

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools**  
**Local Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Plan**  
**Effective 2019-2022**

**Approved by local Board of Education on:** 04-JUN-19  
**LEA Superintendent's Name:** Clayton Wilcox  
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Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools has developed this local AIG plan based on the NC AIG Program Standards (adopted by SBE, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018). These Standards serve as a statewide framework and guide LEAs to develop, coordinate and implement thoughtful and comprehensive AIG programs.

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

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

***For 2019-2022, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools local AIG plan is as follows:***

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Vision for local AIG program:** The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools 2022 Plan for Gifted Education provides a comprehensive plan of action to meet the advanced learning needs of gifted and advanced students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The plan outlines goals, supports, and programs designed to nurture, identify, and effectively serve gifted and advanced students in an effort to maximize student potential. Through implementation of the CMS 2022 Gifted Plan, we will create access to advanced courses and programs, increase integrity to gifted and advanced programs to ensure academic and social emotional needs of students are met, and ensure clear communication with all stakeholders. The three-year plan responds to the NC General Assembly Article 9B that requires each LEA to develop a local AIG plan with specific components.

The 2022 Plan for Gifted Education is designed in support of the CMS Strategic Plan and district initiatives. Plan development occurred using data gathered from surveys, assessments, school and student performance indicators, collaborative planning groups, and the AIG Plan Advisory Group. Relevant perspectives were gained from multiple stakeholders to ensure our district's diverse needs were considered and met.

**The 2022 CMS Gifted Plan Overall Goals are as follows:**

8/7/2020

Create access for underrepresented students to gifted and advanced programs and appropriately challenging coursework.

Increase integrity of gifted and advanced programs to ensure academic & social/emotional needs of all students are met.

Create systems to increase clear communication with all stakeholders.

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

<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>	<b>Grant Funding</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>
<b>\$7893577.00</b>	<b>\$2503357.00</b>	<b>\$189217.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

## Table of Contents

<a href="#">Standard 1: Student Identification</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Standard 2: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Standard 3: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Standard 4: Personnel and Professional Development</a>	<a href="#">39</a>
<a href="#">Standard 5: Partnerships</a>	<a href="#">48</a>
<a href="#">Standard 6: Program Accountability</a>	<a href="#">53</a>

## 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 CMS Advanced Studies department conducts a universal screening for all second grade students primarily educated within a general education setting. The screening utilizes multiple criteria to create a comprehensive student profile. Each second grade student is provided with, at minimum, one formal opportunity via the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), a nationally-normed abilities test, and one informal opportunity via the Gifted Rating Scales (GRS), an observational checklist. Other formal and informal assessment opportunities are available if students meet certain criteria, including the Iowa Assessments, a nationally-normed achievement assessment in reading and math, and a portfolio consisting of student work samples.

The gifted screening process for second grade students is communicated clearly and consistently at the elementary level. These efforts are led by the Talent Development (TD) Teacher at each school. The Advanced Studies Department develops and disseminates letters to ensure communication is consistent across the district. The letters and forms are all provided in multiple languages. Clear deadlines are set and shared with elementary stakeholders for when communication must be shared with families. Parents and guardians are notified of assessment dates, timelines, and next steps.

Additionally, each elementary school will host an informational session for second grade families to explain the process with a presentation generated by our department. TD Teachers will lead this session. TD Teachers will also lead an informational session with all teachers and administrators regarding gifted identification, including second grade screening and rescreening in grades 3-5. All schools are provided with access to practice activities prior to the second grade screening with the CogAT.

Kindergarten and first grade students may be considered for gifted identification if assessment results are available as a result of the grade acceleration process, Horizons application process, or if the student is identified as gifted in a district or school outside of CMS.

Parents/guardians, students, counselors, teachers, and other stakeholders may refer students for testing for gifted identification in grades 3-12. Each school is required to have a TD Site-Based Committee, which is comprised of an administrator, TD Teacher or Academic Facilitator (AF), classroom teacher, and other relevant staff members. All decisions for testing for gifted identification outside of the district-wide second grade screening process are made by TD Site-Based Committees. The Advanced Studies department has developed a document outlining rationale for screening/rescreening to provide guidance to committees and they are encouraged to utilize both quantitative and qualitative data to make informed decisions. Students may be considered for rescreening through district testing after a period of at least 24 months has passed.

Assessment windows are posted on both the district's website and on the Advanced Studies

department's website annually. Windows are strictly adhered to in order to ensure consistency within the district.

During screening windows and referral processes, district approved letters are provided to communicate referral processes/timelines, assessment dates, next steps, and results. Parent/guardian permission is required for any student who is assessed outside of the district-wide second grade screening process. Gifted identification in any capacity also requires parent/guardian permission to ensure proper coding within our student information system, Power School.

Communication of identification screening procedures at the secondary level is managed by Academic Facilitators to appropriate stakeholders.

### **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:** An objective points-based rubric has been developed to determine gifted eligibility for students in CMS using multiple criteria that includes both formal and informal assessment opportunities. Formal opportunities include aptitude and achievement assessments, while informal opportunities include rating scales and portfolios. Students in CMS may identify as gifted in five different capacities-- Academically Intellectually Gifted (AI), Academically Gifted (AG), Intellectually Gifted (IG), Academically Gifted- Reading (AR), and Academically Gifted-Math (AM).

**KINDERGARTEN & FIRST GRADE:** Parents/guardians, students, counselors, teachers, and other stakeholders may refer students to be screened for Horizons or grade acceleration. For students in grades K-1, if the TD Site-Based Committee has enough qualitative and quantitative data to determine the child is consistently performing one to two grade levels above his/her current grade level the following two screenings can occur:

**Grade Acceleration:** The grade acceleration process supported through our department is driven by the Iowa Acceleration Scales (IAS). Students who are considered for grade acceleration are initially screened with the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA). If the student scores in the 90th percentile or higher, he/she continues with the grade acceleration process. In this process students are administered the Woodcock Johnson or another aptitude assessment, Iowa Assessments (two grade levels ahead), and qualitative rating scales completed by parents, teachers, and administrators. Scores are placed into points categories as identified by the IAS. Upon receiving the overall rating on the IAS, the TD Site-Based Committee will meet to determine if the child meets criteria on the CMS Gifted Identification Rubric to qualify as gifted, and if grade acceleration should occur. If a child identifies as gifted in any capacity, the TD Site-Based Committee will work to develop an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) to best meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of the child. If a decision to grade accelerate occurs, a transition plan is developed.

**Horizons Program:** The CMS Horizons Program is a district-wide program designed for highly gifted

8/7/2020

students who are performing at a minimum of two-grade levels above their same-age peers in all content areas. Students are screened for the Horizons program using multiple criteria, including aptitude and achievement results.

If a kindergarten or first grade student is identified as gifted in any capacity in another school or district, gifted identification will remain the same in CMS. No further testing is required. An IDEP will be developed for gifted kindergartners and first graders and TD Teachers will work collaboratively with classroom teachers and parents to determine how to best meet social, emotional, and academic needs.

**SECOND GRADE:** All second grade students who are educated primarily in a CMS general education classroom are screened with the CogAT and the GRS. The GRS is completed by first grade teachers in the spring. Students who did not attend a CMS school in first grade will have the GRS completed by their second grade teacher after they have known them for at least 6 weeks. Gifted Rating Scales (GRS) are nationally-normed observational checklists where teachers are asked to rate students compared to their same age peers in six domains- intellectual, academic, creativity, artistic talent, motivation, and leadership.

The district utilizes the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) as a formal measure to assess a student's ability to reason. The CogAT consists of three batteries-verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal and is administered in the fall of a student's second grade year.

A student will be identified as Academically Intellectually Gifted (AI) if they accumulate a minimum of 12 points through a combination of...

- aptitude testing
- aptitude and achievement testing
- aptitude testing and GRS percentiles

Unidentified students who score in the 77th-95th percentile or higher on CogAT through overall age composite, verbal, quantitative, or quantitative-nonverbal (QN) composite will be eligible for an achievement assessment opportunity and will be administered the Iowa Assessments in both reading and math. If a student does not identify as gifted in any capacity through CogAT, Iowa assessments, and/or GRS, student will be eligible to submit a portfolio of work samples.

Students who score in the 89th-95th percentile on an aptitude assessment shall be identified as Intellectually Gifted (IG) if they do not identify as gifted in any capacity after achievement testing.

A student will be identified as Academically Gifted (AG) if they accumulate a minimum of 12 points through a combination of...

- achievement testing and GRS percentiles
- aptitude, achievement, and GRS percentiles

Students who meet criteria for portfolio eligibility and earn the minimum number of points on the CMS Portfolio Scoring Matrix shall also be identified as AG.

Students who accumulate a minimum of 6 points will be identified as gifted in a single subject area-either Academically Gifted- Reading (AR) or Academically Gifted- Math (AM). Identification as AR is

8/7/2020

determined through verbal aptitude percentile combined with reading achievement percentile, while identification as AM is determined through quantitative or quantitative/ nonverbal (QN) aptitude percentile combined with math achievement percentile.

CMS students must not be identified as gifted in any capacity and meet one of the following criteria in order to be eligible to participate in the portfolio opportunity:

- Score in the 84th percentile or higher in 3 or more domains on Gifted Rating Scales with at least one occurring in Intellectual, Academic, or Creativity domains.
- Score in the 77th- 88th percentile on the overall age composite (VQN) on a CMS-administered aptitude assessment.
- Score in the 77th percentile or higher on any battery (verbal, quantitative, nonverbal, or quantitative/nonverbal composite) of a CMS-administered aptitude assessment and have one or more of the following factors—English Learner, Exceptional Child, McKinney-Vento, high rate of absenteeism, multiple entry points within a 24 month period, or attends a Title 1 or Low Performing school.

CMS 2nd grade portfolios consist of three student work samples with an optional advocate entry and are scored by a team of trained TD Teachers. The process is designed to capture gifted and advanced traits within student work samples. Students who earn the minimum number of points on the CMS Portfolio Scoring Matrix shall be identified as Academically Gifted (AG).

THIRD-TWELFTH GRADES: Parents/guardians, students, counselors, teachers, and other stakeholders may refer students for testing for gifted identification in grades 3-12. Each school is required to have a TD Site-Based Committee, which is comprised of an administrator, TD Teacher or Academic Facilitator (AF), classroom teacher, and other relevant staff members. All decisions for testing for gifted identification outside of the districtwide second grade screening process are made by TD Site-Based Committees. Students may be considered for rescreening by the district after a period of at least 24 months has passed. The CMS Gifted Identification Rubric is used to determine gifted eligibility.

Currently, third-twelfth grade screening relies solely on formal assessments. We will continue to develop an informal opportunity outside of the initial 2nd grade screening and invite schools to participate in this pilot over the next three years.

The following descriptors are used for the various gifted identification labels in CMS:

- Academically Intellectually Gifted (AI): Student demonstrates high intellectual capacity and high academic performance.
- Intellectually Gifted (IG): Student demonstrates high intellectual capacity but has not yet demonstrated high academic performance.
- Academically Gifted (AG): Student exhibits high performance capability in reading and math and possesses a strong capacity for learning.
- Academically Gifted- Math (AM): Student demonstrates strength in the area of mathematics with substantially high levels of accomplishment.

- Academically Gifted- Reading (AR): Student demonstrates strength in the area of reading with substantially high levels of accomplishment.

Reciprocity for Gifted Identification outside of CMS:

- Gifted Identification from another North Carolina (NC) Local Education Agency (LEA): If testing results led to student being identified as gifted in any capacity (AI, AG, IG, AR, AM), gifted identification will remain the same in CMS with no further testing required. If identification label does not transfer through PowerSchool, a parent or guardian signature will be required on a Talent Development Referral and Results Form to ensure proper coding.

- Gifted Identification provided by a school district or LEA outside of NC: If a student was identified as gifted in any capacity (AI, AG, IG, AR, AM) in a school district or LEA outside of North Carolina, gifted identification will remain the same in CMS with no further testing required. Documentation must be provided and may consist of an official score report, educational record, and/or official letter from school or district to show student was identified as gifted. The TD Teacher or Academic Facilitator will complete the top portion of a Talent Development Referral and Results Form and obtain a parent or guardian signature to ensure informed consent and proper coding in PowerSchool.

### **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:** The CMS screening process for gifted identification is comprehensive and designed to provide access for underrepresented populations. The identification process includes universal screening, multiple formal and informal assessments, multiple pathways to identification, and students can identify as gifted in five different areas (AI, AG, IG, AM, and AR). and The Talent Development (TD) Catalyst model is inclusive and allows us to provide differentiated learning experiences to gifted and high-ability students. Consistent work and research are done to ensure that our identification process accurately captures students across the district with advanced learning needs.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is a diverse district. Currently, about 11% of the CMS student population is identified as gifted. The gifted student population includes all demographic groups. However, some demographic groups are still underrepresented within the gifted population. Consistent work is being done to increase access for underrepresented students. As the identification procedures from the 2022 CMS Gifted Plan are implemented, sub-group data will continue to be monitored and analyzed.

Expanding the ranges of performance on the 2019-2022 CMS Gifted Identification Rubric will increase access and opportunities for gifted identification. Students will now earn points beginning in the 77th percentile, which encompasses all of the 7th stanine that indicates above average aptitude or achievement. Additionally, we have expanded percentile ranks for Gifted Rating Scales equating to



84th percentile and above (very high and high probability gifted).

Outside factors that may impact a student's ability to perform on an aptitude assessment are considered and opportunities have been expanded by recognizing demonstrated areas of strength in individual batteries of CogAT assessment. Students will now be eligible for the portfolio if they score in the 77th percentile or higher on any battery (verbal, quantitative, nonverbal, or quantitative/nonverbal composite) of a CMS-administered aptitude assessment and have one or more of the following factors—English Learner, Exceptional Child, McKinney-Vento, high rate of absenteeism, multiple entry points within a 24 month period, or attends a Title 1 or Low Performing school. Additionally, our portfolio criteria have been adapted to strategically target underrepresented populations, including English Learners (EL) and Exceptional Children (EC). The portfolio opportunity allows students to demonstrate gifted and advanced traits through work samples. This process will continue to be refined and adapted to better capture student output and performance compared to their same-aged peers.

The Advanced Studies department will continue to partner with the CMS EL department and will foster collaborative partnerships with other CMS departments, including EC, Equity, and Title I, to ensure we are effective in finding and serving underrepresented gifted students.

The district has developed a comprehensive screening process for Horizons, our full day program for highly gifted students in grades K-8. The Horizons application and screening process utilizes multiple criteria. Horizons provides full day learning experiences facilitated by AIG-licensed teachers and designed to meet needs of highly gifted students.

#### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** A district-wide CMS Gifted Identification Rubric and other supporting documents including checklists, organizers, and clear guidelines, have been developed to guide consistency with the district-wide identification procedures. Ongoing professional development ensures TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators are consistently informed regarding screening, referral, and identification processes. Additional professional development regarding the screening, referral and identification procedures for school-based administrators will be provided. There is an opportunity for greater consistency and communication to occur at the secondary level. To address this, each school at every level (elementary, middle, and high) will establish two consistent points of contact for department communication.

The district's TD Compliance Specialist consistently monitors identification procedures and practices across the district. Monitoring of district processes for screening, referral and identification occurs through both paper and electronic school-based compliance folders, checklists to document completion of compliance items, and cumulative folder audits. Consistency in the management of the screening and referral processes has increased throughout all elementary schools as a result of district level monitoring and reinforcement by the TD Site-Based Committees.

### **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 Advanced Studies department works to be proactive in communicating policies and processes to stakeholders. The CMS Advanced Studies website will be updated to reflect changes in identification to keep stakeholders and the community-at-large informed. Our district is transitioning to a new website platform which will allow us to develop and disseminate enhanced content to stakeholders. Additionally, our department will schedule informational sessions for parents and community members regarding identification.

All communication documents, including letters and forms, will be updated to reflect current practices in screening, referral, and identification. Communication is generated through our department to maintain consistency. All forms and documents are translated into multiple languages, reflecting the diversity of our community.

An assessment calendar with screening windows are posted on the district's website each year and we consistently adhere to these windows.

Elementary TD Teachers and Middle School Academic Facilitators receive ongoing professional development regarding the screening, referral, and identification processes and serve as the main points of contact at their respective schools. A session for school-based staff and for parents will be developed by the Advanced Studies department and shared by TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators at the school level.

Additional communication tools, including FAQ documents and videos, will be created and made available on the website to increase clear communication and understanding of the identification procedures for the district.

### **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:** Our district has strong physical and electronic systems in place to document a student's AIG identification process and evidence which leads to an identification decision. We will continue maintaining physical student files with documentation from screening processes, including test scores and referral and results forms, as well as secured electronic files with documentation for screening processes. Secured electronic files include spreadsheet organizers with data and results for all students who are participating the screening process, including those who are screened and/or referred, but not identified. The spreadsheet organizers for the identification process includes built in formatting to assist with consistency at all parts of the identification process and across the district.

School audits are conducted a minimum of once a year to ensure schools are in compliance with

expectations for maintaining accurate physical files. Electronic files are consistently monitored throughout the year by the TD Compliance Specialist. If a school is out of compliance, it is documented in writing with a request to comply. A second notice is sent to a building level administrator if necessary.

Parents are provided with information about the identification process and their student's results after each part of the identification process. Consistency in communication is maintained across the district through the use of district-generated form letters for each part of the identification process. Individual student results and next steps are added to the form letters by TD Teachers and provided to parents. Students and parents are encouraged to contact the TD Teacher with additional questions about the process and/or results. All forms and documents are translated into multiple languages reflecting the diversity in our community. After the identification process is complete, a DEP meeting is held for parents of newly identified students.

### **Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**

Update all communication documents, including letters and forms, to ensure they are clear and accessible for all stakeholders. Provide clarity for all stakeholders regarding identification procedures K-12

Enhance communication with all stakeholders, regarding screening, referral, and identification processes. Include multiple modes of communication such as meetings, videos, and information documents.

Develop a communication plan for secondary stakeholders regarding rationale for AIG identification and identification screening procedures

Provide annual sessions about the gifted identification procedures at each school for school-based staff.

Provide annual sessions about gifted identification procedures for parents and community members.

Maintain collaborative partnerships EL department to support the identification of underrepresented populations. Build on success with EL partnership to include EC, Title I and Equity.

Expand the pilot for an informal assessment opportunity outside of the second grade screening process.

Ensure all documents are provided in multiple languages and provide link for translation support

Provide rationale and resource guide for administrators at all levels

### **Sources of Evidence:**

- Electronic compliance folder for each school
- Identification process spreadsheet organizers for each school

8/7/2020

- Referral and Results Forms signature sheets for identified students
- Performance Assessments Reports for each identified student
- Cumulative file information including DEP, identification results, and Performance Review Documents
- Professional Development archives
- Resource guides and communication tools provided to all stakeholders
- Audit reports
- District data and data analysis reports including demographic and assessment data for the district overall and for identified AIG students
- Survey and focus group feedback from all stakeholder groups

## **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 CMS AIG program and comprehensive services are designed to be inclusive and promote access to gifted services and advanced coursework that appropriately challenge students academically and meets their advanced learning needs. Grade band specific programming and services are outlined below.

K-5: The Talent Development Catalyst Model is implemented in all CMS elementary schools, led in each elementary school by the Talent Development Catalyst Teacher (TD Teacher). The TD Teacher leads the TD Catalyst model within the school, provides expertise in how to best meet the needs of gifted/advanced students within the school, and serves as an advocate for gifted and advanced students.

The core components of the TD Catalyst Model are included below with descriptions:

-Collaboration: Collaborative work occurs between the TD Catalyst Teacher, administrators, classroom teachers, counselors, and parents to meet the needs of gifted and advanced students at the elementary school level. TD Teachers collaborate with school Principals to set a vision, mission, and goals for the TD Catalyst Program at the school to best support the school population. TD Teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to best support gifted and advanced students within the classroom through differentiation and use of TD provided curriculum and instructional materials.

-Cluster & Flexible Grouping: As a part of the TD Catalyst Model, gifted and advanced students are cluster grouped within the regular classroom. A cluster group is a group of gifted and/or advanced students that are placed in the same classroom. This grouping practice allows for an inclusive model while ensuring gifted and advanced students have opportunities for learning with their intellectually and academically similar peers. Throughout the school year, student data is used with flexible grouping practices to ensure students specific needs are met. Cluster and flexible grouping allows for targeted differentiation to occur based on each students' identification area.

-Planning: The TD teacher schedule includes dedicated time for planning with classroom teachers to ensure gifted and advanced students have their needs met. Student data is used to differentiate instruction. TD curriculum resources and instructional strategies are provided for classroom teachers. TD teachers may also create advanced resources to support instruction.

-Instruction: TD teachers provide instruction for gifted and advanced students by co-teaching with

classroom teachers, providing small group instruction based on the advanced learning needs of students, and providing enrichment opportunities to extend learning for students who have mastered specific content. TD Catalyst teachers differentiate services for students based on their identification area and appropriate data. TD Teachers also provide nurturing instruction within the classroom or in small groups at the K-2 level to focus on the development of advanced language and analytical thinking. Gifted curricula and resources are used to cultivate these skills in K-2 learners.

-Professional Development: TD Teachers receive consistent professional development focused on curriculum, instructional practices, and the social/ emotional needs of gifted students. TD Teachers lead whole staff and/or targeted professional development within their schools to build teacher capacity to serve gifted and advanced students. In addition, job-embedded professional development for classroom teachers occurs through co-teaching and/or modeling within classrooms.

- Compliance: TD Teachers lead and manage the gifted identification process, Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs), and the TD Site-Based Committee within their school. They ensure all paperwork and documentation is maintained at the school level and provided to the Advanced Studies department.

-Communication: The TD Teacher maintains consistent communication with families, teachers, administration, and other stakeholders to share opportunities, procedures, events, and updates. Implementation of the TD Catalyst Model allows for TD teachers and classroom teachers to create a systematic and sustained learning environment designed to meet the specific advanced learning needs of individual gifted and advanced students. TD Teachers and classroom teachers share joint ownership for ensuring student needs are met within the classroom.

AIG Programming & Services at the K-2 level also include:

- Access to the K-2 Nurturing Units designed by AIG teachers at the district level and other curriculum materials provided by our department, including Jacob's Ladder, Project M2 Math, Primary Education
- Thinking Skills (P.E.T.S), and Center for Gifted Education Language Arts units.
- Access to early entry to Kindergarten
- Opportunities for grade acceleration

AIG Programming & Services at the 3-5 level also include:

- Access to curriculum materials provided by our department including Jacob's Ladder, Center for Gifted Education Language Arts units, Vanderbilt English Language Arts units, Hands-On Equations, and Project M3 Math.
- Opportunities for grade acceleration

K-5 Learning Immersion/ Talent Development Magnet Schools: At the elementary level, our district also offers the Learning Immersion/ Talent Development (LI/TD) magnet theme at six schools. The LI/TD theme is designed to provide gifted and advanced students with an appropriately challenging learning environment focused on best practices for gifted education. The Learning Immersion (LI) program is designed to nurture gifted potential in students in grades K-5 to help them reach their greatest academic potential. The Talent Development (TD) program serves gifted students in third-fifth graders with rigorous instruction. Gifted students in the TD program at a LI/TD magnet school have automatic continuation into an IB middle school within their transportation zone.

8/7/2020

6-8: Each middle school is supported by an Academic Facilitator, who receives ongoing, specialized professional development in best practices for gifted education and instructional resources for gifted and advanced students. The Academic Facilitator and Secondary TD Specialist work collaboratively to train, coach, and consult with teachers to best serve gifted and advanced students. Further development of service delivery will focus on more closely aligning TD practices with school data and student needs. Academic facilitators and the Secondary TD Specialist will also partner with counselors and classroom teachers to ensure social and emotional needs are considered when working with middle school students.

- Collaboration: Academic Facilitators collaborate with classroom teachers to best support gifted and advanced students within the classroom through differentiation and use of TD provided curriculum and instructional materials. The Advanced Studies department has started collaboration with teachers in middle schools across the district that have an AIG License to provide opportunities to advocate for and mentor gifted and advanced students within their schools. This collaboration will be extended to the secondary teachers who have been accepted to pursue their AIG License through the AIG Licensure Programs that our department supports.

-Instruction: All CMS Middle Schools provide opportunities for gifted and advanced students to engage in honors level courses. A variety of honors course offerings allow students to select advanced courses that align to their identification area, interests, and advanced learning needs. Gifted and advanced students are provided with opportunities for single-subject acceleration in Mathematics by taking high school math courses in middle school. The middle school math honors level courses are compacted to prepare students to take the High School math courses, such as Math 1 and Math 2, while they are in middle school.

- Professional Development: Academic Facilitators receive consistent professional development focused on curriculum, instructional practices, and the social/ emotional needs of gifted students. Academic Facilitators lead whole staff and/or targeted professional development within their schools to build teacher capacity to serve gifted and advanced students.

- Compliance: Academic Facilitators lead and manage the gifted identification process, Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs), and the TD Site-Based Committee within their school. They ensure all paperwork and documentation is maintained at the school level and provided to the Advanced Studies department.

Communication: Academic Facilitators maintain consistent communication with families, teachers, administration, and other stakeholders to share opportunities, procedures, events, and updates.

9-12: CMS high school students receive differentiation through content area and advanced course offerings.

- Instruction: Advanced course offerings include honors courses, International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), Advanced Placement Capstone, Cambridge, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) programming, and dual enrollment courses through local colleges and universities. High school students also have the opportunity to accelerate their learning through Credit By Demonstrated Master (CDM). CDM allows students to earn high school credit for a course by demonstrating mastery of the course material through a multi-phase assessment process instead of having to take the course. In addition, high school students have access to virtual course options that can be used for single subject acceleration. These options allow high school students multiple

opportunities to personalize their high school path based on their identified strengths, interests, needs, and goals. The opportunities for personalization allow for optimal student growth and preparation for their plans and goals after high school.

- Collaboration: The Advanced Studies department supports collaboration between classroom teachers of AP and IB courses across the district to best support advanced and gifted students. IB teachers are provided quarterly opportunities to come together for planning and collaboration with the other IB teachers of their content across the district. The Advanced Studies Department supports an AP Master Teacher for each AP course that receives consistent professional development and provides content and pedagogy support for the AP teachers of that content area across the district. The Advanced Studies department has started collaboration with teachers in high schools across the district that have an AIG License to provide opportunities to advocate for and mentor gifted and advanced students within their schools. This collaboration will be extended to the secondary teachers who have been accepted to pursue their AIG License through the AIG Licensure Programs that our department supports.

- Professional Development: AP and IB teachers are provided with training opportunities specific to teaching an AP or IB course including AP Summer Institutes, AP One-day training, and IB training in their content area. In addition, teachers of advanced courses in high school are provided opportunities to engage in professional development specific to best practices with advanced and gifted students, along with opportunities that target working with underrepresented students such as Culturally Relevant Teaching, AVID trainings, and Quality Teaching for English Learners.

In addition to the gifted programming provided at each level that is outlined above, we support a specialized program for highly gifted students called the Horizons program. The Horizons Program is available to highly gifted students within the district whose educational needs require extreme differentiation and acceleration. In Horizons, students experience accelerated coursework with their same-age peers and are typically taught 2-3 grade levels above.

Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) are created in collaboration with the TD teacher at the elementary level and the Academic Facilitator at the middle school level with classroom or subject area teachers. DEPs outline how the needs of gifted and advanced students are met in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. The DEP includes information about learning environment, curriculum and resources, instructional strategies, social and emotional needs, and extracurricular and enrichment opportunities. DEPs are shared with classroom teachers, administrators, and counselors at the school level. Each elementary and middle school is required to host an annual DEP Meeting for families to share how needs of gifted and students are met.

Acceleration: The Advanced Studies department provides support and guidance to school with the early entry to kindergarten processes, grade acceleration processes, and single subject acceleration through opportunities like CDM and/or virtual learning.

Special Programs: The Advanced Studies department also leads and supports special programs for students, such as Spectrum of the Arts, a summer program for creatively talented students in grades 4-8, and Mathapalooza, a math enrichment event for district third graders. Other special programs that we support include Math Olympiad, Odyssey of the Mind, National Chess Tournament, Duke TIP, and North Carolina Governor's School each year.



### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** The Advanced Studies department is housed within the Learning and Teaching Department and Academics Division within CMS, which allows for collaborative opportunities to occur with Content Specialists in all content areas, as our work spans K-12 and all content areas. In addition to collaboration with district Content Specialists, our team also maintains ongoing communication and collaboration with other departments, including English Learner Services (EL), Exceptional Children (EC), Student Services, Title One, Personalized Digital Learning (PDL), Learning Community staff, and the Office of Accountability.

The Advanced Studies Department uses state funding to directly support the goals, processes, and programming outlined in the AIG Plan. CMS provides additional local funding to the Advanced Studies Department to support the goals of the AIG Plan and the comprehensive programming and processes for gifted and advanced students that is in place across the district.

CMS Board Regulations include opportunities for grade and content acceleration that is supported by best practices outlined by the Advanced Studies Department. Regulations also support opportunities for students to engage in the CDM process and dual enrollment. CMS Board Policies specify that CMS students may earn recognition through a variety of honors programs that promote and recognize student achievement, including the NC Academic Scholars Program, National Honor Society, and CMS Academic Scholars Program. In addition, CMS Board Policies also specify that all schools provide students with access to advanced curriculum

Gifted and advanced curricular resources are purchased and distributed to elementary and middle schools to support advanced instruction in all content areas. Additional resources have also been purchased and provided to support the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. All gifted and advanced curriculum resources provided by the Advanced Studies Department are monitored through an inventory process to ensure all schools have access to the resources provided. DEPs outline which curricular resources are utilized to support learners within a school across multiple content areas.

A gifted-licensed educator is provided to each elementary school for a minimum of two days of service. Days of service are calculated by considering number of gifted identified students and the size of the school. Several principals elect to trade positions to create full-time positions at schools. Opportunities for elementary and secondary teachers to obtain their AIG License are provided through partnerships with local universities.

In the past, our department's Specialists have worked to align gifted resources and curriculum with the district's scope and sequence for English Language Arts. CMS is currently in the process of adopting new curriculum for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Our department will maintain frequent communication with Content Specialists as new curriculum is adopted and shared with schools. Continued work with aligning gifted resources, curricula, and strategies will occur to ensure alignment with total instructional programming within schools.

District Math Specialists regularly collaborate with Talent Development Specialists to ensure the requirements of House Bill 986 are met and schools are supported with implementation. The gifted curriculum resources will be used to design higher level mathematics units for grades 3-5 to support advanced math instruction and the mandates of the bill.

Content Specialists provide professional development sessions for TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators, while Talent Development Specialists provide professional development sessions to specialized personnel within schools, including EL Teachers, Literacy Facilitators, and Math Facilitators. This has provided internal stakeholders with increased awareness of curricular resources, strategies, and practices designed to meet the needs of gifted and advanced learners.

EL Specialists and Talent Development Specialists have a strong partnership and have collaborated to design and deliver a series of professional development sessions geared towards nurturing gifted potential, the identification of gifted ELs, and how to meet their unique academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted EL students.

The district use of Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) has also increased collaboration opportunity for all levels, K-12. Through the design of ILT meetings, Specialists in Advanced Studies are able to connect with individual schools and groups of schools sharing instructional strategies and curriculum on how to best meet the needs of gifted and advanced students.

The Advanced Studies Director and Specialists frequently participate and serve on district-wide committees where they advocate for gifted and advanced learners, provide input on policies, and identify opportunities where our team can both lead and support.

Our department seeks to maintain existing relationships with departments and expand our work with specific departments, including Exceptional Children (EC), Title 1, and Equity. This will ensure access and opportunities are aligned and inclusive to diverse students across the district. Through collaboration with EC, Title 1, and the Equity team, we will develop consistent practices and resources that can be used across CMS to meet the advanced learning needs of CMS students.

### **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:** Using multiple criteria and data points to guide instruction for students is a core component of instructional planning and practice in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The Advanced Studies Department supports the use of data to intentionally create flexible groups to provide appropriate instruction for students in all subject areas and grade levels. Use of pre-assessments to inform instruction is encouraged by both the Advanced Studies Department and the school district. The Advanced Studies Department will continue to lead and develop professional development to not only discuss intentional use of data to create groups and implement best instructional practices to achieve growth in advanced and gifted students.

Cluster grouping and flexible grouping are a part of the Talent Development Catalyst Model used at the elementary level. Cluster grouping is a research-based practice for gifted students. A gifted

cluster is a group of gifted and/or high-ability students placed within a mixed-ability classroom. This allows for ongoing, consistent differentiation to occur within classrooms. TD Teachers provide support to both teachers and students in this structure. Flexible grouping is also encouraged with the use of data to support formation of groups. Groups may be created based on a variety of criteria, according to student interest, mastery level, learner profile, and may change based on current standards or units of study.

Moving forward, specialists within the Advanced Studies department will explore opportunities to support elementary schools with low numbers of gifted identified students to expand access to talent development opportunities by identifying advanced students for cluster and flexible grouping using school-based norms.

At the secondary level, students are grouped according to course selection and course placement. Our department has worked with the district's Office of Accountability to develop data systems to gauge potential for success in enrollment in AP courses and Math 1. These data systems provide guidance to counselors, administrators and master schedulers to ensure students are enrolled in appropriately challenging courses to engage in rigorous content to maximize potential. Middle schools and high schools utilize multiple data points, including gifted identification, course selection, grades, and achievement data to make course placement recommendations and decisions.

Groups of students within advanced courses in middle school and high school are supported directly by classroom teachers. The Advanced Studies department provides teachers with opportunities to engage in professional development such as Culturally Relevant Teaching and Quality Teaching for English Learners, that enable them to serve diverse groups of gifted and advanced students. The department will continue to develop and provide targeted professional development opportunities for teachers, counselors and administrators to support them with data use and grouping practices as the secondary level.

As target areas for growth in this practice, the department will focus on designing measures of consistency and accountability for grouping procedures and practices based on the comprehensive needs of students. In addition, we will focus on analyzing current AIG student achievement and growth data to inform grouping practices and procedures at the school and district level. Finally, we will provide professional development and targeted support to administrators, teachers, and counselors to further strengthen data use for effective cluster and flexible group.

#### **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:** The AIG Plan, regulations, and services related to gifted education will be shared with all district stakeholders in the following ways:

- Executive Staff: The proposed 2022 AIG Plan was presented to executive staff to gather feedback before seeking board approval. Following approval, the full plan will be shared with executive staff. Updates from the Gifted Plan Advisory group will be shared with executive staff annually to ensure alignment with district initiatives and goals. Summary documents that include information about

services and regulations related to gifted education will be shared to ensure easy access to this information.

- Administrators: The AIG plan, regulations, and services will be shared with school administrators following plan approval. Updates from the Gifted Plan Advisory group will be shared with administrators to ensure alignment with district initiatives and goals. Summary documents that include information about services and regulations related to gifted education will be shared to ensure easy access to this information.

- Elementary TD Teachers: Our TD Teachers are key stakeholders with implementation of the AIG Plan. They will be provided with ongoing professional development regarding components of the plan and receive coaching and support to ensure expectations are met. TD Teachers will lead communication of AIG Plan expectations to classroom teachers and school-based support staff.

- Middle School Academic Facilitators: Academic Facilitators will learn about the AIG Plan and their role in implementation during scheduled Academic Facilitator meetings throughout the year. Sessions will be targeted on meeting academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted and advanced students. Academic Facilitators will lead communication of AIG Plan expectations to subject area teachers and school-based support staff.

- High School Advanced Studies Contacts: The AIG plan, regulations, and services will be shared with school administrators following plan approval. Summary documents that include information about services and regulations related to gifted education will be shared to ensure easy access to this information. Professional Development sessions will be offered on meeting academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted and advanced students. The High School Advanced Studies contacts will lead communication of the AIG Plan expectations to subject area teachers and school-based support staff.

The AIG Plan will be posted prominently on our department's website for easy access by all stakeholders.

Based on survey feedback, educators within the district desire more information about gifted services, resources, instruction, and regulations. To increase consistency and ensure a common district-wide language, our department will create a series of print and electronic resources to communicate gifted service delivery and expectations, as outlined within our AIG Plan. These resources will include summary documents, FAQ's, slide decks, and webcasts. The resources will be housed on the Advanced Studies page of the CMS website for easy access by all stakeholders.

TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators are provided with ongoing professional development regarding gifted regulations. A TD Compliance Manual has been developed and is edited each year to reflect current standards, practices, and expectations. This ensures consistency within our large district. These stakeholders are also provided with annual TD Compliance Checklists to ensure adherence to expectations outlined by North Carolina DPI and the CMS Gifted Plan. Resources and supports have been created for each compliance process. For example, an editable slide deck has been developed for both elementary and middle school DEP meetings for families.

To deepen implementation of the elementary TD Catalyst Model, each TD Teacher will use the TD Catalyst Model Implementation tool to identify areas of strength and areas of growth. TD Teachers

and administrators will receive ongoing, differentiated support and professional development to help enhance the model and service delivery for gifted and advanced students.

As a target area for growth in this practice, we will more consistently integrate program standards, legislation and regulations around gifted programs into locally offered PD, administrative meetings, and site team meetings. In addition, we will develop a system to ensure all school-based staff receive an annual update that includes identification procedures, gifted services, best-practices for gifted and advanced students, instructional materials provided by advanced studies, compliance requirements, and opportunities for gifted and advanced students.

### **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:** DEPs are created in partnership with TD Teachers and classroom teachers at the elementary level and Academic Facilitators and subject area teachers at the middle school level. DEPs are shared with relevant internal stakeholders, including administrators and counselors each year. A copy of the DEP is also filed within student cumulative folders that follow them from year to year.

Based on available data, there is a clear opportunity for growth in our practices to support communication at key transition points. Currently, practices for transitioning students are inconsistent across the district. Although articulation meetings may occur within certain matriculation patterns to ensure smooth transitions for gifted learners, this practice is not in place in all schools. To ensure more consistency and effective service delivery across grade levels and buildings, all schools will be encouraged to conduct site team meetings to discuss services within the school and collaborate with their feeder schools.

TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators will continue to provide notification of student services to instructional staff at the beginning of each year and provide support for service implementation. Collaboration regularly occurs between TD Teachers at monthly meetings. TD Teachers have opportunities to connect with others to share best practices, express concerns, and creatively brainstorm solutions to enhance service delivery and programming. Middle school Academic Facilitators are also provided with collaborative opportunities during semi-monthly meetings to share best practices and discuss ideas. TD teachers and Academic Facilitators will be provided opportunities for collaboration in matriculation patterns during their existing meetings to ensure student data and DEPs are shared as students transition from elementary school to middle school.

Communication will be maintained with the Student Placement & Magnet teams to ensure continuation of students from magnet programs during their transition years.

Students cumulative folders contain data and information regarding their identification and services, including their DEP. As students transition, schools have access to this data and information within the cumulative folder. There is an opportunity to increase communication between schools at transition points to ensure this data is used effectively to determine needs as the student transitions to the next grade span.

A K-12 Vertical Articulation team has been conducting work on how to best prepare students at all grade levels for advanced course work at the secondary level. Their focus has been on social/emotional supports as well as academic supports through practices like self-reflection and increasing "grit." This team will expand their work to create a framework and implementation plan with a focus on supporting students during their transition years.

### **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:** Currently, the Advanced Studies department provides some professional development opportunities for parents, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders regarding awareness of social and emotional needs of gifted learners. As a district, we are moving toward a more strategic, district-wide approach to support the social and emotional needs of all students. In partnership with the district, the Advanced Studies department will provide input on the district approach to ensure it is inclusive of the social and emotional needs of gifted and advanced students. The department has purchased several high quality instructional resources to support social and emotional learning, including "Affective Jacob's Ladder for Reading Comprehension" and "I'm Not Just Gifted" and we will share these for consideration with the district approach and develop a systematic approach to implementation in schools.

Through partnership with the counseling, EC, EL, and Title 1 departments, we will utilize existing collaborative team structures to share tools and resources that support the social and emotional development of AIG students, with teachers and other staff. Specialists within the Advanced Studies Department will support schools with implementation of strategies to meet the social and emotional needs of gifted students. Social and emotional needs and supports will be included as a part of the Differentiated Education Plans (DEP) developed for gifted student at each school. The existing district level meetings will be used to share information and problem solve issues around supporting the holistic development of gifted learners.

### **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:** The CMS Advanced Studies department provides resources and support for administrators, teachers, and families to better understand acceleration options and make informed decisions to ensure services and programs are provided to support student needs. An evidence based, unbiased tool is provided to support acceleration decisions.

The Advanced Studies department articulates and implements various processes to support decisions regarding acceleration and compacting. Professional development is delivered regarding curriculum compacting and design, as well as how to complete data analysis using gifted assessments. Professional development is delivered as needed for teachers and stakeholders at various levels.

8/7/2020

The Advanced Studies department has outlined a comprehensive grade acceleration process to support administrators in making grade acceleration decisions. Multiple data points are compiled as a part of the decision making process. To support administrators in making grade acceleration decisions, The Iowa Acceleration Scales are completed. The TD Compliance Specialist supports the TD Teacher in the completion of the assessments required in the process outlined in the Iowa Acceleration Scales. The TD Compliance Specialist also can attend the TD Site-Based Committee meeting to discuss the acceleration option, if necessary. An Individualized Differentiated Education Plans (IDEP) is created for student based on student needs to support acceleration. The Advanced Studies department also supports schools with the early entry to Kindergarten process.

The Advanced Studies department provides an accelerated program option for highly gifted learners through the Horizons program. The program allows for course advancement, acceleration, and social/emotional support of highly gifted students. The Horizons Program is also designed to allow students the opportunity to stay with their same-age peers to foster social/emotional growth while providing for their accelerated academic needs. Students in the Horizons program are learning content that is accelerated by 2-3 grade levels.

The Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) process is supported at the high school level as an opportunity for single subject acceleration. The Advanced Studies Department works in collaboration with Accountability and the Counseling Departments to ensure the CDM process is communicated and implemented consistently. Communication is provided to counselors, administrators, and other relevant stakeholders regarding the process and timelines for CDM. Schools provide information directly to students and families about the CDM option, process, and timelines. At the secondary level, students also have access to a variety of online course options that can be used for subject acceleration as needed. Honors, Advanced Placement, and dual enrollment course options are also available at all high schools for additional acceleration options.

Subject acceleration in math is provided to students in middle school through the option to take high school mathematics courses. In collaboration with the Middle School and High School Math Specialists and the Accountability Department, a data dashboard and rubric have been provided to schools to assist them in making decisions about subject acceleration for middle school math. In accordance with House Bill 986, students who score a level 5 on their Math EOG are placed in an advanced math course. Advanced math courses at the middle school level include honors level courses for middle school math and high school math courses. Compacted curriculum is used in honors level middle school math courses to support students who accelerate into high school math courses. The Advanced Studies Department supports high school students to take college and university level mathematics courses as appropriate when their subject acceleration in mathematics leads to completion of all high school math courses prior to the completion of high school.

Finally, CMS Advanced Studies sponsors a Language High-Fliers Program in collaboration with UNCC for students who have accelerated in a world language and have no course options within their high school.

### **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:** The CMS Advanced Studies department provides all elementary schools with a licensed AIG teacher through the Talent Development Catalyst Model. This model is designed to be inclusive and create access for all students with advanced learning needs. TD Teachers and classroom teachers use multiple data sources, formal and informal, to meet the advanced learning needs of students throughout the school. Currently, schools vary in the number of gifted identified students that attend. Intentional training opportunities are being provided on finding and serving underrepresented gifted students for TD teachers who serve schools with fewer gifted students and larger underrepresented populations. In addition, we are building on the success of our EL partnership for finding and serving gifted EL students to increase access for other underrepresented groups. The changes to our identification procedures directly support this effort by expanding the ranges for aptitude and achievement results to provide more students, primarily those in underrepresented groups, access to demonstrate gifted traits and characteristics through authentic work samples within the portfolio identification process.

In an effort to bolster the development of talent at the K-2 level, instructional units that nurture students' talents have been created by AIG licensed teachers and made available to all elementary schools. Curricular resources designed specifically for young learners have also been purchased and distributed to all elementary schools, including Project M2, Jacob's Ladder, and Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS).

An intentional partnership with the English Language Learner (EL) department has been developed to identify and serve gifted EL students. This partnership includes a differentiated portfolio process for identification and teacher training for providing services to gifted EL students. The partnership includes a focus on collaboration between TD Teachers and EL Teachers. This model and process will be expanded to include other underrepresented groups including EC students and students in Title 1 schools. Through intentional expansion, this model and process will ensure consistent collaboration between teachers in all specialized areas, including Exceptional Children (EC), English Language Learners (EL), Title 1, and AIG, will work together to find and serve gifted students in underrepresented populations.

The CMS Advanced Studies department also supports six Learning Immersion and Talent Development Magnet Programs that serve students from all across the district. These K-5 programs include a Learning Immersion component that is intended to nurture students' gifts and develop their talents. Interested families are selected to attend these magnet programs through our district magnet lottery process.

The Advanced Studies department provides an accelerated program option for highly gifted learners through the Horizons program. The program allows for course advancement, acceleration, and social/emotional support of highly and profoundly gifted students. The Horizons Program is also designed to allow students the opportunity to stay with their same-age peers to foster social/emotional growth while providing for their accelerated academic needs.

The Advanced Studies department supports the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) system for college and career readiness at schools throughout the district. Through AVID, students develop the skills they need to be successful in higher level and advanced courses. AVID supports access to advanced courses for underrepresented students by supporting skill development and



8/7/2020

integrating consistent, higher level opportunities for writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and critical reading.

In collaboration with the CMS Equity Team and Advanced Studies team, multiple high schools across the district are engaged in work with Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS). EOS provides schools with a systematic process to increase access to advanced and college level courses for underrepresented students.

In an effort to increase access to Advanced Placement Courses for students in all high schools in CMS, the Advanced Studies Department is supporting all CMS high schools to offer a core group of 10 AP courses. Targeted training is being provided, including Culturally Relevant Teaching and Quality Teaching for English Learners, to Advanced Placement teachers to support them in effectively serving a more diverse group of learners. A data dashboard, including multiple data points on student readiness for advanced courses, is available to schools through the CMS Navigator to support with identifying underrepresented students to provide intentional access.

As a target area for growth, we will continue to identify additional opportunities to connect data available in the district to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities and services to students from underrepresented AIG populations. We will also explore opportunities to gather feedback directly from students of underrepresented populations to discuss service options outside of traditional services that are needed.

We will continue to develop and provide professional development that communicates service options to EL, EC, Title 1 and other teachers who have a specialized student focus and partner with these teachers for effective programming. We will identify ways to strengthen talent development strategies, including K-2 nurturing, transition bridge programs, AVID, and EOS, to cultivate the potential of and address the needs of underrepresented populations, across the K-12 continuum.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** The Advanced Studies department directly supports creatively talented students through the Spectrum of the Arts summer program. The department also hosts an annual math enrichment event called Mathapalooza for district third graders who have an affinity for mathematics. Our department works in conjunction with the Math department to provide schools with access to Math Olympiad contests. The Secondary TD Specialist supports the North Carolina Governor's School application process to ensure CMS students are provided the opportunity to participate. Other programs with direct or indirect support from the Advanced Studies Department include: Odyssey of the Mind, Robotics, National Chess Competitions, Debate, Science Olympiad, Destination Imagination, Future Problem Solvers, as well as many others. We encourage our schools to identify opportunities for their student population and include extracurriculars as a component of the DEP.

Our target areas for expanding in this practice are to provide targeted support to schools so they can expand service learning projects, clubs, and enrichment programs across all grade spans based on needs and interests of gifted and advanced students. The targeted support in this area will be

provided with the goal of increasing the number of consistent opportunities offered to students at all schools across the district. In addition, we will continue offering and look for opportunities to expand district-level extracurricular programs such as Mathapalooza and Spectrum of the Arts. Finally, we will explore how to leverage existing opportunities (i.e. the CMS Graduation Project) as a way for students to showcase the interests explored and knowledge gained during the school year.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**

Develop implementation tools for K-12 AIG program to increase integrity and support schools with continuous growth.

Target development of secondary program services through collaboration with the Secondary TD Specialist to build capacity with AIG Licensed educators and Advanced Studies contacts in middle and high schools.

Continue to align gifted and advanced resources to appropriately supplement district curriculum in a variety of content areas.

Model collaborative partnerships with the EC and Title I departments after the current collaborative partnership with the EL department.

Analyze current AIG student achievement and growth data to inform grouping practices and procedures at the school and district level. Design measures of consistency.

Provide professional development and targeted support to administrators, teachers, and counselors to further strengthen data use for effective cluster and flexible group.

Consistently integrate program standards, legislation and regulations around gifted programs into locally offered PD, administrative meetings, and site team meetings.

Develop a system to ensure all school-based staff receive an annual update that includes identification procedures, gifted services, best-practices for gifted and advanced students, instructional materials provided by Advanced Studies, compliance requirements, and opportunities for gifted and advanced students.

Provide opportunities for TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators to collaborate in matriculation patterns to support students as they transition from elementary school to high school.

Leverage the K-12 Vertical Articulation team to create a framework and implementation plan to support students during their transition years.

Establish a team of key stakeholders to focus on a system-wide approach for supporting the social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

Increase access to acceleration and advanced course options for underrepresented students at the secondary level.

Continue to identify additional opportunities to connect data available in the district to broaden access to advanced learning opportunities and services to students from under-represented AIG populations.

Explore opportunities to gather feedback directly from students of under-represented populations to discuss service options outside of traditional services that are needed.

Continue to develop and provide professional development that communicates service options to EL, EC teachers, Title 1 and other teachers who have a specialized student focus and partner with these teachers for effective programming.

Identify ways to strengthen talent development strategies, including K-2 nurturing, transition bridge programs, AVID, and EOS, to cultivate the potential of and address the needs of underrepresented populations, across the K-12 continuum.

Explore how to leverage existing opportunities as a way for students to showcase or demonstrate some of the interests explored and knowledge gained during the school year.

Continue offering and expand district-level extracurricular programs such as Mathapalooza and Spectrum of the Arts.

Provide targeted support to schools so they can expand service learning projects, clubs, and enrichment programs in an effort to increase the number of consistent opportunities offered to students at all schools across the district.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- District data and data analysis reports including demographic and performance data for the district overall and for identified AIG students
- District and school course enrollment data
- Program data from AVID, AP, IB
- Implementation Tool data
- Survey and focus group feedback from all stakeholder groups
- Professional Development archives
- Feedback from professional development sessions, collaborative meetings, events, and seminars
- Communication tools
- Electronic compliance folder for each school
- Performance Assessments Reports for each identified student
- Cumulative file information including DEP, identification results, and Performance Review Documents
- Resource guides and communication tools provided to all stakeholders
- Audit reports

### **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 Advanced Studies department provides curriculum, coaching, professional development, and site-based support on how to best meet the academic needs of gifted and advanced learners in all grade levels. Data gathered indicates strong use of instructional and curriculum components at the elementary level, although not always consistent from school to school within our district. Curriculum designed or obtained specifically for advanced learners is provided at all levels, K-12, that enhances the NCSCOS. Professional development is also provided to all levels through frequently scheduled meetings, and at the request of specific schools or Learning Communities on relevant topics in gifted education.

Elementary: The TD Catalyst Model is implemented in all CMS elementary schools, led in each elementary school by the TD Teacher. The TD Teacher serves as the lead advocate for gifted services within the school. The TD Teacher works to ensure gifted identified/advanced students receive support to maximize growth and potential through the implementation of the TD Catalyst Model. The TD Catalyst Model focuses on collaboration, consultation, and cluster grouping within the regular classroom environment. Implementation of the TD Catalyst Model allows for TD teachers and classroom teachers to create a systematic and sustained learning environment designed to meet the advanced learning needs of gifted and advanced students. The TD Catalyst Teacher works closely with classroom teachers to differentiate the NCSCOS using curriculum materials provided by the Advanced Studies department. TD Teachers use their daily planning time to design, research, collect, and develop lessons based on student data and needs of classroom teachers. Each school is provided with relevant, evidence based curriculum designed to enhance the NCSCOS and to meet the advanced learning needs of gifted/advanced students. The curriculum provided by the Advanced Studies department provides opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of expected standards. The curriculum is challenging, but appropriate with a clear focus on building critical thinking, analytical thinking, conceptual thinking, collaboration, communication, and writing skills across various content areas. Prior to district-wide purchase, items are reviewed to determine level of alignment to the NCSCOS. TD Specialists, vendors, administrators, teachers, and TD teachers are all a part of the review process. Once curriculum is purchased, work groups meet to create implementation guides that support the strategic alignment of the NCSCOS, and the core curriculum provided by the district. Elementary schools have access to the following curriculum: William and Mary Literacy/Science/Social Studies Units, various novels to accompany William and Mary units, M2/M3 Curriculum, Jacob's Ladder, Hands-On Equations, and other supplemental resources. Additional curriculum resources are developed internally to support the NCSCOS while meeting the advanced learning needs of gifted/advanced learners. Currently teams of TD teachers have worked to designed K-2 Nurturing Concept Based Units, K-12 Vertical resources to support the growth of the

8/7/2020

whole-child, and problem-based and project-based units to support academic areas where curriculum could not be obtained. Units are piloted and edited prior to publishing. Professional training on curriculum implementation is provided to TD Teachers at monthly meetings. A variety of other curriculum PD opportunities are offered for classroom teachers each year. PD is delivered by department specialists, external vendors, and TD Teachers.

Middle School: Academic Facilitators (AFs) are assigned to each middle school and attend frequent meetings throughout the school year lead by the Talent Development Secondary Specialist in conjunction with Content Specialists. AFs guide instructional practice in middle schools, serving as a lead for regular classroom teachers on instructional best practices and curriculum for identified gifted and advanced students. AFs receive ongoing professional development on how to best meet the academic and social/emotional needs of gifted and advanced students through evidence-based curriculum and instruction. Multiple curriculum units are available in every middle school to provide teachers the opportunity to implement curriculum focused on building critical thinking, analytical thinking, and conceptual thinking across content areas to strengthen their understanding of standard curriculum objectives. The DEP template for CMS is created at the district level and managed at the middle school level by the academic facilitators . AFs also communicate Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) for Mathematics and English Language Arts at the middle school level. They also serve as a lead for identification of middle school students. Curriculum at the middle school level includes resources from the Advanced Studies department (listed in part (c)) and district curriculum specialists to support teachers in extending, enriching, and in some cases accelerating students. Curriculum and resources are provided to support teachers in differentiating to meet the advanced learning needs of their gifted and advanced students by supplementing and in some cases compacting the NCSCOS. Honors math course curriculum for middle school is compacted to support students as they prepare to take high school level math courses (i.e. Math 1 & Math 2) while in middle school.

High School: The North Carolina Standard Course of Study is adapted through addition of material which provides honors credit. Advanced course offerings from Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge also meet the requirements of the NCSCOS and are differentiated to meet the advanced learning needs of gifted and advanced students. The Advanced Studies department supports a group of AP Master Teachers that share their experience and mentor new AP Teachers across the district. The addition of the Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) program is focused on providing differentiated curriculum through increasing access to advanced courses for students in EOS high schools. CMS High schools provide additional differentiation for gifted and advanced students through Credit by Demonstrated Mastery and virtual course options that enable students to complete the credits required in the NCSCOS at an accelerated pace. The K-12 Vertical Articulation Team has focused work on developing the academic, social/emotional benchmarks at each level to help ready a child for advanced coursework in the secondary setting. Resources have been compiled to support students at all levels in the areas of self-reflection, perseverance, and critical thinking. This team's work has been shared, through optional professional development, with teachers in some schools. This work will continue to be shared and serve as a foundation to expand vertical supports for students across the district.

To provide additional support for high schools, each high school will have multiple points of contact who are invited to attend professional development meetings led by the Advanced Studies and Talent Development Secondary Specialists, in conjunction with district Content Specialists, regarding best practices for advanced students at the high school level. These meetings will discuss instructional strategies to meet differentiated needs of advanced learners, social and emotional supports for secondary students, data analysis support for master scheduling, and how to help students best prepare for post-secondary paths.

## **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:** TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators are provided updated professional development on evidence-based practices throughout the school year at their job-alike meetings. Teachers and facilitators are trained on how to design, implement, and model instructional practices with curriculum designed for gifted and advanced learners. Through professional development, specialists model how to use data to determine readiness to move students through the curriculum at an appropriate pace, while maintaining district expectations. Mentoring and coaching is provided for schools, teachers, or facilitators who seek further guidance from experienced staff. The district also provides curriculum developed to foster future ready skill such as collaboration, communication, problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity, that utilize best practices in gifted education for all grade levels, K-12, including the examples below:

**Academic Enrichment-** Provides opportunities for students to probe deeper into the content of the curriculum, experience different processes for learning and create products to demonstrate their learning. Classroom teachers create and plan enrichment lessons related to grade level curriculum, goals and objectives. Through flexible grouping, teachers match extension and enrichment activities to students' needs in the content areas of reading, math, science and social science.

**Acceleration-** Involves allowing a student to move through traditional educational organizations more rapidly, based on readiness and motivation. Acceleration includes grade skipping, telescoping, early entrance into kindergarten, acceleration in content areas through credit by demonstrated mastery and virtual learning opportunities, and access to college level coursework through programs such as dual enrollment, early and middle colleges, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate at the high school level. Instructional adaptations in the classroom such as compacting, which allows for better use of learning time in a specific subject, is also an example of acceleration.

**Curriculum Compacting-** Giving students full credit for what they know about an upcoming unit and/or providing advanced students opportunities to learn new material in a shorter time period than needed by classmates.

**Differentiated Units-** Teachers can differentiate four ways: 1) content, 2) process, 3) product, and 4) learning environment based on the individual learner. Differentiation is an organized, yet flexible way of proactively adjusting teaching and learning methods to accommodate each child's learning needs and preferences in order to achieve his or her maximum growth as a learner.

**Extension Menu-** A selection of topics from which a student can choose to pursue an independent study that extends the learning beyond already mastered content standards.

**Flexible Grouping-** Grouping and regrouping students throughout the year according to readiness, interest, learning style, achievement level, activity preference, or special needs.

**Independent Study-** Ongoing in-depth research on a topic of a student's own choosing. Both student

8/7/2020

and teacher plan a method of investigating the problem or topic and identify what product the student will develop.

Interest Centers/Groups- Way to organize students to work together on learning activities or projects.  
Learning Contract- A signed agreement between student and teacher regarding specific tasks to be done by the student. A strategy used for compacting and differentiation of previously mastered curriculum.

Literature Circles- Twelve steps of an authentic Literature Circle: Students choose their own reading. Small temporary groups are formed based on the book choice. Groups meet on a regular, predictable schedule for discussion. Students use written notes to guide both their reading and discussion. Discussion topics come from the students, not the teacher. Group meetings strive to become open, natural conversations about books. Students take on a rotating task of distinct roles. The teacher serves as the facilitator and not as a group member or instructor. Evaluation is by teacher observation and student self-evaluation. A spirit of fun about reading pervades the room. When books are finished, readers share with their classmates and new groups form around new reading choices.

Paideia/Socratic Seminar- Question and discussion format that builds and maintains critical thinking as part of discussion. It offers an excellent way to help students move from recall to true understanding. The Socratic method of teaching is based on Socrates' theory that it is more important to enable students to think for themselves than to merely fill their heads with "right" answers. Socratic Seminar engages students in dialogues by responding to their questions with questions, instead of answers. This process encourages divergent thinking rather than convergent. Students are given opportunities to "examine" a common piece of text, whether it is in the form of a novel, poem, art print, or piece of music. After "reading" the common text, open-ended questions are posed. Opened questions allow students to think critically, analyze multiple meanings in text, and express ideas with clarity and confidence.

Project Based Learning- An instructional approach built upon authentic learning activities that engage student interest and motivation. These activities are designed to answer a question or solve a problem and generally reflect the types of learning and work people do in the everyday world outside the classroom. PBL teaches students college and career ready skills as well as content. These skills include communication and presentation skills, organization and time management skills, research and inquiry skills, self-assessment and reflection skills, and group participation and leadership skills.

Problem Based Learning- A learning system to help students develop flexible knowledge, effective problem solving skills, self-directed learning, effective collaboration skills and intrinsic motivation. Problem-based learning is a style of active learning where students learn both content and critical thinking skills. PBL is an instructional method that challenges students to "learn to learn," working cooperatively in groups to seek solutions to real world problems. These problems are used to engage students' curiosity and initiate learning the subject matter. PBL prepares students to think critically and analytically, and to find and use appropriate learning resources.

RAFT- A strategy (Santa, 1988) that employs writing-to-learn activities to enhance understanding of informational text. Instead of writing a traditional essay explaining a concept learner, students demonstrate their understanding in a nontraditional format. This technique encourages creative thinking and motivates students to reflect in unusual ways about concepts they have read. RAFT is an acronym that stands for role of the writer, audience, format and topic.

8/7/2020

Research Projects- Research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue. It consists of three steps: Pose a question, collect data to answer the question, and present an answer to the question.

SCAMPER- An acronym for a strategy to expedite the brainstorming of new ideas and promote looking at old thoughts in new ways.

TABA Concept Development Model- TABA is used to enhance the thinking skills of students. It gives students practice in categorizing and developing, extending concepts and making generalizations.

Tiered Lessons or Tiered Instruction- A differentiation strategy in which all students are taught the same essential concepts and skills at different levels of complexity, depth or novelty of a lesson in response to assessed needs. The tiered lesson approach provides for the appropriate challenge level for all students.

### **Practice C**

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

**District Response:** The CMS Advanced Studies department currently offers a variety of curricular resources to support differentiation for all content-areas at all levels, K-12. The resources provided by the Advanced Studies Department are available at all schools across the district. Implementation support is provided by professional development and collaboration. Professional development is designed or provided for each curriculum component purchased and shared with appropriate stakeholders. TD Teachers, Academic Facilitators, and classroom teachers incorporate these resources to enhance student learning. Collaboration and planning time is provided through monthly TD Catalyst Teacher meetings, monthly Academic Facilitator Meetings, and teacher summer work groups. AVID curriculum is provided at multiple sites throughout the district. AVID's College Readiness System provides elementary, middle, and high school students the opportunity to build writing, inquiry, collaboration, reading and organizational skills to benefit their readiness for advanced courses and post-secondary choices. Curriculum resources currently offered for gifted and advanced students include: Center for the Gifted Math, Literacy, Science and Social Studies Concept-Based Units, Novel Studies to support unit implementation, Hands-On Equations, Problem-Based Units of Study, Art of Problem Solving, District-designed K-2 Concept-Based Units, Caesar's English, Jacob's Ladder, Project-Based Units of Study, Primary Education Thinking Skills, M2 Mentoring Young Mathematicians, M3 Mentoring Mathematical Minds, and College Board Advanced Placement.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** The CMS Advanced Studies department works in conjunction with the district to support the development of future-ready skills, including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and leadership, for gifted and advanced students. Professional development is provided on gifted pedagogy that focuses on relevance of curriculum and instruction that provides



8/7/2020

students the opportunity to develop critical thinking and collaborative skills. The professional development and curriculum provided by the Advanced Studies Department focuses on concept-based units, problem-based learning, project-based learning, and other evidence-based practices. Through intentional design and exposure, our teachers are provided relevant instructional strategies and curriculum to create classrooms that nurture skills such as creativity and leadership. Professional development is also provided to classroom teachers, administrators, and curriculum specialists to bridge the practice into all classroom environments. Other programs supported by the department to foster future-ready skills are International Baccalaureate (IB), AVID, Advanced Placement Capstone, Advanced Placement, and Cambridge. Opportunities for professional development and collaboration focused on future-ready skills are provided for AP, IB, & Cambridge teachers. Each of these programs encourages critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and community service.

Partnerships with community organizations and local colleges/universities will be leveraged to provide students with additional opportunities for community service projects, research opportunities, mentorships, and internships.

### **Practice E**

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

**District Response:** TD Teachers, Academic Facilitators, and other relevant stakeholders work with formal and informal assessment data to determine groupings and make relevant academic decisions. TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators are encouraged to use CogAT, EOG, EOC, MAP, Reading 3D benchmark assessments, classroom observations, rubrics, pre and post assessments to determine readiness and mastery of students. TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators are encouraged to monitor both gifted students and other students who may demonstrate high achievement or the potential for advanced performance. To implement the best instructional strategies and select appropriate curriculum, teachers use pre-assessment data. Various forms of pre-assessments are encouraged such as entrance tickets, writing samples, multiple choice, and interest inventories. Many of the selected curriculums designed or purchased for implementation include pre-assessments to use with students. Post-assessments are also provided via the curriculum units either designed or purchased. Use of post-assessments and rubrics are critical in determining if students met expectations of the differentiated curriculum as well as maintained proficiency.

Assessments, both formal and informal, provide evidence for the Talent Development Site-Based Committee to determine rescreening for gifted identification. Consistent communication, updates, and management of a school data tracker is relevant in leading gifted programming at each school. Since the CogAT is used as the universal screener for the CMS gifted identification process, it is a unique data point we have for all students. Professional development is provided for analysis of CogAT results and the ability profiles on an annual basis. Our teachers and administrators have received training on how to utilize these results to identify potential, correlate with intervention teams, communicate needs and opportunities with parents, and identify students with high academic potential. These results have become part of the data driven instructional process within our elementary schools.

At the high school level, student requests and multiple data points are used to find students who are ready for advanced courses, such as Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses. Data used includes ACT, PSAT, classroom performance, EOC, NC Final Exams, and data provided by College Board. In collaboration with the accountability team, the advanced studies team helped to create a scheduling report for high school level courses based on all available student data.

Although implemented and encouraged, more strategic and structured training can be provided to relevant stakeholders to discuss how to use assessment data to compact curriculum, create flexible grouping, and encourage depth and complexity of content, along with advancement of the curriculum.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Affective curriculum and instructional practices are provided to schools to address the social and emotional needs of AIG students. As a district, we are moving toward a more strategic, district-wide approach to support the social and emotional needs of all students. In partnership with the district, the advanced studies department will provide input on the development of the district approach to ensure it is inclusive of the social and emotional needs of gifted and advanced students.

In addition, professional development and curriculum resources, for teachers, parents and students, provide basic information on ways to support AIG students social and emotional needs. Examples of the curriculum resources and professional development provided to support social and emotional learning include Affective Jacob's Ladder, AVID, district created K-2 nurturing units and district created K-12 vertical team resources. Monthly TD Catalyst meetings and Academic Facilitator Meetings include components to support social and emotional learning.

Through partnership with the counseling department, we will provide professional development and resources for counselors on social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Through partnership with the Media Services department, sessions on bibliotherapy are provided for teachers, instructional support staff, and parents.

During our Annual Parent Conference, we consistently provide sessions to address social and emotional needs of gifted students. Parent seminars also available upon request.

Data is used to identify AIG students who are in need of additional support. The district Early Warning Indicator report is used to identify students who are at risk for underachievement or dropping out. In addition, partnerships with Accountability Department to provide data linkage reports, linking PSAT, ACT, SAT, and other data points to help make appropriate course recommendations.

The social and emotional component is also included as a part of the DEP. If a student needs additional support, it is personalized on the DEP and/or included as a part of their IDEP.

As an area of continued growth in this practice, we will work with the counseling department and media services department to develop and share high school specific resources with multiple staff members in high schools: counselors, AIG licensed staff, IB coordinators, AP teachers, IB teachers, AVID coordinators, and Media Specialists. In addition, we will coordinate more strategic supports for transitional years (5th to 6th grade; 8th to 9th grade).

### **Practice G**

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

**District Response:** CMS has worked diligently over the past few years to create strategic supports for all students in grades K-2. An emphasis has been placed on nurturing and exposure to advanced language and analytical thinking. K-2 Nurturing Concept-based units have been created for all quarters in grade K-2. These units were designed by TD teachers in collaboration with classroom teachers to extend and enrich the standards in multiple content areas for each grade-level. Each unit can be taught in part or in whole. The purpose of the units is to provide an opportunity for students at a young age to engage in concept-based learning to enrich and extend grade level standards. The K-2 Nurturing Units have been shared with teachers throughout the district and professional development on how to use them continues to be provided. As the district implements new curriculum at the K-5 level, these units will provide crucial enrichment opportunities in K-2 classrooms. A system for monitoring the consistent implementation of K-2 nurturing opportunities across the district will be developed.

Other curriculum supports were purchased for the K-3 students to support development of critical thinking skills. Those curriculum resources are: Primary Education Thinking Skills, M2 Units designed by the College of William and Mary, and Primary Jacob's Ladder. Professional development has been designed and delivered to increase relevant instruction for the K-3 students.

CMS has six Learning Immersion/Talent Development (LI/TD) magnet programs for K-5 students. Classroom teachers, LI/TD Coordinators, and TD Catalyst Teachers work collaboratively to provide enriching and relevant instruction, exposing these students to gifted curriculum and instructional strategies throughout the day. The K-2 approach of the LI/TD magnet theme focuses on learning immersion, which is designed to nurture gifted potential in young learners. Students are exposed to gifted curriculum and instructional strategies led by teachers who receive specialized training in gifted education. Classroom teachers at LI/TD magnet schools are encouraged to obtain AIG licensure and are supported by both a LI/TD Magnet Coordinator and TD Teacher.

### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** The Advanced Studies department is housed within the Learning and Teaching department in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. This organization allows for ongoing collaboration to occur with a variety of stakeholders who make an impact on gifted and advanced instruction. Regular

meetings occur between directors, specialists, and other support staff from various departments to share current practices and identify opportunities for alignment of work.

Focused efforts have been placed on collaborating with curriculum content specialists and special service departments such as Magnet Programs, Title 1, EL, and EC departments to ensure schools receive consistent, aligned support. Through these relationships, we aim to create cohesive communication, advocacy, and increased program integrity.

The district is beginning a curriculum adoption process for elementary and middle school ELA, middle school math, and high school Math. The Advanced Studies Department had multiple representatives serving on teams as a part of the curriculum adoption process. Through this collaboration, we will ensure that district core curriculum includes opportunities for differentiation for gifted and advanced learners. Work has been done to create curriculum units and align gifted and advanced curriculum resources to the core district curriculum scope and sequence. With the new curriculum adoption, resources for gifted and advanced learners will be aligned to the new core curriculum.

Collaboration between classroom teachers, TD Teachers, and Academic Facilitators is built into the comprehensive instructional programs. Two essential components of the TD Catalyst Model are collaboration and instructional planning. TD Catalyst teachers collaborate with classroom teachers and administrators for the benefit of AIG students.

At the elementary school level, greater consistency has been reported with meetings held by TD Site-Based Committees. TD Site-Based Committees include TD Teachers, Academic Facilitators, Classroom Teachers and Administrators at the school level that work together to ensure gifted and advanced students are identified and served appropriately. Encouragement of these meetings will continue, as well as requiring documentation of meetings. TD Site-Based Committees are encouraged to meet as often as needed and all meetings must be documented. Currently, elementary schools are required to submit documentation to our office for at least one meeting. This practice will be expanded to secondary sites to continue collaboration at the school level.

### **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:** Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs) are used to communicate how the academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners are met at individual sites. These documents are created in collaboration with grade-level representation, administrators and other relevant support staff. Once developed, these documents are shared with parents at one of two required annual meetings. Documentation for the meetings and the DEP are required uploads for each school for a minimum of two meetings a year. Translations are provided, as needed. DEPs are stored in the AIG student's cumulative record. It is encouraged that articulation occur from elementary to middle and middle to high transitions.

Individual Differentiated Education Plans (IDEPs) are created for gifted students in kindergarten and

first grade and for those who demonstrate unique needs. Often these students have been grade accelerated, identified as gifted prior to the second grade, or are twice exceptional. IDEPs can be created as needed by a TD Site-Based Committee if they feel a child has demonstrated needs that are not met on the DEP.

Performance Reviews are completed annually for each identified gifted child in grades K-8. These documents are completed collaboratively with classroom teachers, subject area teachers, TD Teachers, and Academic Facilitators. These documents are shared with parents at the end of the year. The annual performance reviews are also shared with the Advanced Studies Department and are filed within the student's cumulative record.

At the high school level, counselors support students as they select courses that align with their goals and meet their interests. As appropriate, opportunities for acceleration through CDM, virtual options, AP and IB courses, and dual enrollment are shared with students and parents. There is an opportunity for more targeted planning and communication at the high school level through the development of a four-year plan of coursework that supports students to reach their post-secondary goals.

### **Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**

Provide professional development and targeted support to secondary teachers to strengthen differentiation in the classroom.

Expand the work of the K-12 Vertical Articulation team to reach all schools in the district.

Design and implement competency-based, year-long professional learning experience for staff interested in pursuing their AIG licensure via the Praxis option.

Increase opportunities for secondary teachers to pursue an AIG license.

Create support documents for administrators, Learning Communities, teachers, and facilitators regarding best practices for gifted and advanced students K-12.

Align supplemental curriculum resources to new district core curriculum.

Provide updated professional development for all curriculum materials.

Create a greater awareness of materials and resources provided for gifted and advanced learners by posting alignment documents and unit guides on Canvas with grade level and subject resources.

Create a video library that includes exemplar lessons and effective use of the resources for professional development.

Expand and/or strengthen programs that foster career and college readiness skills: IB, AVID, AP Capstone, Advanced Placement, Cambridge.

Provide TD Catalyst Teachers, Academic Facilitators, and other relevant stakeholders professional development on flexible grouping, curriculum compacting, and opportunities to enrich and deepen the curriculum.

Develop capacity with secondary stakeholders in data analysis of EOC, EOG, PSAT, ACT, SAT, and other data reports which provide relevant information regarding course scheduling and strengths of the students.

Analyze district EOG results to determine schools where program implementation results in growth of gifted and advanced students. Evaluate school's program to determine how to create greater impact across the district.

Coordinate more strategic supports for transitional years, for example grade 5 to grade 6 and grade 8 to grade 9.

Identify gifted students who may be at risk and implement strategic supports.

Increase the use of the K-2 nurturing units across the district.

Develop communication tools for relevant stakeholders on characteristics of young gifted, advanced and creative thinkers.

Collaborate with school counseling department, EC department, and Title 1 department to provide supports for students and development opportunities for staff.

Provide targeted support to ensure consistent collaborative planning opportunities for TD Catalyst Teacher and Academic Facilitator at schools across the district.

Collaborate with the counseling department to develop a document and system to create a 4-year plan of coursework at the high school level.

### **Sources of Evidence:**

- Professional Development archives and feedback
- Curriculum training and feedback
- Curriculum inventories
- Curriculum implementation and use
- AIG cohort documentation
- Compliance folders for each school
- Differentiated Education Plans
- Agendas and sign-in sheets from DEP meetings
- Minutes from collaborative meetings
- K-2 Nurturing Units
- Implementation of K-12 Vertical strategies
- Collaborative professional development with other departments
- Student and teacher performance and growth data
- Survey and focus group feedback from stakeholders

## **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:** Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools employs Specialists, District Lead Teachers, and one Director in the Advanced Studies Department to coordinate, lead, and support the district AIG plan and program. The Director, AIG Specialists, and District Lead Teachers in the Advanced Studies Department are required to obtain AIG licensure. The Director, AIG Specialists, and District Lead AIG Teacher are all AIG licensed at this time. Additionally, each elementary school receives direct support from an AIG licensed TD Teacher for a minimum of two days per week. These teachers are responsible for leading the TD Catalyst Model in a school to best meet the needs of the school population.

**Director of Advanced Studies:** Lead gifted and advanced programming, goals, and initiatives that support AIG Plan. Lead and coordinate work for the district focused on the AIG Plan goals. Support Specialists and programs to obtain goals. Manages, monitors, and plans budget to support AIG Plan. Facilitate appeals for gifted identification and Horizons. Coordinate Cohort for AIG Licensure with Queens University and the University of North Carolina Charlotte.

**Talent Development Elementary Specialist:** Lead Elementary TD Catalyst Program and provide additional support for new TD Catalyst Teachers. Support LI/TD Magnet Theme. Plan and facilitate monthly TD Catalyst Teacher Training and manage the trainings in MyTalent. Lead K-2 Nurturing Program, including the development and implementation of the K-2 units. Facilitate K-12 Vertical Team to support vertical articulation of students. Manage TD Catalyst Teacher Placement, including interviews for new TD Catalyst Teachers. Coach and support TD Catalyst Teachers, support school implementation of TD Resources and provide District/School Professional Development. Support with the AIG Identification Process, Second Grade Portfolio Process and EL Portfolio Process. Recommend curriculum for high ability and gifted learners. Manage CMS Talent Development Standards Inventory. Facilitate Summer Extended Employment Work Groups. Support elementary extracurricular activities for advanced learners.

**Advanced Studies Specialist:** Act as AVID District Director - conduct District Leader Training, facilitate & plan Site Team Meetings, coordinate Summer Institute, conduct AVID site visits, provide district data requests, assist schools through AVID certification. Act as AP District Coordinator - facilitate & plan AP Meetings, lead AP Master Teachers, coordinate AP Summer Institute, conduct AP Site visits, provide AP district data requests, conduct AP Course audit, coordinate AP one-day training. Support K-12 Vertical Team. Support school implementation of TD resources in middle and high school. Recommend curriculum for high ability and gifted learners.

**Talent Development Compliance Specialist:** Lead and conduct assessments used to identify gifted students following the identification procedures established by the CMS Gifted Plan. This includes the

8/7/2020

coordination of the Fall gifted screening for all CMS 2nd grade students (aptitude and achievement), spring gifted screening for CMS 1st grade students with an informal opportunity, re-screening of students in grades 3-12 (aptitude and/or achievement). Maintain data system for district by entering AIG data via PowerSchool, as required by the state and submit AIG Headcounts to state in the Fall and Spring. Plan and coordinate portfolio assessment reviews for 2nd graders, including the EL portfolio assessment in conjunction with the EL department. Conduct internal audits of Differentiated Education Plans (DEP)/Independent Differentiated Education Plans (IDEP) files and other compliance documents utilized to evaluate program quality. Maintain accurate testing data and documentation for gifted identified students. Ensure district's adherence to AIG plan, policies, and procedures regarding gifted identification and services. Conduct school audits of Talent Development documentation within student cumulative files to provide feedback to schools. Communicate and provide support to parents of gifted identified students and external stakeholders (i.e. prospective CMS families) on gifted identification and service options. Support data analysis for schools, by request. Create, maintain, and revise (as needed) Talent Development forms (Performance Reviews, Referral and Results Forms, etc...). Provide training to necessary stakeholders in administration of assessments used for gifted identification. Support Elementary Specialist with TD Catalyst Teacher placement and interviewing. Support schools with Early Entry to Kindergarten process and during grade acceleration with the process outlined in the Iowa Acceleration Scales.

**AIG & Talent Development District Lead Teacher:** Provide leadership, coaching, and professional development for consistent implementation of the Talent Development Catalyst Model across CMS. Provide leadership, coaching, and professional development for the development and implementation of a consistent LI/TD magnet instructional program. Collaborate with TD Teachers, LI/TD Coordinators and Principals to identify and support needs of TD Catalyst Programs and LI/TD magnet Programs. Plan, track, and identify training needs for TD Catalyst Programs and LI/TD magnet Programs. Support gifted and advanced curriculum implementation across the district. Collaborate with Advanced Studies staff to connect TD Catalyst Model and LI/TD Magnet program with other advanced studies programs, resources and best practices. Collaborate with Learning and Teaching Services Specialists to ensure comprehensive understanding of gifted and advanced resources and strategies is relevant for all content specialists. Advocate for TD Catalyst and LI/TD Magnet program needs. Coordinate district-trainings, meetings, and other events to support the TD Catalyst Model and LI/TD Magnet program.

**Talent Development Secondary Specialist:** Facilitate Middle School Academic Facilitators professional development training and meetings. Provides TD communication and professional development for Advanced Studies contacts in secondary schools. Leads collaboration to plan, facilitate, and organize K-12 TD Professional Development for the department. Coordinate Horizons - provide professional development opportunities, develop and implement policies and procedures, communicate and market program, host parent nights to support program, support Horizons students within the high school program. Support Elementary Specialist and TD Compliance Specialist on projects. Support K-12 Vertical Team. Supports development, design and management of Advanced Studies Websites. Support the creation of media marketing tools for TD department (flyers/posters, website, videos, etc.) Coordinate Governor's School application process for the district. Lead and/or support district events that provide unique learning opportunities for students. Support school implementation of TD resources in middle and high school. Recommend curriculum for high ability and gifted learners.

**IB District Lead Teacher:** Collaborate with IB Lead Teachers, Coordinators and Principals to identify and support needs of IB programmes within each school. Plan, track, and identify training needs for



IB programme. Support curriculum implementation at IB sites. Support IB schools with evaluation visits, needs assessments, and program implementation. Collaborate with Advanced Studies staff to connect IB programme with gifted and advanced curriculum, instructional practices, and philosophies. Collaborate with Learning and Teaching Specialists to ensure comprehensive understanding of IB programme is relevant for content specialists. Advocate for IB programme needs. Coordinate district-trainings, meetings, and other events to support the IB programme. Advocate and collaborate with state and national organizations to gain better support for CMS IB programming.

Virtual Learning Specialist: Coordinate virtual learning programs including NCVPS, Edgenuity, and other district approved vendors. Collaborate with e-learning advisors, and Principals to identify and support needs of virtual learning programs within each school. Plan, track, and identify training needs for virtual learning. Support schools with virtual learning program implementation. Collaborate with Advanced Studies staff to connect virtual learning with gifted and advanced curriculum, instructional practices, and philosophies. Identify and communicate virtual learning options for acceleration and enrichment. Collaborate with Learning and Teaching Specialists to ensure comprehensive understanding of virtual learning program as relevant for content specialists. Advocate for virtual learning program needs. Coordinate district-trainings, meetings, and other events to support the virtual learning program. District lead on Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM). Supports development, design and management of Advanced Studies Websites.

The Advanced Studies department also works closely with the Learning & Teaching team of content specialists, EL department, Magnet department, EC department, Title I department, and Cambridge Coordinator to ensure the needs of gifted and advanced learners are met through varied advanced learning opportunities offered throughout the district.

### **Practice B**

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

**District Response:** An AIG Licensed TD Teacher in each elementary school is responsible for leading the Talent Development Catalyst Model. TD Catalyst teachers provide both direct and indirect services for AIG students while building the capacity of classroom teachers to differentiate and meet the needs of gifted learners. The core components of the TD Catalyst Model in each elementary school program include cluster grouping, collaborative planning, supplementation of curriculum with evidence-based gifted curriculum, professional development, communication, and compliance/identification.

For middle and high schools, the AIG Licensed Staff within the Advanced Studies Department works collaboratively with Academic Facilitators, Assistant Principals of Instruction, and classroom teachers to provide professional development regarding best practices for gifted and advanced students. Advanced Studies department Specialists and the Director work with secondary schools individually to provide advanced courses and curriculum to support the needs of gifted learners, guidance on master scheduling using available data, and appropriate professional development.

Consistent opportunities are provided for teachers, facilitators, and administrators to collaborate with

AIG-licensed specialists through professional development, monthly meetings for TD Catalyst Teachers, and Academic Facilitators, collaboration with AP teachers and AP master teachers, and direct support provided to individual schools. These multiple opportunities for collaboration and professional development directly target work that addresses the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted and 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:** There are specific license and professional development requirements for teachers involved in CMS Advanced Studies programs.

TD Catalyst Teachers are required to obtain AIG licensure through the State of North Carolina within three years of assuming the role as TD teacher. Middle school Academic Facilitators are provided with on-going, relevant professional development to support them with AIG services in their schools. Academic Facilitators are also encouraged to obtain AIG licensure. We are working to increase the number of AIG licensed educators, particularly at the secondary level.

As a district, we provide ongoing professional development opportunities for elementary and middle school classroom teachers on instructional practices, curriculum, and social/emotional needs of gifted and advanced learners.

AVID professional development is provided K-12 for schools across the district. AVID schools are required to have a core AVID site team of educators trained in the AVID system.

At the secondary level, teachers for advanced classes, such as AP and IB, are required to attend training for their AP or IB course and provided with opportunities to collaborate with AP and IB teachers across the district. AP Master Teachers provide additional support for new AP teachers. AP and IB teachers are also provided with PD opportunities focused on working with diverse groups of advanced students.

We have developed opportunities for administrators to engage in professional development and collaboration that supports implementation of the TD Catalyst model. Additional opportunities for counselors, special education teachers, and secondary administrators will be provided.

Additionally, we have established a model elementary school that embodies the TD Catalyst model. Teams of teachers and administrators visit the site to engage in job-embedded professional development and see co-teaching, collaborative planning, and rigorous instruction taking place at high levels. We would like to establish more model sites throughout the district as we deepen implementation of the TD Catalyst model at the elementary level and best practices in gifted education at the secondary level.

After reflection and feedback, we have determined that professional development is a way we can grow our teachers and create more teacher-leaders in gifted education across the district. It is also an

opportunity to intentionally engage counselors, special education teachers, and administrators in learning best practices for gifted education so they can support the integrity of programs K-12.

#### **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:** As a part of the TD Catalyst Model, classroom teachers with gifted students in their class are provided on-going and job-embedded support, professional development, and resources by the AIG Licensed TD Catalyst teacher at their school.

Administrators at each school use multiple qualitative and quantitative data points to determine placement of gifted students into regular classrooms. Another factor considered when placing gifted and advanced students is the training and capacity of the classroom teacher. Cluster grouping is an essential component of the TD Catalyst Model and administrators are encouraged to cluster group gifted and advanced students together to allow for ongoing differentiation to occur to best meet the academic needs of the students. Flexible grouping is also an encouraged practice in our schools. Flexible grouping should occur on grade-levels to allow for the needs of diverse populations to be met as the need for advancement and differentiation is demonstrated on pre-assessments. Moving forward, Specialists from the Advanced Studies team will provide additional support and guidance to schools with a low number of gifted students. This will expand opportunities for students and allow schools to be strategic in TD Catalyst Model implementation. Teachers with gifted clusters within their classrooms are provided professional development through the Advanced Studies department and encouraged to pursue AIG licensure. Teachers with gifted clusters often co-teach with AIG Licensed TD Teachers and engage in collaborative planning sessions to plan instruction.

TD Teachers are also encouraged to provide guidance and information to administrators regarding the cluster model, and current performance of gifted identified students. TD Catalyst Teachers are encouraged to monitor and share academic performance, motivation, and social and emotional development.

In an effort to increase the number of AIG Licensed classroom teachers (K-12) across the district, we continue to expand partnerships with local Universities to support teachers in obtaining an AIG License. Through expansion, the cohorts now include varied methods of participation (online, face-to-face) and multiple cohorts to support more teachers.

In addition, the Advanced Studies Department is in the process of developing a year-long, competency based professional development experience for classroom teachers (K-12). This PD opportunity will provide teachers with the skills and knowledge they need to effectively serve gifted and advanced students within their classroom setting. This will also serve as an alternative AIG licensure pathway for teachers who express interest in taking the AIG praxis.

#### **Practice E**

Aligns professional development opportunities with local AIG program goals, other district initiatives,

and best practices in gifted education.

**District Response:** The Advanced Studies Department designs and aligns professional development to support goals of the AIG Plan, enhance and enrich the NCSCOS, as well as directly support district initiatives and best practices for gifted education. The work of the Advanced Studies department is embedded within multiple district goals and initiatives. A few examples include providing access to advanced courses and programs for students at all schools, embedding social and emotional learning, and expanding AVID.

Professional development is designed to be interactive and collaborative to maintain high levels of engagement of participants. Often, participants are immersed in gifted strategies and resources during professional development session. Professional development is individualized for specific school(s) when requested to increase relevance for the targeted population. The department encourages participants and relevant stakeholders to evaluate professional development on a regular basis. This feedback allows Specialists within the department to redesign professional development opportunities to better meet the needs of participants.

AIG Licensed Specialists supporting the AIG Plan provide multiple levels of professional development for teachers, administrators, support staff, and facilitators in the district. Scheduled monthly, quarterly, and/or online meetings and resources deliver updated research related to best instructional practice and evidence-based curriculum for gifted and advanced studies.

The Advanced Studies department also offers a suite of professional development options a school, PLC, Learning Community, or department can request. These opportunities provide in-depth training on instructional practice and curriculum materials. Trainings are often individualized for a specific school, and are delivered over multiple sessions.

The professional development is geared for specific grade level ranges and shares best practice while providing a foundation for understanding the characteristics of gifted students. By combining foundations of gifted education with instructional practice, teachers have the opportunity to gain a beginning understanding of the uniqueness of the gifted child, including academic and social/emotional needs for this population.

Speakers and trainers are brought in to support instructional practice and curriculum purchased by the district. These opportunities are provided for TD Catalyst Teachers, Academic Facilitators, classroom teachers, administrators, and other relevant parties. The Advanced Studies Department also works to provide TD Teachers, Academic Facilitators, classroom teachers, and administrators the opportunity to attend state, national, and content-specific trainings. Trainings and conferences often attended are: North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented (NCAGT), National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), William and Mary training, Confratute (UCONN), trainings provided by North Carolina universities, College Board events, AVID Summer Institute, AP Summer Institute, IB specific trainings, Vanderbilt, and Magnet Schools of America (MSA).

Professional development opportunities that directly align to the AIG Plan and district goals to increase access to advanced courses at the secondary level are being provided on a regular basis. These PD opportunities are designed for AP and IB teachers to learn and implement research-based best practices for working with a diverse group of learners. Examples of the PD opportunities include Culturally Relevant Teaching and Quality Teaching for English Learners.

Based on feedback from stakeholders, collaborative professional development opportunities for TD Teachers and Administrators are being offered to support full implementation of the TD Catalyst Model throughout the district. These PD opportunities include topics such as cluster and flexible grouping practices, collaboration between classroom teachers and TD teachers, gifted curriculum, and instructional best practices.

The Advanced Studies Department also sponsors the opportunity for teachers, facilitators, administrators, and specialists to obtain their North Carolina AIG License. Through partnerships with local universities, we have AIG License options that include both face-to-face and distance learning opportunities.

In addition, the Advanced Studies Department is in the process of developing a year-long, competency based professional development experience for classroom teachers (K-12). This PD opportunity will provide teachers with the skills and knowledge they need effectively serve gifted and advanced students within their classroom setting. This will also serve as an alternative AIG license pathway for teachers who express interest in taking the AIG praxis.

Work groups exist to create supporting documents and professional development sessions that align district curriculum and initiatives to the curriculum and instructional methodology designed to meet the needs of gifted and advanced students.

Specific examples of where alignment has occurred is as follows:

**K-2 Nurturing Concept Based Units-** A team of TD Teachers, classroom teachers, and LI/TD Magnet Coordinators have created four concept-based units for each grade level in K-2. These units are designed to provide enrichment and nurture potential. Units align to the NCSCOS and use is flexible.

**K-12 Vertical Alignment -** Teachers and facilitators from all levels K-12 are working in cross functional groups to identify and develop targeted support strategies for transitions years and finding and serving underrepresented advanced and gifted students.

**Literacy Scope and Sequence -** TD Teachers have worked to align gifted instructional practices and curriculum to the district's scope and sequence. Examples of lessons, rubrics, etc., are provided for classroom teachers.

**Virtual Learning -** The Virtual Learning Specialist works with secondary schools to provide best practices when using online curriculum and tools with advanced learners. Virtual learning options are commonly used for subject acceleration at the secondary level for individual students.

As the district adopts new curriculum in reading and math, opportunities exist for alignment of TD curriculum resources to support teachers with differentiating core curriculum to meet the advanced learning needs of gifted and advanced students.

As the district transitions to a consistent set of indicators as a part of the School Improvement Planning (SIP) process, there is an opportunity for alignment between school SIP goals and the professional development provided by Advanced Studies to support school goals. The Advanced Studies department is committed to supporting schools with this alignment.

### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** Regularly-scheduled professional development opportunities for TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators are led by Specialists in Advanced Studies. These meetings are collaborative in nature and teachers are able to engage in professional learning that they can share within their own schools. These sessions are held regularly and designed to build upon learning from previous sessions. TD teachers and Academic Facilitators are provided time within the professional development to reflect and refine practices that they have learned and started to implement. This ongoing professional development is designed support continuous improvement in program implementation for TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators. Technology platforms, including Canvas and Google Drive, are used for ongoing resource sharing between TD Teachers, classroom teachers, and Academic Facilitators.

Classroom teachers are provided opportunities to implement and refine their learning from professional development within their schools with the support of their TD Catalyst teacher. However, additional opportunities for teachers to collaborate from multiple schools on a regular basis would be beneficial.

The Advanced Studies Specialists provide opportunities for ongoing professional development and collaboration for groups of secondary teachers. Advanced Placement teachers participate in ongoing blended professional learning led by the AP Master Teacher for each AP course. High School IB teachers are provided opportunities to collaborate across IB schools on regular basis. AVID coordinators are provided with ongoing professional development and collaboration opportunities to strengthen their AVID system within their schools.

Advanced Studies Specialists also lead and participate in work groups that involve a variety of teachers and school-based stakeholders, including TD Teachers, classroom teachers, Academic Facilitators, AVID Coordinators, and AP and IB teachers. These work groups collaboratively plan and develop curriculum, resources, and professional development. Products developed during these work groups are later piloted at schools, assessed, and revised based on feedback prior to delivering to all schools in the district. Specialists, classroom teachers, and facilitators also attend state and national conferences. During and after these conferences, collaboration occurs on how to best develop relevant professional development for teachers and administrators.

### **Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**

Design and deliver specific professional development for school-based staff focused on social and emotional needs as well as transitioning students from grades 5-6 and 8-9

Create varied resources for teachers and administrators communicating best practice for gifted and advanced students

Increase number of AIG licensed staff at middle and high schools

Increase diversity of individuals participating in AIG cohort opportunities

Develop a year-long competency based PD opportunity to provide classroom teachers with knowledge and best practices for gifted education and support AIG licensure.

Expand opportunities for administrators to attend professional development that supports best practices for gifted and advanced students

Expand opportunities for classroom teachers to collaborate after professional development in an effort to refine implementation of their learning.

**Sources of Evidence:**

- Professional Development archives and feedback
- Curriculum training resources and feedback
- Documentation from Professional Development and Conferences outside of CMS
- AIG cohort documentation, applications, and interest
- GoogleDrive folders used for electronic resource sharing
- Canvas courses use for blended PD and resource sharing
- Minutes from collaborative meetings
- Products created and revised by work groups (K-2 units, alignment documents)
- Professional development needs & requests
- Technology platforms for collaboration (Canvas & Google Drive)
- Use of gifted curriculum resources and strategies
- Student and teacher performance data
- Survey and focus group feedback from stakeholders

## **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:** The CMS Advanced Studies department partners with parents to provide multiple large-scale events and opportunities throughout the year. Examples of these events include the Maximizing Potential Conference for parents of gifted students in CMS, Spectrum of the Arts program for students, and Mathapalooza competition for students. Feedback from parents and families indicates that these partnership opportunities are valued and there is a desire more events and more opportunities to engage.

Parents were involved in the revision of the gifted plan as part of the advisory group and through survey feedback.

Schools communicate regularly with parents regarding services and opportunities for gifted and advanced students. There is an opportunity for additional district-level communication with parents and families. For improved communication, more face-to-face and online options, including webinars and Facebook Live events, will be planned in order to reach more parents.

Based on survey feedback from parents, there is a desire to engage and provide feedback on a more regular basis. As a result, a parent partnership committee will be created. The parent partnership group will be representative of the district, both geographically and socioeconomically. This group will advise the Advanced Studies staff on programming and resources within the district to support academic and social/emotional growth.

### **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:** The AIG plan, program components, and district policies and practices are available on the CMS website, and stakeholders are regularly referred to access the resources on this website. Companion documents that summarize components of the AIG Plan, such as AIG identification and services, are also provided on the website. The district is revising the website to make it easier to navigate and more accessible. The new district website features multiple language options which will further support parents and families in accessing this information. As a result of the new website platform, the AIG Plan and other resources will be more accessible and easier to locate.



8/7/2020

Social media is used regularly to communicate events, news, and student accomplishments with parents and other stakeholders. The opportunity for a district AIG parent listserv will be explored to continue to increase communication.

TD Teachers and Academic Facilitators provide regular communication, including emails, newsletters, and phone calls, with parents regarding AIG plan components such as AIG Identification, Differentiated Education Plans (DEPs), and opportunities to participate in school and district events. Schools are required to host DEP meetings annually to review the services provided for students within the school setting.

An opportunity to increase clear communication with parents has been identified through stakeholder feedback. Parent resource documents for gifted identification and services will be revised to ensure clarity. Additional video resources will be created to explain plan components for parents. This will ensure access to clear information about the gifted identification process along with the services and opportunities provided for gifted and advanced students.

### **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:** A diverse advisory group was convened to revise the CMS Gifted Plan based on overall district goals, progress on previous AIG plan goals, data, current research, and stakeholder feedback. The Advisory Group was designed to include stakeholders from demographic groups and roles that represent the diversity of the district to ensure multiple perspectives and experiences are included in the plan. The diverse advisory group that was convened to revise the CMS Gifted Plan will form the basis of a permanent AIG Advisory Group for the district.

The group includes representatives of the following stakeholder groups:

- Elementary, middle, and high school administrators
- AP, AVID, and IB teachers
- AVID, LI/TD, and IB coordinators
- Academic Facilitators
- TD Catalyst teachers
- Elementary, middle, and high school classroom teachers
- Executive Directors
- Learning Community representatives
- Exceptional Children's support staff
- English Learner support staff
- Advanced Studies Specialists
- Magnet Department Specialists
- Representatives from Title I department
- Representatives from the Equity Department
- Parents
- Students

8/7/2020

- Community members (non-parents)
- Partnership representatives (including higher ed)
- Instructional content specialists

The AIG Advisory Group will support implementation and monitoring of the CMS Gifted Plan. The group will be leveraged to break the three year plan into targets for each year. Subcommittees will be formed and tasked with goals to support with implementation and monitoring on a yearly basis. Members of the Advisory Group will support implementation and monitoring of the gifted plan, as well as championing the work of the AIG department in the community. AIG Advisory Group meetings will provide opportunities for subcommittees to receive and provide updates, collaborate, and discuss implementation and progress.

### **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:** TD Teachers provide quarterly newsletters regarding AIG programming within the school setting. Websites and wikis are also used to provide more frequent updates to parents and families. A goal of the department is to increase communication directly from the Advanced Studies department regarding opportunities for AIG students.

There is an opportunity to increase communication from the Advanced Studies department by providing regular updates from the district level regarding programming, opportunities, and ways to support gifted students in the home setting. As documents are revised, they will also need to be translated appropriately. Communication will be provided to parents and families that translators are available for other languages.

Surveys and conversations with stakeholders indicate that many parents and teachers would like additional communication about opportunities available to AIG students. The department will explore avenues, in addition to the CMS website and school-based communication, to provide (at minimum) fall and spring updates that include opportunities for AIG students. In addition, having all current documents translated into all needed languages has been a challenge. The district's website revision will include a Google Translate option for every page on the site, and the department will ensure that its webpage is formatted to take advantage of this translation opportunity. As an additional communication tool, the new website will also feature a parent resource page that is updated regularly with extracurricular opportunities and home-based activities for gifted children.

### **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:** The Advanced Studies department has partnered with local Universities for the benefit of students, teachers, and parents. Advanced Studies department partners with Queens University and UNC Charlotte for teacher training and AIG License opportunities, student

opportunities such as UNCC AVID Day and the World Language High Fliers program, and parent events such as the Maximizing Potential gifted conference. The Advanced Studies department has also recently partnered with Freedom House and Charlotte Museum of History for teacher support, parent outreach, financial gifts to schools, and student programming.

Additional partnerships are in place at the school-level. Advanced Studies will work with the CMS partnerships department to increase possible partnering organizations, then share them with schools. Expanding existing partnerships to multiple schools and across feeder patterns will also serve to support students throughout the district. Existing district-wide partnerships will be maintained and expanded for additional teacher development, student events, and parent outreach.

### **Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:**

Leverage the Gifted Plan Advisory Group to organize the three year plan into yearly goals and monitor the progress on the goals for each year.

Schedule and meet with advisory group regularly to determine progress towards goals and determine what action steps need to occur to ensure goals are met.

Evaluate the advisory group representation annually to ensure representation meets the needs and reflects the diversity of the district.

Increase the number of partnerships that provide unique learning opportunities for students. Expand current partnerships to additional schools, including feeder patterns.

Use multiple modes of communication, including meetings, videos, screen-casts, FAQs, and multiple languages to increase communication for all stakeholders.

Work with internal departments, including CMS partnerships department, to identify collaborative partnership opportunities

Provide updates directly to parents and families (at least twice a year) from the Advanced Studies Department on district opportunities, programming, and methods for supporting gifted and advanced learners.

Utilize translation capabilities of the district website to ensure maximum access to district policies for all families.

Use website to post current resources for parents and opportunities for gifted learners. (including social/emotional resources)

Update website, including addition of video resources, to reflect current AIG program expectations, the local AIG plan, and other policies that support gifted and advanced students grades K-12.

### **Sources of Evidence:**

**8/7/2020**

- Survey and focus group feedback from stakeholders
- Communication tools & website
- Advisory Group meeting agendas and minutes
- Feedback from parent conferences and parent sessions
- Feedback from participants for events and programs
- Notes and feedback from partners on programs and events

## **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:** Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools' AIG plan is developed by an advisory group representative of our diverse district and the needs of our gifted and advanced students. The AIG Advisory Group was expanded to include a diverse group of educators, parents, and community partners that advocate and share perspectives from their experience and context.

As a part of the plan revision process, the AIG program was evaluated using data, surveys, and informal feedback. Data and feedback were gathered from parent surveys, administrator/teacher surveys, and executive staff regarding services and programming for gifted and advanced students. The advisory group and Advanced Studies department worked collaboratively to develop revisions and goals to increase opportunities provided to gifted and advanced students in accordance with state and district expectations. Revisions and goals are supported with evidence-based practices that have resulted in growth of gifted and advanced students.

### **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:** Overarching goals associated with the local AIG program and plan in accordance with current legislation and state policies are monitored at the district level. The department ensures identification, compliance, programming support, professional development, and supplemental curriculum is closely monitored through electronic documentation, audits, inventories, and survey feedback. In addition, multiple data points, including growth, student performance, and stakeholder feedback are analyzed for all programs and levels K-12.

An Implementation Tool for the TD Catalyst Model has been developed to aid TD Teachers and Administrators in creating goals and working toward continuous improvement. The tool incorporates all essential components of the TD Catalyst Model, allowing for school teams to identify their current strengths and needs. Each school's implementation tool ratings are submitted to the Advanced Studies Team to allow for targeted professional development and support. The implementation tool for the TD Catalyst Model will also be shared with Learning Communities and other district leaders to further promote integrity to the TD Catalyst Model throughout the district.

Observational data and student performance data is also gathered on certain programs, such as AP,

8/7/2020

IB and AVID. Additional implementation tools for these programs need to be developed and provided to schools, administrators, and Learning Communities to ensure integrity to program implementation for all components of the AIG Plan. An opportunity exists in partnering with HR to collect and monitor teacher training in the areas of AP, IB, and AVID. This data will be used, in conjunction with other data points, to monitor program integrity.

To closely monitor implementation of the AIG plan goals, the AIG Advisory Group will be leveraged. Annual targets will be identified for each year of the 3-year plan. Subcommittees of the advisory group will support implementation and monitoring of annual targets. Annual progress reports will be prepared and shared based on data analysis, monitoring of program implementation and plan goals, and stakeholder feedback.

### **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:** The Advanced Studies department uses funds allotted for the local AIG program to support all goals, initiatives, and programs stated in the AIG plan.

Each year, a strategic budget is developed to support the goals of the AIG plan. The plan goals and budget are aligned to the needs of gifted and advanced students throughout the district. Data and feedback are used to prioritize specific goals and needs each year. The annual budget development process occurs in partnership with the Executive Director of Learning and Teaching and the Chief Academic Officer. The proposed budget and budget requests for additional local funding to support AIG plan goals are reviewed and approved by cabinet.

The Advanced Studies Director and Senior Administrative Secretary collaborate during weekly meetings to ensure funds are used appropriately in accordance with the strategic budget and the goals and priorities of the CMS AIG plan.

In collaboration with the CMS Grants Team, grants are pursued to support the goals of the AIG plan. In addition, a partnership with the Title I department is being developed to provide additional resources to Title 1 schools to support those schools with finding and serving gifted students from underrepresented populations.

### **Practice D**

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

**District Response:** Currently, analysis and sharing of student achievement and growth data is conducted annually for students at all levels involved in all programs. The Advanced Studies Team works with the Accountability Department to obtain district growth and proficiency data for each school and program as well as the district overall. Additional informal program data from IB, AP, and AVID is also gathered internally. The CMS Navigator Portal contains district, school, and student level

reporting that captures student performance. The current reports allow for demographic desegregation of the data and filtering for identified AIG students. Data Presentations will be delivered to relevant stakeholders such as: TD Catalyst Teachers, Administrators, Academic Facilitators, and Program Coordinators. Data analysis regarding achievement patterns, growth, and trends will inform targeted support for schools from the Advanced Studies Specialists and opportunities for collaborative learning between schools. Schools with identified strengths in specific areas will inform practices within schools who have targeted needs in those areas.

The CMS Navigator Portal provided by the Accountability Department includes a report with early warning indicators for students at risk of dropping out and/or being retained. The report can be filtered for AIG identified students and other demographic data. This report is used to provide targeted support for students that aligns to their needs and goals.

Through partnership with the Accountability Department, TD Catalyst Teachers and Academic Facilitators are provided with up to date professional development on the use of data including EVAAS, MAP, and EOGs.

Annual district-level data was shared with the Gifted Plan Advisory Group as a part of the plan revision process and will continue to be shared to ensure progress is being made toward our goals. District level data will also continue to be used to identify model schools for specific program components and schools that would benefit from additional support.

The maintenance, analysis, and sharing of data will be further improved by the creation of an Advanced Studies Data Dashboard. This report will directly support analysis and sharing of data at the school level to address trends and individual student needs.

### **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:** Monitoring of traditionally underrepresented populations currently occurs within the Advanced Studies Department. As a department, we have access to data through the CMS Navigator, a data portal created by the CMS Accountability Department. The CMS Navigator includes demographic and achievement data for all students within the district, including data for students who are identified as gifted through our district process outlined in standard 1. The CMS Advanced Studies Team gathers and reviews the following data on underrepresented populations: percentage identified as gifted, number attending LI/TD magnets, number enrolled in AP courses, number enrolled in IB courses, number obtaining an IB diploma, and relevant AVID data.

As a result of the success with targeted efforts for identifying gifted EL students, identification procedures have been revised with expanded ranges to provide additional opportunities for students demonstrate gifted traits through authentic work samples. The revisions include targeted efforts to find and serve gifted students who have any of the following factors: English Learner, Exceptional Child, McKinney-Vento, high rate of absenteeism, multiple entry points within a 24 month period, or attends a Title 1 or Low Performing school.

At the Elementary level, TD Catalyst teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to monitor performance and growth of all gifted and advanced students through informal data points collected throughout the school year and formal data points such as a EOGs, MAP, and EVAAS. In addition, Early Warning Indicator reports for both the elementary and secondary level are available through the CMS Navigator for both school level and district level leadership. These reports are used to identify students who may need targeted support to be successful.

An opportunity for growth occurs in systematic and consistent monitoring of the performance and retention of underrepresented populations at the secondary level. In partnership with the Accountability Department, the Advanced Studies Team will work to determine how underrepresented gifted students are currently performing at the elementary and secondary level. Based on information gathered, specific goals and supports will be developed, in collaboration with other central office departments such as the Student Support Services, EL, EC, Title One, and Learning & Teaching, to help eliminate any barriers these students may face and provide the supports needed to meet their unique advanced learning needs.

#### **Practice F**

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

**District Response:** The Advanced Studies Director works each fall and spring to complete an audit of positions funded through the department to ensure expected credentials are obtained or are being appropriately pursued. Teachers who are working to obtain licensure are supported and timelines of licensure obtainment are monitored.

The hiring of personnel funded through the Advanced Studies Department to serve AIG students across the district includes screening, interviews, and hiring by the Advanced Studies Department. The Advanced Studies Department collaborates with school administrators to place personnel in schools to serve AIG students.

The Advanced Studies Director has partnered with Human Resources to maintain a current list of all AIG licensed staff throughout the district. The Advanced Studies department will engage all AIG licensed staff throughout the district that are not in positions to directly serve gifted students in an effort to provide them with opportunities to advocate and impact AIG students in their current role. In addition, through partnership with HR, we will expand monitoring of credentials to the areas of AP, AVID, and IB.

#### **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:** Informal feedback is gained from students, parents/families, teachers and other stakeholders regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the AIG program on a regular basis. Informal feedback is gathered through district leadership and department meetings, school-based meetings and DEPs, district and school parent events, and individual meetings with teachers,



parents, and administrators.

The AIG Advisory Group has been expanded to gather in depth feedback from an increased number of diverse perspectives. Additional large-scale formal feedback opportunities need to be offered on a regular basis.

Clear and frequent communication is a key component of our goals for the CMS AIG Plan 2022. We will seek feedback annually from students, parents/families, teachers and other stakeholders. This will provide information on progress toward AIG plan goals and guidance for the AIG Advisory Group in adapting implementation of the AIG Plan goals.

Formal feedback opportunities will include an annual survey for parents, students, and school-based staff that is targeted to gain insight into progress on the CMS 2022 AIG Plan Goals. In addition, an AIG parent focus group will be established to provide a K-12 AIG parent perspective and consistent feedback to evaluate progress on CMS 2022 AIG Plan Goals and plan for continuous improvement.

#### **Practice H**

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

**District Response:** Multiple sources of data including student achievement & growth, identification data, demographic data, AP/IB course enrollment data, and stakeholder survey results were used as a part of the Local AIG plan evaluation and revision process. In addition, the advisory group was expanded to include a larger and more diverse group of stakeholders to give feedback and share ideas for how to best serve gifted and advanced students across CMS.

The process to evaluate and revise the AIG Plan included the engagement of a large and diverse AIG Advisory Group, including teachers, administrators, parents, district personnel, and community partners. The process also included compiling multiple sources of data indicated above and the collection of survey feedback from students, parents, and school-based staff. The AIG Advisory group met multiple times throughout the year to analyze data & survey feedback, review research, evaluate current practices, and propose changes to the AIG Plan. Through this process overall goals and plan revisions were identified. The draft plan was shared with district stakeholders, including executive staff, for feedback prior to presentation to the CMS School Board for approval.

The Advanced Studies Team uses data consistently to evaluate progress and plan for continuous improvement. The data sources used for program evaluation and plan revision are consistently used by the team. The AIG Advisory Group that engaged in the plan revision process will be leveraged to identify goals for each year based on the AIG plan. The Advisory Group will support program implementation to work toward the goals and review progress using the data sources identified.

Although multiple data sources were reviewed and used to revise the local AIG plan, survey feedback was minimal from some stakeholder groups. The majority of the survey feedback gathered for the plan revision was gained from teachers, administrators, and elementary parents. Secondary teachers and administrators are part of the AIG Advisory Group; however, perspective is limited to school based staff. To provide more comprehensive programming for the district, we need to access more

secondary stakeholders. Community member feedback was gathered directly from multiple community partners that have been added to the AIG Advisory Group.

### **Practice I**

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

**District Response:** Information regarding the evaluation of the local AIG program has been communicated to stakeholders. A full evaluation of the AIG plan and program was conducted as a part of the revision process. Identified changes to the plan and continuing practices and goals were shared with the AIG Advisory Group, Executive Staff, and CMS Board of Education. Following the approval of the plan, the identified changes and continuing practices are posted on the Advanced Studies page of the CMS website along with the approved AIG Plan.

Program evaluation will be conducted annually by compiling data related to the goals of the AIG plan and feedback collected from all stakeholders. An annual progress presentation will be developed and shared through district leadership meetings, TD Catalyst Teacher meetings, and Academic Facilitator meetings. Progress will be shared with the AIG Advisory Group through regular meetings to review yearly goals and progress. In addition, the annual progress presentation will be posted on the Advanced Studies page of the CMS website along with the AIG Plan.

### **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:** The primary goal of the Advanced Studies department is to serve as the lead advocate for all gifted and advanced students in CMS. Through involvement in district policies, procedures, and practices, the department works to maintain a high level of awareness regarding decisions made that influence gifted students. The LEA plan includes equitable identification procedures, placement, services, reassessment, transfer, and procedures to resolve disagreements that are clearly articulated in written form, as well as communicated by schools. Each of these processes are evaluated annually to ensure students, parents, and families receive adequate support in helping gifted identified and advanced students maximize their academic potential.

Informed consent for identification and services is provided through the required the 8001 referral and results form. This form requires a parent signature for the student to be screened for identification and provided services if they are identified.

The following statement is included as a part of the form: I give permission for my child to be screened to determine eligibility for gifted identification. As a result of this screening, if my child meets the district's criteria for gifted identification, I agree to have him/her coded as gifted in Power School and receive gifted services. Further, I am aware of the annual performance review if my child is identified as gifted in any capacity.

The current forms and letters that are used for informed consent and communication of the screening process are available in the five major languages within the district. The revised 8001 referral and results form and all identification process letters will be translated into the five major languages within the district so that they are available to all schools to provide informed consent in the students' native language. TD Site Based committees will be instructed to reach out to the TD Compliance Specialist if there is a need for the 8001 referral and results form to be translated to additional languages.

All decisions for testing for gifted identification outside of the districtwide second grade screening process are made by TD Site-Based Committees. The Advanced Studies department has developed a document outlining rationale for screening/ rescreening to provide guidance to committees and they are encouraged to utilize both quantitative and qualitative data to make informed decisions. Students may be considered for rescreening through district testing after a period of at least 24 months has passed.

#### Rationale for Talent Development Screening/ Rescreening:

Unidentified CMS students in grades 3-12 may warrant rescreening for potential gifted identification and placement if they demonstrate one or more of the following traits and have not been assessed in the past 24 months by the Advanced Studies Department:

- Student entered CMS after the initial second grade screening and performance is on at least grade level according to district grade level assessments in both math and reading.
- Student has earned a minimum of 4 points on our Talent Development Identification Rubric through achievement testing (EOGs or EOCs).
- Student has been placed on a 504 or IEP with newly implemented testing accommodations and is now performing above grade level.
- Student participated in EL/TD identification procedures in 2nd grade, but did not qualify as gifted.
- Student is recommended for testing by School Guidance Counselor or another agency or individual working with them.
- All decisions for rescreening are made at the school level and must be approved by the Talent Development Site-Based Committee.

CMS has reciprocity for gifted identification for students who transfer from other LEAs. If testing results from another North Carolina (NC) Local Education Agency (LEA) led to student being identified as gifted in any capacity (AI, AG, IG, AR, AM), gifted identification will remain the same in CMS with no further testing required. If identification label does not transfer through PowerSchool, a parent or guardian signature will be required on a Talent Development Referral and Results Form to ensure informed consent and proper coding. If a student was identified as gifted in any capacity (AI, AG, IG, AR, AM) in a school district or LEA outside of North Carolina, gifted identification will remain the same in CMS with no further testing required. Documentation must be provided and may consist of an official score report(s), educational record, and/or official letter from school or district to show student was identified as gifted. The TD Teacher or Academic Facilitator will complete the top portion of a Talent Development Referral and Results Form and obtain a parent or guardian signature to ensure informed consent and proper coding in PowerSchool.

The procedures to resolve disagreements are provided to parents and made publicly available on the Advanced Studies page of the district website. The approved procedures to resolve disagreements will be translated into the five major languages in the district to ensure the document is readily available as needed. In addition, the new district website features translation capability which will be used to ensure the procedures to resolve disagreements are available on the website in additional languages.

Procedures to Resolve Disagreements (Effective: August 25, 2013) Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C - 150.7 (7) and § 150B, Article 3, the parent/Guardian has the right to disagree with the following procedures and services: Identification of student and appropriate services for the gifted student.

Disagreement with identification/services must be filed within 90 calendar days of the initial decision.

1. The parent/guardian makes a written request for a conference with the school-based Talent Development (TD) committee to discuss concerns regarding identification or services. The school principal is notified of this concern.
  - A conference between the school and the parent must be scheduled within 15 school days of receipt of the written contact from parents.
  - At the conference, the committee will share the identification process and the documentation used to support the decision.

(Appeals for Horizons placement begins at Step 2.)

2. If the concern/disagreement is not resolved at the school-based conference:
  - The parent/guardian may appeal the decision by sending written notice to the Director of Advanced Studies.
  - The Director of Advanced Studies will notify the school, the Learning Community, and the Chief Academic Officer of the appeal.
  - Within fifteen days of receipt of the notice of appeal from the parents, the Director of Advanced Studies will schedule a conference. The conference must occur within 30 days of the receipt of the notice of appeal, unless the parents request an extension of time.
  - The Director of Advanced Studies will review all documentation and the parent/guardian's disagreement.
  - At the conference, the Director of Advanced Studies will facilitate a process to resolve the parents' disagreement with the district's decisions.

3. If the concern/disagreement is not resolved through a conference with the Director of Studies:

The parent/guardian may appeal the decision by sending written notice to the Learning Community Superintendent of their child's school.

  - The Learning Community Superintendent will organize a team of TD teachers, from other schools within that Learning Community, who will review the documentation and the parent/guardian's complaint. The Learning Community Superintendent will notify the parent of the opportunity to provide additional documentation for consideration. Once this process is completed, the Learning Community Superintendent and this team of TD teachers will render a decision.
  - After a decision has been reached, the Learning Community Superintendent will convey a Resolution Meeting with members of the team of TD teachers, the Learning Community Superintendent, and the parents, at which the staff will discuss their findings with the parent. The Learning Community Superintendent must send a follow-up letter detailing the decision to the parents within 15 days of the Resolution Meeting.
  - If the parent/guardian intends to be represented by legal counsel at this meeting, they must notify the Learning Community Superintendent so that CMS legal counsel may be notified of the meeting. If parents appear with counsel but have not given prior notice of the intention to be so represented, the Resolution Meeting will be rescheduled to a later date.

4. If the concern/disagreement is not resolved at the Resolution meeting:

- The parent/guardian may appeal the decision by making a written request for a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools (or his/her designee).
- At the meeting, the Superintendent (or his/her designee) will review the documentation of the disagreement and hear the parent/guardian's concerns.
- The Superintendent (or his/her designee) will notify the parent of his/her decision within fifteen school days after meeting with the parents.

5. If the parent/guardian with the Superintendent's decision, he/she may file for State Mediation and, if appropriate, a State Due Process petition.

#### State Mediation

- i. Parent/Guardian makes a written request for a State Resolution Meeting to the Director of Advanced Studies
- ii. Both the school district and the parent/guardian will agree upon an impartial mediator. A list of mediators will be sent to the parent/guardian to make his/her selection of mediator.
- iii. The school district will notify the parent/guardian of the scheduled conference date within the required 15 days due process timeline.
- iv. Parent/guardians, school representatives, and impartial mediator will meet to discuss disagreements. The impartial mediator will make a determination using school and parent/guardian input. The mediator will develop a written agreement between parent/guardian if a resolution is reached. In the event that the impartial mediation procedure fails to resolve, the disagreement (s), the State Due Process procedure will be implemented.

#### State Due Process

- i. The parent/guardian files a petition for contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of the review shall be limited to the following:
  - ii. Whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the student as academically or intellectually gifted; and whether the local plan developed has been implemented appropriately with regard to the student. An Administrative Law Judge will review the case. His/her decision is final, is binding on the parties, and is not subject to further review under Article 4 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes.

**Ideas for Strengthen the Standard:** Evaluate components of the local AIG plan annually to ensure funding is appropriately allocated for prioritized goals.

Collaborate with the office of accountability to develop an Advanced Studies dashboard that compiles the data used to inform plan review, evaluation, and revision.

Provide data analysis professional development opportunities for Advanced Studies contacts at elementary, middle, and high school on a regular basis.

Develop implementation tools and strategic processes for data analysis for district level results regarding specific programs (AVID, AP, AP Capstone, IB)

Use data to provide targeted support for schools in finding and serving underrepresented students.

Implement revised identification procedures and monitor closely to ensure equity for all students.

Determine efficient way to monitor performance and retention of underrepresented populations throughout all programs supported by the Advanced Studies Department

Collaborate with HR to expand monitoring of credentials to AP, AVID, and IB.

Create opportunities for advocacy and impact for AIG Licensed staff who are not in positions to directly serve AIG students.

Develop and implement a plan to successfully survey stakeholders on an annual basis.

Complete data analysis with AIG Advisory Group to ensure consistency in implementation of the plan and adapt plan implementation as needed based on feedback provided by stakeholders.

Develop a K-12 AIG parent focus group to provide the parent perspective and ongoing feedback to evaluate progress with goals from the CMS AIG Plan.

Develop an efficient communication tool for all stakeholders.

Disseminate information regarding progress with the CMS AIG program and plan on a regular basis.

Intentionally provide all documents outlining procedures and practices in students' native languages.

**Sources of Evidence:** - District & school data and data analysis reports including demographic and performance data

- Survey and focus group feedback from all stakeholder groups
- TD Catalyst Implementation tool data
- District and school course enrollment data
- Program data from AVID, AP, IB
- Electronic compliance folder for each school
- AIG plan and updates
- Referral and Results Form signature sheets for identified students
- Cumulative file information including DEP, identification results, and Performance Review Documents
- Professional Development archives
- Resource guides and communication tools provided to all stakeholders
- Audit reports

**Glossary (optional):**

**Appendix (optional):**

CMS Board Meeting - 2022 Gifted Plan Approval.pdf (*Local Board Approval Document*)