of Advanced Academics extends professional learning opportunities throughout the year with round table discussions to families around such topics as: Developing a Growth Mindset in Gifted/Advanced Learners, Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted/Advanced Learners, Parenting a Gifted/Advanced Child, and other topics that increase parent/family understanding of supporting their child's unique academic, social, and emotional needs.

Practice B

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

District Response: Information regarding the local AIG plan, program, and policies is shared in multiple ways to reach all stakeholders. Communicating with stakeholders include the following practices:

- DPS has an electronic weekly newsletter that serves as the primary communication tool between central services and school level administrators. It is the expectation of district leadership that all departments contribute information to ensure effective communication is in place, thereby allowing the Office of Advanced Academics an opportunity to inform school leaders about the local AIG program, the AIG plan, and regulations related to gifted education.
- School Board Members receive a weekly electronic newsletter which provides updates from all departments.
- The Director/Coordinator of Advanced Academics maintains the Advanced Academics webpage on the district's website which houses the AIG plan, programming information, annual powerpoint presentation, and current policies as it relates to DPS. School level AIG webpages provide a link for parents to quickly access the district communication.
- The Office of Advanced Academics will develop an annual powerpoint presentation reflecting current program, policies, services, data, and opportunities for involvement to be shared at school and parent informational meetings.
- The Director/Coordinator of Advanced Academics will develop an AIG-specific web portal whereby teachers and administrators in each school could access information and FAQs related to gifted education. This site would include guidance for recognizing characteristics of gifted students, the social/emotional needs of gifted students, instructional strategies for supporting advanced learners, etc. The Igniters Credentialing course would be housed on this site. (See Standard 4d)
- At the time of referral for AIG, parents/guardians receive a Parent Handbook outlining the screening, identification, and placement procedures; service delivery options; annual review process; procedures for resolving disagreements; and contact names, emails, and phone numbers to receive additional information.
- When a child is identified as AG/AIG/IG, the parents/guardians attend an initial placement conference to discuss service delivery and develop a Differentiated Educational Plan (DEP)/Individual Differentiated Educational Plan (IDEP) for their child.
- Annual informational parent meetings will be held during the first six weeks of the academic school year to discuss elementary and middle school services as part of the annual review DEP/IDEP process
- School based AIG Leadership and Partnership Advisory Committees assist in sharing information and building community support.
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) provides another means of communication with stake holders.

Practice C

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

District Response: With changes in administration and the responsibility of writing the 2019-2022 AIG Plan, a new Advanced Academics Advisory Council was created. The diverse group, reflective of the district's demographics, brings together an assortment of unique knowledge and skills to effectively ensure various perspectives are being considered when developing the 2019-2022 AIG Plan.

The membership of the Advanced Academics Advisory Council is fluid, retaining a core group and rotating other members on to bring in new ideas, perspectives, and energy. Parent liaisons, school administrators, Central Services administrators, AIG Specialists, AIG teachers, general education teachers, community members, school level Equity Champions, and representatives from Career and Technical Education, district Curriculum and Instruction, English as a Second Language, the Office of Equity Affairs, and Student Support Services were an integral part of the council. (See Standard 6a for a description of the Advanced Academics Advisory Council's work in developing the plan.) The Office of Advanced Academics will be intentional to invite student representation based on agenda topic(s) and provide opportunities to serve on committees.

The Advanced Academics Advisory Council meets quarterly.

Practice D

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

District Response: Parents/families and other stakeholders in the community are informed of opportunities available to gifted/advanced learners and/or families in multiple means, such as:

- DPS website with links to the Advanced Academics departmental page
- flyers/brochures related to events,
- automated call systems
- email listserv
- excerpt in school newsletters
- Social Media outlets, such as Facebook (DPS and Advanced Academic pages), Instagram, and Twitter

Currently, printed information and phone communication shared by the district and the Office of Advanced Academics is primarily translated into Spanish. Translators present at district and AIG sponsored events are bilingual, helping bridge the connection to culturally and linguistically diverse families.

With over 80 different languages spoken in Durham Public Schools, multilingual communication with

families is a priority. Many DPS students quickly attain proficiency in English; however, there often remains a language barrier when communicating with parents. The DPS Office of Public Relations, English as a Second Language Department, bilingual staff members at the DPS Multilingual Resource Center and the Office of Advanced Academics recognize the growing need for multilingual communication and will continue to partner together to ensure successful parent communication.

Practice E

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

District Response: In alignment with the DPS Strategic Plan: Priority 4 Strengthen School, Family, and Community Engagement and Advanced Academics' Priority 3: Outreach - Focus on District Leadership & Community Engagement, the Office of Advanced Academics partners with a broad base of businesses, industries, and institutes of higher education that support AIG programming and services in DPS. Enhanced student and staff learning through mentorships, outreach programs, interest clubs, enrichment camps, and field-based experiences provide opportunities outside-of-school programming for the almost 60 schools in our district. Such diverse opportunities are provided by the:

- Museum of Life and Science
- Duke Lemur Center
- Bull Durham's Baseball (student field based experience with filming)
- Office of Duke TIP
- HUB Farm, an outreach of the CTE program
- Environmental Science Summer Program (ESSP)/Duke University

To foster the continued talent development in gifted/advanced learners, organizations such as the Arts Council, Full Frame Documentary Festival, Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, Durham Performing Arts Center, and Carolina Theatre provide opportunities for student and AIG Specialist/Teacher involvement

To showcase some of the businesses, organizations, and community agencies that partner with the Office of Advanced Academics, an annual Summer Enrichment Expo is sponsored by the AIG Specialists. The event provides the opportunity for approximately 40 community stakeholders to showcase summer enrichment camps, internships, and programs to parents and families. Academic and non-academic representation is present, including area art museums, the Museum of Life and Science, the Lemur Center, technology camps, community education outreach, YMCA, etc.

Continued partnerships with area institutions of higher education offer student learning experiences beyond dual enrollment. DPS partners with NC Central, Duke University, NC School of Science and Math, and Durham Technical Community College to offer extended learning opportunities for gifted/advanced learners.

For approximately 15 years, the Office of Advanced Academics has partnered with area institutes of higher education to provide AIG Licensure to over 300 DPS teachers and staff members. The graduate level program has built greater capacity in recognizing and responding to the needs of gifted/advanced

learners. The district supports this initiative through Title II funds.

As the district employs strategies (listed below as connected to AIG Partnerships) to meet Priority 4: Strengthen School, Family and Community Engagement, Goal C: By 2023, every school will have a community partner that is committed to providing meaningful programs and services to meet the diverse needs of students as outlined in the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan, additional support for AIG programs, services, and student will increase.

*Strategies for meeting Priority 4, Goal C, 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan

- Identify community partners for every school that could address the school's needs.
- Establish relationships between schools and community partners and utilize community services in schools

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Engage the Advanced Academics Advisory Council to support plan implementation, feedback for improvement, and ideas to support student success.

Sources of Evidence: AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing) Binders at each school that support programming as outlined in the DPS AIG 2019-22 Plan.

AIG/Advanced Academic Leads Handbooks

Minutes/Attendance Roster from District Advanced Academic Advisory Council meetings

Standard 6: Program Accountability

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

Practice A

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

District Response: Durham Public Schools maintains a local AIG plan in accordance with state legislation and policy which is reviewed and revised every three years. Using the North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted Program Standards (State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018) and Article 9B [N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-8], the district's written plan reflects the statewide framework for quality AIG programming, the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan, and the Office of Advanced Academics Priorities, which include:

- Strengthening equity in academic pursuit that focuses on the individualized need of the student (identified and nurtured),
- Providing high-quality professional learning opportunities and implementation evidence that focus on supports for student learning and ensures program fidelity, and
- Increasing program outreach which bolsters collaboration and communication with all stakeholders

The 2019-2022 AIG Plan clearly articulates program guidance for student identification and service delivery expectations, differentiated curriculum and instruction strategies, personnel and professional development supports, comprehensive programming within a total school community that supports advanced learning options for all students regardless of identification, partnerships that build program capacity and contribute to program improvement, and program accountability that is evaluated periodically for refinement and continuous improvement.

During this plan cycle, feedback from multiple stakeholders including both internal and external groups (i.e. students, parents, staff, community members, district leadership) was incorporated to intentionally design support for AIG program improvement and innovation in all schools across the district. The following actions were taken to provide insights into current successful practices within the AIG program that should be retained as well as program improvement recommendations including:

- Creation of an AIG District Advisory Council*
- A comprehensive review of the 2016-2019 DPS AIG Plan determining effective practices and noting goals for improvement completed by multiple audiences, including Elementary AIG Specialists, Middle School AIG Specialists, HS Advanced Academic Leads, and the AIG Plan Advisory Team
- Surveys administered for the following stakeholder groups:
 - o Student - elementary and secondary
 - o Parents/Families/Community Members
 - o School level administration and certified/classified staff
- A cross-disciplinary team reviewing 2016-2019 LEA AIG Plans from multiple districts with emphasis on strengthening middle and high school programming options

- Conversations with district leadership and community members regarding areas of concern and improvement recommendations
- An intentional focus on alignment with the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan
- A strategic review of all data points to create the 2019-2022 AIG Priority Goals
- A review of the draft version of the 2019-2022 DPS AIG Plan and feedback from the AIG Plan Advisory Team

*Advanced Academics District Advisory Council: This diverse group is reflective of the district's demographics and is comprised of parent liaisons, school administrators, AIG Specialists, AIG teachers, classroom teachers, community members, school level Equity Champions, and representatives from Career and Technical Education, district Curriculum and Instruction, and Student Support.

Practice B

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

District Response: To monitor the successful implementation of the local AIG program and plan according to current legislation and state policies [Article 9B, Academically or Intellectually Gifted Students [N.C.G.S. 115C-150.5-.8] and North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted Program Standards (State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018), the Advanced Academics Director / Coordinator conduct ongoing program monitoring and evaluation that allows for fidelity of implementation and successful outcomes for students including:

- Monitoring of student referrals and identification to ensure equity; all PowerSchool entries are reviewed and entered by the Advanced Academics Coordinator
- Analyzing the disaggregation data from the Department of Public Instruction AIG Child Count to monitor demographic groups for equitable representation that is reflective of district demographics
- Collaborating with Research and Accountability to analyze student proficiency and growth data of AIG students
- Collaborating with Financial Services to ensure AIG funds are allocated appropriately to support the AIG program implementation.
- Monitoring of K-8 service delivery options, including K- INVESTIGATIONS, at each school to ensure that the academic and instructional needs of AIG learners are being met
- Monitoring of 9-12 service delivery options where service delivery is built into course progression and advanced course offerings of honors, AP/IB, Dual Enrollment, CDM, etc.
- Completing Interim reports as provided by NCDPI to assess progress towards program implementation
- Conducting surveys from all stakeholders to collect and analyze feedback designed around program improvement
- Reviewing AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing) Binders at each school that support programming as outlined in the DPS AIG 2019-22 Plan.
- Implementing an AIG Classroom Walkthrough /Look Fors document that allows the Director, Coordinator, and Lead Specialists in providing feedback to AIG Specialists; This document also provides assistance to the school administrator in program evaluation

Practice C

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

District Response: To ensure AIG allotted funds from the state and additional funding from the local level are appropriately allocated to support AIG program implementation, the Director of Advanced Academics prepares and submits an annual budget aligned with program priorities which support the NC AIG Program Standards (State Board of Education Policy ACIG-000 – June 2018), and district Strategic Plan Goals. The budget is monitored monthly by the Chief Financial Officer, the Budget Administrative Assistant and the Director of Advanced Academics ensuring oversight of funding and appropriateness of expenditures.

DPS is fortunate to support AIG programming at each elementary and middle school with a full time AIG Specialist and an extended contract for Advanced Academic Leads at the high school level who oversee the implementation of the DPS AIG plan, works directly with instructing or supporting gifted/advanced learners, and ensures exposure to higher order thinking skills for all K-2 students at the elementary level. Additional personnel support is allocated to elementary and middle schools based on the school's Average Daily Membership and number of AIG identified students.

Additional budget line items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Salaries for AIG Specialist and AIG teachers who have obtained full or provisional AIG licensure and are directly supporting instruction with AIG identified and nurtured students.
- Opportunities for Professional Development, including Summer Institute for AP teachers
- Materials and scoring services for universal screening at the second grade level, as well as additional assessment materials for ongoing screening in grades K-12
- Program implementation
- Support of Governor's School tuition

Title II funds designed specifically for professional learning contribute to the AIG licensure requirement supporting the district's directive that all AIG identified students are served by a licensed AIG teacher.

Practice D

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

District Response: The Director and Coordinator of Advanced Academics have access to the DPS Office of Research and Accountability webportal RADD (Research and Accountability Data Drive)

which houses all district achievement data. Pulling data periodically from RADD allows the Office of Advanced Academics a continuous cycle of collecting multiple data sources, interpreting the data to determine systems of support around AIG student achievement, and implementing changes as needed to ensure student growth continues. Data points include achievement from BOG, EOG, EOC, AP, IB, pre-ACT, ACT, PSAT and SAT scores, as well as predictions on student's success probabilities from EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment System). Special attention remains on monitoring the achievement and growth on underrepresented populations. Data on student achievement and growth is systematically shared with Central Service Leaders, School Administrators, district level content specialists, AIG Specialists, and High School Lead Teachers.

Elementary & Middle School

Elementary and Middle School AIG Specialists develop Intervention Plans to assist AIG students who may need support in challenging classes or who are not working at an expected level as aligned with their area of identification. Classroom teachers, the student, and his/her parents are part of the collaborative process to develop, review, and refine plans.

Supported by the DPS 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Priority 1, Goal c: Develop a centralized Early Warning Tracking System, beginning at elementary school, that identifies students who are at risk of disconnecting from school, AIG Specialists and teachers of gifted/advanced learners will develop additional supports for students based on needs.

High School

Student Support Services works collaboratively with the Director/Coordinator of Advanced Academics to share early-warning data for drop-out prevention of AIG students. Supports are developed at the high school level to support students in danger of failing/dropping out.

Practice E

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

District Response: In support of AIG Priority 1: Equity in Academic Pursuit, the Office of Advanced Academics engages in ongoing monitoring of all students being referred and identified, achievement results of AIG students, and the retention of identified students in DPS, especially during transition years.

Elementary and Middle School:

Data audits for each school are conducted in the fall and spring to analyze variables that support student success, including a targeted review of under-, equal- or over representation among students

who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and twice-exceptional. Enrollment data for the district, divided by elementary, middle, and high for a closer comparison, is used to support the measure for proportionality. Each school's data is shared with their AIG Leadership Committee for further review. When disproportionalities exist among subgroups of identified students (gender, race, SES, ELL, etc.) the team members explore reasons for the differences and identify strategies to close the gaps.

High School:

At the high school level, student enrollment and performance in Advanced Placement and Honors classes are analyzed in a partnership between Curriculum and Instruction, Student Support Services, Office of Equity Affairs, building administration, and the Office of Advanced Academics. The subgroup percentages of students enrollment in advanced classes are compared with the overall subgroup enrollment at each school. Equity teams at the high school are creating systems to enroll underrepresented populations in more rigorous classes and provide supports for student success, such as monitoring pass/fail status, initiating parent/teacher/student conferences, involving school social worker or mental health professional if needed.

Advanced Academics High School Lead Teachers facilitate additional analysis at the building level to ensure collaboration between counselors, teachers, and administrators when discussing the representation, retention, and performance of subgroups within advanced classes.

The Director and Coordinator of Advanced Academics have access to the DPS Office of Research and Accountability's webportal RADD (Research and Accountability Data Drive) which houses all district achievement data. When yearly analysis of student performance data from standardized testing and dropout data occurs, special consideration is focused on underrepresented populations.

Practice F

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

District Response: The Office of Advanced Academics, in partnership with the DPS Office of Human Resources, reviews current data regarding the credentials of personnel to ensure all AIG Specialists and teachers funded to deliver AIG services hold an AIG add-on license through the state of North Carolina. This information is shared with principals to guide staffing positions requiring AIG license.

When teachers or other staff members earn an AIG add-on license or accrue professional development hours that address gifted/advanced learners, the Office of Advanced Academics works with the Professional Development Office to ensure data is updated. With the start of the IGNITERS program (30 hour credentialing course), principals will be notified of teachers who successfully complete the program. The IGNITER teachers should be given consideration when placing cluster groups of advanced learners with general education services.

Practice G

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

District Response: To create a program rich in feedback, the Advanced Academics Director and Coordinator conduct formal and informal measures of response to elicit positive change and fuel growth of the AIG program.

Feedback is collected from stakeholders in a variety of ways to ensure all perspectives are considered:

- facilitate open conversation with the DPS Advanced Academics Advisory Council
- review minutes from each school-based AIG Leadership and Partnership committee
- engage in round table discussions at monthly meetings with AIG Specialists
- gather updates from Lead Specialists based on their weekly school visits
- involve principals, AIG Specialists, regular education classroom teachers, and students in meaningful conversation during school visits, collaborative work committees or other district established meetings
- survey all stakeholders, allowing opportunities for open-ended questions
- engage in conversations with parents and teachers during district wide events where the Office of Advanced Academics is present (Magnet Fair, Countdown to Kindergarten, Transfer Fair, etc.)
- monitor feedback from social media on district and departmental sites

Practice H

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

District Response: Systematic reviews and meta-analysis of the 2016-2019 DPS AIG Plan to determine effective programmatic practices and areas for improvement were completed by multiple groups representing both internal and external perspectives.

Using a rubric of effectiveness, AIG Specialists reflected and ranked each of the NC AIG Program Practices as it related to both the district level and their individual schools. Data gathered from the review was evaluated, marking the areas of strength and needs/opportunities for program improvement.

Surveys that included questions on identification practices, comprehensive programming, curriculum and instruction, perspective of equity, and degree of satisfaction with AIG were sent to the following groups:

- o Elementary students in grades 3 -5, identified and nurtured
- o All students at the middle and high school level
- o Parents/Families/Community Members

- o School level administration and certified/classified staff

The Advanced Academics District Advisory Council* examined the survey results, establishing the biggest areas of concerns and posing questions as to possible reasons for some quantitative and qualitative responses. This data was integrated with the AIG Specialist review noted above for commonalities and variances.

To this growing collection of data, the Director/Coordinator of Advanced Academics incorporated information gathered from ongoing intentional conversations with district leadership, school administrators, community members, and students regarding areas of concern and improvement recommendations. The following was used to continue developing the plan:

- Recommendations from DPI Advanced Academics after review of the DPS 2016-2019 AIG Plan
- An intentional focus on alignment with the 2018-2023 DPS Strategic Plan
- A strategic review of all data points to create the 2019-2022 AIG Priority Goals
- A review of the draft version of the 2019-2022 DPS AIG Plan and feedback from the AIG Plan Advisory Team

*Advanced Academic District Advisory Council: This diverse group is reflective of the district's demographics and is comprised of parent liaisons, school administrators, AIG Specialists, AIG teachers, classroom teachers, community members, school level Equity Champions, and representatives from Career and Technical Education, district Curriculum and Instruction, and Student Support.

Practice I

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

District Response: Data from informal and formal review of the AIG program is shared with the public through the Advanced Academics District Advisory Council meetings held quarterly. Program implementation, data results, and areas of concern or for improvement are shared during district leadership meetings.

The Advanced Academics Director and Coordinator will prepare an annual report regarding the implementation of the AIG Plan to the Board of Education, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Members of the Curriculum and Instruction Department, and all other stakeholders. The report will articulate the status of current programming and provide formative and summative evaluation reports. Summary documents will be posted on the district's website page.

Practice J

Safeguards the rights of all AIG students and their parents and families through established written

policies, procedures, and practices. The LEA plan includes: informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.

District Response: In accordance with state law, Durham Public Schools employs consistent processes for safeguarding the rights of AIG students and their parents/families. Written procedures that articulate informed consent regarding evaluation and placement are followed throughout the district. Parents/families are informed of the procedures outlined in the Parent Handbook at the beginning of the referral process.

Each student nominated has a confidential documentation folder in which all forms are filed. Such forms include the Consent to Evaluate and Reassess*- invitation to initial conference, minutes from conference, invitation to annual review, etc. Following the outlined procedure for documentation ensures that all parents/families are aware of processes and that each individual student receives consistent communication during the identification and placement process. During school annual review meetings to discuss the Differentiated Education Plans, the AIG Specialist will review students' rights for reassessment, appropriate services, and enrichment opportunities.

Students showing an academic need for differentiated, accelerated, and/or advanced services can be considered for reassessment on an annual basis. Parents will receive a Consent to Evaluate and Reassess* form communicating the process and seeking permission to conduct additional assessments.

* Consent to Evaluate and Reassess - When a student is referred for AIG identification and further academic testing is warranted, a "Consent to Evaluate" form is sent to the parent/guardian making them aware of the process and seeking permission to conduct additional assessments. The signed Consent to Evaluate Form is part of the documentation folder for each student.

Once a student is identified, parents/guardians attend an Initial Placement Meeting with the AIG Specialist. During this meeting, the AIG Specialist reviews all assessment data and the parent signs the Summary of Evaluation Card, giving consent to services. Oftentimes the service delivery does not change since the student has participated in the talent development pool; however, parents are officially notified and give consent to continued services through the Initial Placement Meeting.

The process for reviewing transfers from other LEAs is articulated in the Parent Handbook, the AIG Specialist Handbook, and in the DPS AIG Plan under Standard 1b. Parents are made aware of this process through the Temporary Services/ Transfer Form upon registration.

AIG Specialists will ensure teachers, counselors, and administrators understand the policies, procedures, and practices in place to protect the rights of AIG students.

Procedures for Resolving Disagreements

Parents or guardians may request a review of Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) services if they feel that:

- (a) Durham Public Schools improperly failed to identify their child as an AIG, AG, or IG

student,

or

- (b) The plan for the AIG Program has not been implemented appropriately in regard to their child.

Step 1: Principal's Conference

(a) If a disagreement concerning AIG services is not resolved with the AIG committee, the parent or guardian may file a written appeal of the committee's decision with the principal within five (5) school days.

(b) The principal shall schedule a conference with the parent or guardian within five (5) school days of receiving the appeal and, after reviewing the challenged recommendation with the AIG committee chairperson, shall respond in writing to the parent or guardian and AIG committee within five (5) school days after the parent conference.

Step 2: Appeal to the Office of Advanced Academics

(a) If the disagreement is not resolved through the principal's conference, the parent or guardian may file a written appeal of the decision with the district's Office of Advanced Academics within five (5) school days of receiving the principal's response.

(b) The Office of Advanced Academics shall convene the AIG Appeals Committee and schedule a conference with the parent or guardian within five (5) school days of receiving the appeal.

(c) The Office of Advanced Academics shall respond in writing to the parent or guardian and principal concerning the outcome of the review within five (5) school days after the conference.

Step 3: Appeal to Durham Public Schools Board of Education

(a) If the disagreement is not resolved through the AIG Appeal Committee's review, the parent or guardian may file a written appeal of the decision with the Durham Public Schools Board of Education within five (5) school days of receiving the response from the AIG Appeals Committee.

(b) The Board of Education shall offer a final written decision to the parent or guardian within thirty (30) calendar days after receiving the appeal.

(c) The Board of Education shall notify the parent or guardian that he/she has sixty (60) days to appeal to the Office of Administrative Hearings.

Step 4: State Level Grievance Procedure

(a) In the event that the local grievance procedure fails to resolve the disagreement, the parent or 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:

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

(ii) 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 conclusions of law. Notwithstanding the provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, the decisions 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.

Ideas to Strengthen the Standard: Classroom walkthrough tools for administrators

Annual parent, student and staff surveys

Sources of Evidence: AIG IMPACT (Implementation, Partnerships, and Comprehensive Testing)
Binders at each school that support programming as outlined in the DPS AIG 2019-22 Plan.

AIG/Advanced Academic Leads Handbooks

Disaggregated data of AIG Headcount, students in nurturing programs, and testing done by the AIG specialists

List of AIG Licensed teachers in the district and current teaching assignments

Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):

()