

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

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

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

As LEAs continue to transform their AIG Programs to align to the AIG Program Standards, LEAs participated in a self-assessment process of their local AIG program, which involved multiple stakeholders. The data gathered during this process guided LEAs in their development of this local AIG plan for 2013-2016. This local AIG plan has been approved by the LEA's board of Education and sent to NC DPI for comment.

For 2010-2013, Jackson County Schools local AIG plan is as follows:

Jackson County Schools Vision for local AIG program: All students will become responsible, functional, and productive members of a culturally diverse, 21st century, global society.

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

State Funding	Local Funding	Grant Funding	Other Funding
\$211321.00	\$22770.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

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Standard 1: Student Identification

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The plan includes a very clear process for screening, referral, and identification.

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

Description: The identification and placement process for Academically and Intellectually Gifted services consists of three-steps:

- (I) Student search/nomination - Screening
- (II) AIG needs determination team review - Identification
- (III) Service options match - Placement

I. Student Search/Nomination: Initial Screening

A. General Information

1. The 'student search phase' of the placement process includes all activities designed to screen the general student population in order to determine which students may require further assessment for placement in the AIG program.
2. Particular attention during this process will be given to potentially gifted students from culturally diverse and economically disadvantaged populations, including assessments given in the language in which the student is most fluent and non verbal assessments.
3. Information collected at the final stage will lead either to a referral and additional assessment, or to a decision that the student currently does not require differentiated services. This process will establish a pool of highly able students in Jackson County.
 - a. If the student is referred, parents will be notified by the school-based AIG needs determination team that further assessment is necessary. Parent consent will be required for testing.
 - b. If the AIG needs determination team finds that the student does not require differentiated services, documentation will be placed in the student file. This will alert future teachers that the learner has shown some indication of potential giftedness and deserves to be monitored to determine if the process should begin again.

B. Screening Strategies

1. A county-wide student search will be conducted annually. This search will include a review of aptitude test scores at the 90th percentile or above, the 93rd percentile and above on End-of-Grade tests, and the 93rd percentile and above for classroom performance. This student search will occur annually in third grade and biannually for fourth grade and up.

2. A referral seeking process will involve parents and/or teachers who may nominate students. Supporting documentation will accompany these nominations. Data collected from teachers, parents, psychologists, and the central office will include standardized achievement test scores, group and/or individual aptitude scores, grade averages, portfolio documentation, work samples and a cognitive/behavioral checklist.

3. All AIG transfer students' records will be reviewed by the appropriate school-based AIG needs determination team to decide placement. If necessary, students may be reevaluated for AIG placement based on Jackson County Schools' identification procedures.

II. Identification and Placement

A. The school-based AIG needs determination team will be established at the school site and may include the principal, central office personnel, the AIG specialist, a school counselor, and classroom teachers.

B. The responsibility of the school-based AIG needs determination team in the Identification and Placement process is to:

1. Collect data from:

- a. Tests and other sources of measurable performance (e.g., grades)
- b. Nominations and supporting materials from teachers, students, and parents
- c. Observations of student performance

2. Make an initial decision regarding which students need further review or referral for possible placement.

3. Notify parents in writing if the team decides to refer the student for possible services or when further review is necessary.

4. Make recommendations and suggest program options for appropriate placement (math, reading, or both).

5. Keep appropriate records of decisions regarding all students nominated for review, referral, and placement by the team.

C. The identification process will be based on a system of documentation of multiple indicators of giftedness. (See Appendix A, Figure 2.)

1. Information from any or all indicators may be used in matching students with appropriate service options.

2. Information used from each indicator should be directly related to the service option considered.

3. Information from specific indicators may be given priority for specific service options (e.g., math achievement and/or performance—advanced math class).

4. Of the six multiple indicators, four of the six indicators must be evident for a student to be placed on the AIG headcount. Of the required four indicators, two must be either student achievement (EOG scores), student aptitude, or student performance (grades).

5. Any student who transfers with evidence of participation in a program for academically or intellectually gifted students will be reviewed for instructional placement in the existing gifted program based on the student's educational needs and local options available.

III. Services Options Match

A. Appropriate services will be determined using the criteria for placement specified for each option

and the information collected about the student's needs during the student search and review process.

B. Information must match the placement option to ensure that the needs of the student have been taken into account.

C. If other service options are needed to meet the student's math and/or reading needs, the school system will have the responsibility of designing an Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) based on the student's identified needs.

D. Since gifted students do not become "ungifted" in heterogeneous setting, the DEP/IDEP should specify instructional modifications needed for identified gifted students in general education classes that may include being excused from skills that are already mastered or offered choices of more challenging assignments.

E. Should a student transfer or experience a furlough, reevaluation of their DEPs or IDEPs will be addressed by the AIG needs determination team.

IV. Nurturing Programs

The Jackson County school system is committed to informally identifying students of high intellectual/academic potential in grades K-3. Students are informally identified using multiple indicators, in conjunction with quarterly state-wide assessments, systematic observations, portfolio assessments, work samples, and teacher interviews. The informal identification is dynamic and flexible and may change with each quarterly assessment. It will include students from special populations.

Differentiation occurs in the classroom by varying content, process, product and environment and is reflected in advanced learning experiences and enrichment opportunities. Because of the flexible nature of the identification process, students have the opportunity to move between various groups.

The Jackson County school system is also cognizant of and supports the affective domain of gifted students. When social and emotional issues are addressed and social and emotional needs are met, students face their challenges with emotional balance and appropriate coping mechanisms that promote success in reaching personal potential (Roeper 1995). The school utilizes the services of the Guidance and Counseling personnel in this endeavor. All JCPS teachers are encouraged to refer underachieving gifted students for counseling services. All AIG specialists, as well as the AIG coordinator, endeavor to pay special heed to the social-emotional needs of their students.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • AIG Plan appears on Jackson County Schools website

- Cover letter and AIG Brochure is sent to parents of all third graders prior to mass screening notifying of screening, referral, and identification process
- AIG Brochure distributed in Kindergarten packet, to parents requesting individual testing, and to transfer students

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The plan employs multiple criteria which is utilized consistently across the school district.

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

Description: Criteria considered for placement are: Student Achievement, Student Interest, Student Motivation to Learn, Student Aptitude, Student Performance, and Observable Student Behaviors.

Observation of Student – Indicators of student's needs for differentiation, based on his/her observable behavior may be shown through the student's abilities in the following areas:

- Communication – Highly expressive and effective use of words, numbers and symbols
- Motivation – Evidence of desire to learn
- Humor – Conveys and picks up on humor
- Inquiry – Questions, experiments, explores
- Insight – Quickly grasps new concepts and makes connections, senses deeper meaning
- Interests – Intense (sometimes unusual) interests
- Problem-Solving – Effective, often inventive, strategies for recognizing and solving problems
- Memory – Large storehouse of information on school or non-school topics
- Reasoning – Logical approaches to figuring out solutions
- Imagination/Creativity – Produces many ideas, highly original

Student Performance – Indicators of a student's demonstrated mastery may be shown through work samples, portfolios, grades, or other authentic assessment strategies. In some cases, performance may be demonstrated outside the school arena.

Student Achievement – Indicators of a student's knowledge may be shown through a standardized test score or an End-of-Grade/End-of-Course test score. Achievement may also be reflected on criterion-referenced tests designed by teachers.

Student Aptitude – Indicators of a student's capacity for learning involve reasoning, problem solving, memory, etc. Aptitude may be shown through an IQ score or demonstrated abilities.

Student Interest – Indicators of a student's focus areas and/or curiosity may be shown through a formal interest inventory/survey, an informal interview, or documentation of a student's particular passion. Interest may also be demonstrated through student's participation in extra-curricular activities.

Student Motivation to Learn – Indicators of a student's commitment to pursue learning experiences may be shown through school and/or outside of school activities. With some students this may be negated by unfavorable environmental or experiential circumstances. For these students, who have often been called "underachievers", an individual case study may be important to reflect the student's specific areas of need.

Giftedness is the manifestation of ability to learn well beyond the expected level of one's age mates. It can be discovered through outstanding student performance, high test scores, and/or through observation. These abilities are sometimes muted in students by unfavorable environmental circumstances and need to be actively sought. Jackson County Public Schools' personnel is committed to seeking AIG students from all student populations.

AIG placement in Jackson County Public Schools will be based on evidence of the multiple indicators seen in the above figure. As previously noted, placement on the AIG headcount will occur when at least four of the six indicators are present. Of those four, two must be either student achievement (End-of-Grade Test scores) in the 93rd percentile or above, student aptitude (Naglieri Non-verbal Ability Test NNAT) in the 90th percentile or above, or student performance (grades) in the 93rd percentile or above. (See Appendix A)

[Reference source—Coleman, Gallaher, Harrison, and Robinson (1995)]

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Student folders containing identification information

• District AIG Plan

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The system has moved to a non-verbal test to allow for under-represented populations to be represented in the referral pool. There has been a steady increase of English Language Learner students identified since the first use of this test. Stakeholders are satisfied with current procedures making this a Maintained Practice.

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

Description: Jackson County Schools previously administered the Test of Cognitive Skills II (TCSII) as the third grade mass screening instrument to determine a pool of students for AIG placement consideration. However, in 2006, it was determined that a move should be made to a non-verbal assessment to reduce any bias that might be caused by a highly verbal test. At that time, the decision was made to use the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT). The NNAT measures ability without the requirement of reading, writing, or speaking, instead focusing on reasoning and problem-

solving skills. The test is considered ideal for those with limited English proficiency, as such is considered cultural-fair. The TCSII has been used for off-grade level testing of students who needed an additional test beyond the NNAT. Currently the system is exploring other testing possibilities for supplemental testing. The North Carolina Governor's School has removed the TCSII from the approved list of aptitude tests because it does not meet the rigor desired for acceptance.

Student Search/Nomination: Initial Screening

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3. Information collected at the final stage will lead either to a referral and additional assessment, or to a decision that the student currently does not require differentiated services. This process will establish a pool of highly able students in Jackson County.
 - a. If the student is referred, parents will be notified by the school-based AIG needs determination team that further assessment is necessary. Parent consent will be required for testing.
 - b. If the AIG needs determination team finds that the student does not require differentiated services, documentation will be placed in the student file. This will alert future teachers that the learner has shown some indication of potential giftedness and deserves to be monitored to determine if the process should begin again.

Planned Sources of Evidence: Continued use of the Naglieri and addition of another aptitude test.

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: AIG specialists have been provided training on screening, referral and identification processes and provided reference notebooks for use. A random sampling of new AIG placement folders are reviewed for consistency by the AIG Coordinator, and specialists are provided written suggestions for improvement.

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

Description: AIG specialists at each school will provide training to general education teachers in the screening, referral, and identification process to ensure consistency across the district.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Screening, referral and identification trends

- AIG Reference Manuals

- Records of random sampling of AIG student folders

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: A teacher/student evaluation form has been developed to be used at end-of-year conferences. Training on the use of the Yearly Progress Review was included in the AIG procedure training. A flow chart was added to the AIG Reference Manual to outline the procedures when there is a transfer student.

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

Description: I. Student Search/Nomination: Initial Screening

A. General Information

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1. A county-wide student search will be conducted annually. This search will include a review of aptitude test scores at the 90th percentile or above, the 93rd percentile and above on End-of-Grade tests, and the 93rd percentile and above for classroom performance. This student search will occur annually in third grade and biannually for fourth grade and up.
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cognitive/behavioral checklist.

3. All AIG transfer students' records will be reviewed by the appropriate school-based AIG needs determination team to decide placement. If necessary, students may be reevaluated for AIG placement based on Jackson County Schools' identification procedures.

II. Identification and Placement

A. The school-based AIG needs determination team will be established at the school site and may include the principal, central office personnel, the AIG specialist, a school counselor, and classroom teachers.

B. The responsibility of the school-based AIG needs determination team in the Identification and Placement process is to:

1. Collect data from:

- a. Tests and other sources of measurable performance (e.g., grades)
- b. Nominations and supporting materials from teachers, students, and parents
- c. Observations of student performance

2. Make an initial decision regarding which students need further review or referral for possible placement.

3. Notify parents in writing if the team decides to refer the student for possible services or when further review is necessary.

4. Make recommendations and suggest program options for appropriate placement (math, reading, or both).

5. Keep appropriate records of decisions regarding all students nominated for review, referral, and placement by the team.

C. The identification process will be based on a system of documentation of multiple indicators of giftedness. (See Appendix A, Figure 2.)

1. Information from any or all indicators may be used in matching students with appropriate service options.

2. Information used from each indicator should be directly related to the service option considered.

3. Information from specific indicators may be given priority for specific service options (e.g., math achievement and/or performance—advanced math class).

4. Of the six multiple indicators, four of the six indicators must be evident for a student to be placed on the AIG headcount. Of the required four indicators, two must be either student achievement (EOG scores), student aptitude, or student performance (grades).

5. Any student who transfers with evidence of participation in a program for academically or intellectually gifted students will be reviewed for instructional placement in the existing gifted program based on the student's educational needs and local options available.

JACKSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Procedure to Disagree

LEVEL I – School Site Grievance Procedure

When the parents or any person, organization, or agency acting on the behalf of a child fails to agree on the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or educational services of a child, a written

complaint should be submitted to the Grievance Committee of the school in which the child is enrolled. The school Grievance Committee will be composed of the AIG Needs Determination Team, the Coordinator of AIG Services, parent(s), an advocate of the child if the parent chooses, and the principal of the school who will chair the committee.

Step 1 – A written grievance should be submitted at least 48 hours before the regularly scheduled AIG Needs Determination Team meeting is scheduled.

Step 2 – If no regular meeting is scheduled, there should be a called meeting within the next five school days.

Step 3 – If the grievance is not resolved, the written complaint and the minutes from the local grievance committee should be submitted to the Jackson County Administrative Grievance Committee for further action.

LEVEL II – Jackson County Administrative Grievance Review

If the disagreement is not resolved at the school site, the parent may appeal in writing to the Coordinator of Academically and Intellectually Gifted Services who will convene the Jackson County Administrative Committee composed of the superintendent or assistant superintendent, a school board member, and a school administrator not involved in the dispute. The Coordinator of Academically and Intellectually Gifted Services will serve as an ex-officio member. They will review the case and respond to the parents and principal in writing within ten days of receipt of the appeal.

Representatives from the child's school, such as the AIG teacher, school administrators, guidance counselor, member of local grievance committee, and/or classroom teachers, may choose to attend the meeting and present information or answer questions. The party bringing the grievance may come to the meeting to present clarification of the written grievance and answer questions the committee may have.

The Jackson County Grievance Committee will meet on an as-needed basis. The chairman of the committee will respond in writing to the complaint within five days of the meeting.

LEVEL III – Appeal to Board of Education

If agreement is not reached through the Jackson County Grievance Committee, the parents(s) may appeal in writing to the Jackson County Board of Education who will hear the complaint in closed session at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

LEVEL IV – Mediation

If agreement cannot be reached administratively, the school system will arrange for mediation with an impartial facilitator within ten days.

LEVEL V – Administrative Law Hearing

If the Board's decision fails to resolve the disagreement satisfactorily and mediation fails, the parents may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of the hearing will be limited to consideration of whether the local school

administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an AIG student, or whether the local plan of services for the student has been implemented appropriately.

Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will make a decision based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law. The decision of the administrative law judge is final, binding on all parties, and is not subject to further review under Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. Attorney's fees are not available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

Planned Sources of Evidence: Documentation of training and yearly updates
Sample reference notebook
Increase in AIG placements that follow procedures in the AIG Plan
Consistency across the district in placement procedures for new referrals and transfers.

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Individual student folders maintained at each school show evidence that this occurs.

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

Description: The responsibility of the school-based AIG needs determination team in the Identification and Placement process is to:

1. Collect data from:
 - a. Tests and other sources of measurable performance (e.g., grades)
 - b. Nominations and supporting materials from teachers, students, and parents
 - c. Observations of student performance
2. Make an initial decision regarding which students need further review or referral for possible placement.
3. Notify parents in writing if the team decides to refer the student for possible services or when further review is necessary.
4. Make recommendations and suggest program options for appropriate placement (math, reading, or both).
5. Keep appropriate records of decisions regarding all students nominated for review, referral, and placement by the team.

Planned Sources of Evidence: Annual, random, monitoring review of AIG folders.

Other Comments:

Standard 2: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The current plan supports the NC Standard Course of Study and differentiation. The NC Educator Evaluation System requires all teachers to differentiate for all students.

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

Description: All students who are identified as AIG will experience curricula that build upon and extend beyond the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS). The AIG program will provide students with opportunities to study curricula in greater depth and at a quicker pace than covered by the NCSCOS and to explore areas of interest beyond the NCSCOS. Every student identified as AIG will be engaged in many opportunities for extension including, but not limited to:

- Broadening classroom studies through self-selected activities
- Studying in areas of personal interest
- Creating individual learning contracts to allow for personal in-depth study
- Engaging in civic responsibility curriculum models

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Lesson plans

- Teacher evaluations
- Curriculum fairs

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The AIG District Coordinator has developed Differentiation Professional Development for general education teachers. Current District Instructional Initiatives based on Robert Marzano's Classroom Instruction that Works, address specific strategies that provide differentiated instruction for all students.

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

Description: DIFFERENTIATED CURRICULA AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

All students who are identified as AIG will experience curricula that build upon and extend beyond the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS). The AIG program will provide students with opportunities to study curricula in greater depth and at a quicker pace than covered by the NCSCOS and to explore areas of interest beyond the NCSCOS. Every student identified as AIG will be engaged in many opportunities for extension including, but not limited to:

- Broadening classroom studies through self-selected activities
- Studying in areas of personal interest
- Creating individual learning contracts to allow for personal in-depth study

In addition, they will be encouraged to participate in enrichment options or extra curricular activities such as:

- Mentoring programs connecting students with experts in the community in areas of student interest
- Online opportunities – facilitating student access to online study
- Allowing opportunities for students to engage in organized academic teams such as Odyssey of the Mind, Lego Robotics, Math Counts, Battle of the Books, and Robotics.

For other suggestions see the Appendix section of this plan.

The process for evaluating the implemented curriculum to determine its impact on student achievement is as follows:

- State testing results
- Classroom assessment
- Survey results
- Self-assessment

Learners will also be engaged in various classroom assessments through choice of projects, products, writing, etc. that demonstrate student mastery of content. Contracts and/or portfolios can be used to facilitate this assessment.

All teachers who teach gifted students will use differentiated instruction to accommodate the strengths and needs of students identified as AIG. Each AIG specialist will provide general classroom teachers with differentiation strategies. AIG specialists will use multiple assessments and evaluation tools for monitoring student understanding and achievement. It is the school's responsibility to provide alternative assessments to meet these requirements.

In accordance with state law, all teachers have a planning period. It is the school administration's responsibility to ensure that there is development of differentiated curricula and programs.

The school's administration will provide clearly articulated guidelines for identifying and teaching any student recognized as accelerated in any content area. Grade/content acceleration can only be considered through a special committee made up of the administration, the regular classroom teacher, the AIG teacher, the parent, the school psychologist, as well as the guidance counselor if necessary.

PROGRAM SERVICE OPTIONS

Grouping may be used to meet individual instructional needs. Such grouping can be flexible; for example, within/between/among individual classrooms or teams. Students may be placed in a group based on their ability, performance, interests, and/or needs. Such flexibility allows students to be moved in and out of groups based on needs and performance. The charts in Appendix B are used to match individual instructional needs with service options.

- Continue to provide district-wide professional development to all teachers on differentiation strategies.
- Principals will continue to monitor the use of current district initiatives such as Marzano's Classroom Strategies that Work, Thinking Maps, Write From the Beginning, Math Partners, and Direct Vocabulary Instruction, research based strategies that provide differentiation.
- Use of new teacher evaluation instrument and Professional Growth Plans to document differentiation in the classroom.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Differentiation strategies documented during teacher observations

- Schedule of differentiation professional development
- Individual student DEPs

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Stakeholders feel that current resources are good, but would like to see additional resources available to both AIG specialists and general education teachers.

Goals: A system-wide list of research-based supplemental resources will be developed to augment curriculum and instruction.

Description: AIG specialists and the AIG Coordinator will work to identify resources currently available in schools and identify resource needs. A list of these resources and their locations will be developed and distributed to the teachers in the district. Additionally, the AIG Coordinator will begin housing professional development materials addressing the needs of AIG students and how to meet those needs.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Meeting minutes/agenda to identify available resources and resource needs

- List of system-wide resources
- AIG professional "library" for teacher access

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Stakeholders feel the district made great strides in this practice since the development of the 2010 plan. Additional resources will continue to be investigated.

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

Description: High level content is supported by the NC common Core and Essential Standards with differentiation. AIG Specialists are included in all professional development to facilitate opportunities for collaboration of unit and lesson planning, and development of curriculum audits and pacing guides. AIG specialists currently use Renzulli to provide differentiation for students within their AIG class, and for assignments in the general education class. Additionally, students have the opportunity to participate in Science Olympiad, Battle of the Books, Science Fair, Math Counts, Geocaching and the NC Bar Association Mock Trial.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Renzulli activity report

- Curriculum audits
- Lesson and Unit plans
- Participation in extra-curricular activities such as Science Olympiad and Battle of the Books

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Although there are many forms of data available to schools, the district has identified a need to be consistent in data literacy to inform instruction.

Goals: All teachers will participate in data literacy training to become proficient in using data to inform instruction and provide differentiation.

Description: The district has access to state testing results, summative and formative classroom

assessment, survey results, self-assessments, EVAAS, and benchmarking to inform instructional decisions for differentiation. Professional Development in data literacy will be provided to encourage consistent and effective use of these data.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Sign-in sheets for data literacy and PLC training

- Agendas, minutes, and sign-in sheets for PLCs
- Lesson and unit plans showing differentiation

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: AIG students have access to school counselors and Jackson County Psychological Services while at school. There are procedures in place at each school for teacher making a referral for these services.

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

Description: Jackson County Schools recognizes that often AIG students have unique social and/or emotional needs that affect their learning. In an effort to meet the diverse needs of all AIG students, including those with different socio-emotional levels, learning styles, and those who may be at risk, the system has established a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional needs of gifted learners. This plan includes increased communication between the AIG Specialists and content area teachers, as well as guidance counselors and other school personnel. A variety of services are available throughout the district to address emotional needs, career planning, and interventions for students who may be at risk for academic achievement.

If a highly gifted student is being considered for double promotion (grade skipping), the school psychologist will be consulted. At the middle school level, both individual and group counseling become critical, particularly for students experiencing identity and adjustment problems. Small group sessions with gifted students that address their unique needs have proven highly successful. Establishing mentor programs for both minority students and underachievers has also proven to be effective in helping such students develop self-esteem, set higher aspirations, make appropriate secondary course selections, and develop career plans.

The NC Standard Course of Study promotes awareness of social issues such as bullying and good decision making. Fifth grade students participate in D.A.R.E. and middle grade students benefit from the partnership with the Jackson County Health Department and their Wise Guys/Smart Girls program.

At the secondary level, individual post-secondary and career planning becomes essential. Opportunities for academic planning, career guidance and college preparation are made available for

gifted learners. Workforce development teachers and vocational counselors are involved in working with AIG students regarding the development of their four-year plans as these students select their career pathways and conduct career and college searches using the internet.

Gifted learners are provided with differentiated guidance services to meet unique socio-emotional development. All JCPS teachers are encouraged to refer underachieving gifted students for counseling services with the schools' guidance counselors and/or contract services.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Documented referrals for counseling services
• Lesson and Unit plans addressing social/emotional issues of gifted students

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice was previously a focused practice. Stakeholders recognize there is still no clear systemic direction for a nurturing program, although many strategies have been explored. Deliberate communication to parents concerning differentiation in K-3 has improved.

Goals: A system-wide plan for addressing the needs of K-3 AIG students will be developed.

Description: IV. Nurturing Programs

The Jackson County school system is committed to informally identifying students of high intellectual/academic potential in grades K-3. Students are informally identified using multiple indicators, in conjunction with quarterly state-wide assessments, systematic observations, portfolio assessments, work samples, and teacher interviews. The informal identification is dynamic and flexible and will include students from special populations.

Differentiation occurs in the classroom by varying content, process, product and environment and is reflected in advanced learning experiences and enrichment opportunities. Because of the flexible nature of the identification process, students have the opportunity to move between various groups.

The Jackson County school system is also cognizant of and supports the affective domain of gifted students. When social and emotional issues are addressed and social and emotional needs are met, students face their challenges with emotional balance and appropriate coping mechanisms that promote success in reaching personal potential (Roeper 1995). The school utilizes the services of the Guidance and Counseling personnel in this endeavor. All JCPS teachers are encouraged to refer underachieving gifted students for counseling services. All AIG specialists, as well as the AIG Coordinator, pay special heed to the social-emotional needs of their students.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • A developed plan for K-3 nurturing

- Implementation of plan as evidenced by teachers and parents able to articulate the plan

Other Comments:

Practice H

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Collaboration is addressed in the AIG plan.

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

Description: All teachers who teach gifted students will use differentiated instruction to accommodate the strengths and needs of students identified as AIG. Each AIG specialist will assist general classroom teachers with ideas for differentiation strategies. AIG specialists will use formative and summative assessments to monitor student understanding and achievement.

In accordance with state law, all teachers have a planning period. It is the school administration's responsibility to ensure there is development of differentiated curricula and programs. The district intranet provides teachers with electronic sharing of lessons, units, strategies, and other resources.

All teachers in the district participate in district initiative training and training of the NC Standard Course of Study; during these trainings, AIG and general education teachers work together to develop curriculum. The district has identified a need for consistent use of PLCs across the district to best ensure the identification of research-based best practice to meet all student needs.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Documentation of PLC training

- Examples of differentiation strategies in lesson/unit plans

Other Comments:

Practice I

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will be a Maintained Practice because each AIG specialist develops a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) for every identified student that includes the differentiated curriculum and

services. Each year, AIG specialists meet with parents and students to review and revise the DEP at the beginning of the school year.

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

Description: AIG specialists meet with parents and students on an annual basis to review and revise the Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). Support and training will be provided to AIG specialists in developing DEPs. An AIG Reference Manual has been developed to assist in the Identification and Placement processes. To ensure consistency of paperwork across the district, the AIG coordinator will spot check folders of newly placed AIG students.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • DEPs

- Student Folders
- Documentation of Student Folder Audits

Other Comments:

Standard 3: Personnel and Professional Development

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Because this practice is completely evident, it will remain a Maintained Practice.

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

Description: The AIG Coordinator will be an AIG-licensed educator. Specific duties will include:

- Guide, plan, develop, implement, revise, and monitor the local AIG program
 - Ensure compliance with state and local regulations, policies, and procedures
 - Oversee budget and materials selection
 - Coordinate professional development
 - Provided consultative services for staff and community
 - Evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the local AIG program with all stakeholders
- See Appendix C

Planned Sources of Evidence: • AIG Coordinator job description

- AIG Coordinator's qualification

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice will be maintained as stakeholders feel there is evidence that AIG specialists are engaging in these tasks.

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

Description: Learning Environments

No subject has received more attention recently in education than the subject of homogenous vs. heterogeneous grouping. The grouping of students has been severely attacked as promoting tracking, separatism, discriminatory practices, and disparity of program opportunities. The effect of grouping on students has, however, been found to be positive by some researchers [Kulik and Kulik (1991), Rogers (1981), Fedheusen (1990)]. In the Program Service Options grids, grouping options that have been found to be effective for students are presented. Many of these are appropriate within a heterogeneous framework. An explanation of each option is provided in the glossary.

Content Differentiation

Four ways to differentiate content are described by Gallagher in *Teaching the Gifted Child* (1994).

- Content acceleration-Students are provided advanced materials that match their level of performance regardless of their grade placement.
- Content enrichment-Students are provided with a variety of materials or resources that elaborate upon the basic concepts being taught in the regular program.
- Content sophistication-Students are provided more complex materials that would allow them to see the larger system of ideas and concepts related to the basic content.
- Content novelty-Students are introduced to completely different materials that are not necessarily provided in the regular curriculum.

Specific ways the differentiated content might be delivered are presented in the Program Service Options grid (See Appendix B). All of these methods have been proven effective in both heterogeneous and homogeneous classes. An explanation of the terms used is also included in the glossary.

Grade Acceleration/Double Promotion

Highly gifted students may be considered for grade skipping/grade acceleration/double promotion. Only those students who score at the 98 or 99 percentile on both achievement and aptitude tests will be considered for this learning environment option. Such students are typically performing two grade levels above their same age peers and may be better served in an educational setting that is developmentally more appropriate. These students will be considered for grade acceleration only after exhibiting a desire to be so accelerated. In addition, a profile of the student's social-emotional maturity must be completed. All other service delivery options must have been considered before this learning option is available.

For more information regarding grade acceleration, consult the following: *The Academic Acceleration of Gifted Children*, W. Thomas Southern and Eric D. Jones, eds., Teachers College Press/Columbia University, NY, copyright 1991 and *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*, Susan Winebrenner, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis MN, copyright 1992.

Enrichment

It is important to stimulate interests and develop potential in all students at all levels. Many students have highly developed interests that need appropriate outlets for expression. Treffinger (1989) feels it is by serving the all and the many that we frequently discover the some and the few. At the elementary and middle school level, interest development might occur through classroom centers,

special activities and projects, special mini-courses, and enrichment clusters. At the secondary level, interests and talents are further expanded through special elective courses and opportunities for independent investigation of topics of interest through seminars, mentorship's, and internships. Each of these options is explained in more details in the glossary.

See Appendix C for AIG Staff roles
Support Services

Social/Emotional Guidance and Counseling

Jackson County Schools recognizes that often AIG students have unique social and/or emotional needs that affect their learning. In an effort to meet the diverse needs of all AIG students, including those with different socio-emotional levels, learning styles, and those who may be at risk, the system has established a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional needs of gifted learners. This plan includes increased communication between the AIG Specialists and content area teachers, as well as guidance counselors and other school personnel. A variety of services are available throughout the district to address emotional needs, career planning, and interventions for students who may be at risk for academic achievement.

If a highly gifted student is being considered for double promotion (grade skipping), the school psychologist will be consulted. At the middle school level, both individual and group counseling become critical, particularly for students experiencing identity and adjustment problems. Small group sessions with gifted students that address their unique needs have proven highly successful. Establishing mentor programs for both minority students and underachievers has also proven to be effective in helping such students develop self-esteem, set higher aspirations, make appropriate secondary course selections, and develop career plans.

At the secondary level, individual post-secondary and career planning becomes essential. Opportunities for academic planning, career guidance and college preparation are made available for gifted learners. Workforce development teachers and vocational counselors are involved in working with AIG students regarding the development of their four-year plans as these students select their career pathways and conduct career and college searches using the internet.

Gifted learners are provided with differentiated guidance services to meet unique socio-emotional development. All JCPS teachers are encouraged to refer underachieving gifted students for counseling services with the schools' guidance counselors and/or contract services. Jackson County Public Schools AIG website will be used to notify students and parents of enrichment opportunities.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • DEPs/IDEPs that include strategies for addressing academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of students.

• Various methods to communicate with parents about upcoming units, assignments, field trips, enrichment opportunities, etc., will be used, i.e., school websites, email, student flash drives, and ConnectED.

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice will remain focused. Differentiation training was developed and offered to general education teachers based on survey results of teacher need. However, stakeholders would like to see some type of professional development requirements for secondary teachers of honors courses.

Goals: The AIG Advisory Council will explore Honors course teacher requirements in other systems and develop a proposal for Jackson County Schools.

Description: It is the responsibility of the AIG specialists, administrators and guidance counselors to provide the necessary requirements for the implementation of a successful AIG program. The Jackson County Public Schools, along with colleges/universities, work together to support the gifted programs. There are ongoing training programs and opportunities to attend appropriate AIG conferences for any teacher, based upon approval from the administration. High quality, research-based, sustainable staff development is provided for personnel and faculty in gifted education which emphasizes study groups, inquiry teams and action research processes. Key district initiatives, such as Marzano's Classroom Strategies That Work, provide differentiation strategies, are required of all teachers and are monitored by principals. Differentiation professional development will continue to be offered to any interested teacher, counselor or school administrator. See Personnel and Professional Development Matrix - Appendix C

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- Agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes from training sessions
- Professional Development needs survey
- Agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes from AIG Advisory Council meetings

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This has become a focused practice because stakeholders have identified the need to address more intentional placement of students with teachers who have AIG add-on licensure.

Goals:

- The AIG Coordinator will work with HR to identify general education teachers holding AIG add-on licensure
- The AIG Coordinator will work with principals in scheduling students with teachers holding AIG add-

on licensure

Description: All AIG specialists in K-8 are AIG certified. There currently is no requirement for secondary teachers of Honors or AP classes to hold such certification. However, there are three AIG certified teachers at Smoky Mountain High School, and one at Jackson County Early College.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- List of licensed AIG personnel
- AIG student class assignments/class rosters

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: System-wide professional development ensures inclusion of intentional instruction on the needs of AIG, EC, and ESL students.

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

Description: Jackson County Public Schools conducts a yearly comprehensive needs assessment that encompasses many data, including demographic, geographic, survey, attendance, graduation, and disaggregated formative and summative assessments. As part of this needs assessment, individual subgroup data are analyzed for trends. The results from the comprehensive needs assessment are used to guide the development of the district improvement plan and professional development. All district initiatives and district provided professional development include instruction on the needs of the gifted, exceptional children, and students for whom English is a second language.

Planned Sources of Evidence: Description of professional development with sign-in sheets.

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: System-wide professional development is research-based, high quality professional development addressing best practice skills for all students.

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

Description: Jackson County Public Schools conducts a yearly comprehensive needs assessment that encompasses many data, including demographic, geographic, survey, attendance, graduation, and disaggregated formative and summative assessments. As part of this needs assessment, individual subgroup data are analyzed for trends. The results from the comprehensive needs assessment are used to guide the development of the district improvement plan and professional development. All district initiatives and district provided professional development include instruction addressing the needs of various subgroups, including AIG, EC, and ESL.

The AIG Coordinator works with AIG specialists to identify professional development needs at each school and find opportunities to share with all teachers. AIG specialists are encouraged to become PD leaders in their own schools through PLCs and team meetings to train their general education colleagues. The AIG Coordinator disseminates AIG professional development opportunities to all teachers.

Planned Sources of Evidence: Description of professional development with sign-in sheets
Emails showing PD opportunities sent out to all staff

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Through the district comprehensive needs assessment, the need for true professional learning communities (PLCs) throughout the district has been identified. This will be a focused practice as the AIG Specialist form their own PLC.

Goals: The AIG Coordinator will facilitate the development of quarterly PLCs for AIG specialists.

Description: Quarterly AIG PLCs will be scheduled at the district office for data analysis, reflection on professional practice, and planning future steps. Efforts will be made to incorporate the use of blogs, Dropboxes, video chats, etc., to allow for collaboration between PLCs to continue.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Meeting agendas and minutes
• Samples of resources produced through collaboration

Other Comments:

Standard 4: Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: All AIG specialists have their AIG Licensure and are trained in meeting the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Local professional development on these skills is made available to general education teachers.

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

Description: AIG services, including differentiation, will be delivered across all grade levels and settings through:

- On-going training of all teachers in research-based system initiatives such as Marzano's Classroom Strategies that Work, Thinking Maps®, Direct Vocabulary Instruction, that incorporate differentiation into all classrooms, and
- Use of the new Teacher Evaluation Instrument to document differentiation occurring in the classroom.

Introduction to the Program Service Options Grid

Planning grids have been developed for the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Each grid outlines service options for each of the categories of gifted learners. (See the Program Service Options Appendix B.)

Learning Environments

No subject has received more attention recently in education than the subject of homogenous vs. heterogeneous grouping. The grouping of students has been severely attacked as promoting tracking, separatism, discriminatory practices, and disparity of program opportunities. The effect of grouping on students has, however, been found to be positive by some researchers [Kulik and Kulik (1991), Rogers (1981), Fedheusen (1990)]. In the Program Service Options grids, grouping options that have been found to be effective for students are presented. Many of these are appropriate within a heterogeneous framework. An explanation of each option is provided in the glossary.

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For more information regarding grade acceleration, consult the following: *The Academic Acceleration of Gifted Children*, W. Thomas Southern and Eric D. Jones, eds., Teachers College Press/Columbia University, NY, copyright 1991 and *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*, Susan Winebrenner, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis MN, copyright 1992. [The JCPS AIG Coordinator has copies of both texts.]

Enrichment

It is important to stimulate interests and develop potential in all students at all levels. Many students have highly developed interests that need appropriate outlets for expression. Treffinger (1989) feels it is by serving the all and the many that we frequently discover the some and the few. At the elementary and middle school level, interest development might occur through classroom centers, special activities and projects, special mini-courses, and enrichment clusters. At the secondary level, interests and talents are further expanded through special elective courses and opportunities for independent investigation of topic of interest through seminars, mentorship's, and internships. Each of these options is explained in more details in the glossary.

Support Services

Social/Emotional Guidance and Counseling

Jackson County Schools recognizes that often AIG students have unique social and/or emotional needs that affect their learning. In an effort to meet the diverse needs of all AIG students, including

those with different socio-emotional levels, learning styles, and those who may be at risk, the system has established a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional needs of gifted learners. This plan includes increased communication between the AIG Specialists and content area teachers, as well as guidance counselors and other school personnel. A variety of services are available throughout the district to address emotional needs, career planning, and interventions for students who may be at risk for academic achievement.

At the middle school level, both individual and group counseling become critical, particularly for students experiencing identity and adjustment problems. Small group sessions with gifted students that address their unique needs have proven highly successful. Establishing mentor programs for both minority students and underachievers has also proven to be effective in helping such students develop self-esteem, set higher aspirations, make appropriate secondary course selections, and develop career plans.

At the secondary level, individual post-secondary and career planning becomes essential. Opportunities for academic planning, career guidance and college preparation are made available for gifted learners. Workforce development teachers and vocational counselors are involved in working with AIG students regarding the development of their four-year plans as these students select their career pathways and conduct career and college searches using the internet. Gifted learners are provided with differentiated guidance services to meet unique socio-emotional development. All JCPS teachers are encouraged to refer underachieving gifted students for counseling services with the schools' guidance counselors and/or contract services.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • DEP's/IDEPs

- Program descriptions
- Lesson plans

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: All AIG specialists have their AIG Licensure and are trained in meeting the academic, intellectual, social and emotional needs of gifted learners. DEPs are developed to address program placement aligned with needs and identified areas of placement.

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

Description: The Jackson County Board of Education is committed to meeting the needs of all students. AIG funding is utilized to fund at least a half-time AIG specialist at each elementary school, and to fund AIG licensed specialists at the high schools. Pull-out programs at the elementary/middle level serve students based on the content area license of the AIG specialist. Currently, pull-out students are served in the area of English Language Arts. General education teachers provide

differentiation in math in grades 4-6. Students identified as AIG in math, benefit from advanced math classes, pre-algebra in seventh grade and Algebra I in eighth, when they reach middle school.

All teachers who teach gifted students will use differentiated instruction to accommodate the strengths and needs of students identified as AIG. Each AIG specialist will provide general classroom teachers with differentiation strategies. AIG specialists will use multiple assessments and evaluation tools for monitoring student understanding and achievement. It is the school's responsibility to provide alternative assessments to meet these requirements.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • DEPs/IDEPs

- Lesson Plans
- Schedule of differentiation training

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will become a maintained practice because AIG programs and services are connected with other areas in the LEA.

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

Description: LINKS TO OTHER SYSTEM WIDE EFFORTS

It is essential that programming for AIG students be linked to other school system initiatives. In Jackson County Public Schools, direct linkage is provided in the following ways:

Planning

All Jackson County Schools have School Improvement Plans. Based on the Effective Schools Correlates and the Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems criteria, these plans include goals and strategies which address the needs of all students including those identified as Academically and Intellectually Gifted.

Professional Development

The AIG Plan is supported by professional development activities. Professional development funds may be used to instruct educators in the techniques necessary to accomplish the goals and strategies identified in the AIG plan. Professional development will be necessary in order to communicate, implement, and evaluate the plan.

Personnel

In the Jackson County Public School System, each school has access to the Coordinator of Gifted Services who consults with principals and classroom teachers and coordinates the program for gifted

students. In addition, each school has an AIG teacher on staff who works with students, teachers, and parents.

Technology

The Jackson County Public Schools' Technology Plan emphasizes basic computer competencies and the extension and enrichment of computer and other technological skills. Access to various modes of technology affords students the opportunity to work at an individual level and pace; academic and enrichment software may be used to offer extended curriculum for gifted students.

Scheduling

Block scheduling helps provide time and opportunities for extension and integration of curriculum. AIG students in elementary schools participate in pull-out programs to receive direct services from an AIG specialist.

Curricular Issues

The curriculum must meet the needs of all students including higher performing students. Curriculum alignment with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and enhancing instructional time in all academic areas is emphasized. Differentiated Educational Plans (DEP) for students identified as AIG will define curriculum differentiation for each student.

Extra-Curricular Activities

An array of extra-curricular activities is available for AIG students. These activities serve to support and enrich the existing curriculum as well as to develop students' higher order thinking abilities and problem-solving skills.

Student Assessment

A strong student assessment program is in place for students in grades K-12. Formative assessment instruments include the North Carolina K-2 Math assessments, Reading 3D, and MAP. Summative assessments include the North Carolina Testing Program for grades 3-12 which is comprised of End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC). These tests also provide a means to assess the continuous progress of AIG students.

AIG Program Evaluation/Review

The Jackson County Public Schools AIG Plan requires a program review. This evaluation will provide opportunity for reflection and assessment of the progress toward program goals. Based on the assessment, program modifications may be made.

Planned Sources of Evidence:

- Meeting agendas, sign-in sheets
- Service options grid
- Program descriptions
- DEPs/IDEPs
- Local AIG Plan

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This is a maintained practice because the stakeholders feel Jackson County Public Schools has put into place numerous ways to ensure broad and effective communication of information concerning the local AIG plan and services.

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

Description: The Jackson County Public Schools AIG Advisory Board is made up of AIG Specialists, teachers, parents, community members, and the AIG Coordinator. The Advisory Board participates in the review, evaluation, and development of the local AIG Plan. Plan development is offered for review to the public via newspaper ads and information on the district webpage. The plan and all of the AIG paperwork is posted on the district website. The AIG Coordinator maintains an AIG Advisory Board Group for email dissemination of relevant information, invitations to meetings, and AIG updates.

Each school has an AIG Needs Determination Team (AIG NDT) that meets to make determinations concerning student placement in the AIG program and provide input into the annual DEPs at each school. Each AIG Specialist provides the AIG NDT with information concerning placement procedures and criteria to facilitate the most informed decisions.

The AIG Coordinator participates in all professional development planning for the system. This ensures the integration of AIG program standards in all curriculum and PD.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Agendas, minutes, sign-in sheets, from Administrator Team meetings, AIG advisory Board Meetings and PD planning meetings

- Website postings
- Stakeholder surveys

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a maintained practice because survey data indicate communication is effective among and between schools.

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

Description: AIG specialists annually meet with the faculties of their schools to inform them of screening, identification, and placement procedures for the AIG program. General education teachers participate in the development of the DEPs for the students they serve. AIG Specialist at the elementary level meet with eighth grade students to help develop high school schedules and discuss the AIG program at the high school level. Additionally, all eighth grade students participate in freshman orientation.

The AIG Coordinator will be facilitating AIG PLCs to allow for discussion about service and opportunities between schools.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Meeting minutes, agendas, sign-in sheets
• Student folders showing annual DEP meetings

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a maintained practice because communication and collaboration is very evident within the system.

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

Description: Each school has an AIG Needs Determination Team (AIG NDT) that meets to make determinations concerning student placement in the AIG program and provide input into the annual DEPs at each school. The AIG NDT is made up of AIG Specialist, an Administrator, and general education teachers. Additional members may be added as needed such as; school counselor, special education teacher, and ESL Coordinator.

The Jackson County Public Schools AIG Advisory Board is made up of AIG Specialists, teachers, parents, community members, and the AIG Coordinator. The Advisory Board participates in the review, evaluation, and development of the local AIG Plan.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • DEPs/IDEPs
• AIG NDM meeting minutes, agendas, sign-in sheets

- AIG website

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Jackson County Public Schools has a clearly outlined plan for meeting the social/emotional needs of gifted learners allowing referrals from school personnel, parents, or students themselves.

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

Description: Social/Emotional Guidance and Counseling

The Jackson County school system is cognizant of and supports the affective domain of gifted students. When social and emotional issues are addressed and social and emotional needs are met, students face their challenges with emotional balance and appropriate coping mechanisms that promote success in reaching personal potential (Roeper 1995). The school utilizes the services of the Guidance and Counseling personnel in this endeavor. All JCPS teachers are encouraged to refer underachieving gifted students for counseling services. All AIG specialists, as well as the AIG coordinator, endeavor to pay special heed to the social-emotional needs of their students.

The system recognizes that often AIG students have unique social and/or emotional needs that affect their learning. In an effort to meet the diverse needs of all AIG students, including those with different socio-emotional levels, learning styles, and those who may be at risk, the system has established a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional needs of gifted learners. This plan includes increased communication between the AIG Specialists and content area teachers, as well as guidance counselors and other school personnel. A variety of services are available throughout the district to address emotional needs, career planning, and interventions for students who may be at risk for academic achievement.

If a highly gifted student is being considered for double promotion (grade skipping), the school psychologist will be consulted. At the middle school level, both individual and group counseling become critical, particularly for students experiencing identity and adjustment problems. Small group sessions with gifted students that address their unique needs have proven highly successful. Establishing mentor programs for both minority students and underachievers has also proven to be effective in helping such students develop self-esteem, set higher aspirations, make appropriate secondary course selections, and develop career plans.

At the secondary level, individual post-secondary and career planning becomes essential. Opportunities for academic planning, career guidance and college preparation are made available for gifted learners. Workforce development teachers and vocational counselors are involved in working

with AIG students regarding the development of their four-year plans as these students select their career pathways and conduct career and college searches using the internet.

Gifted learners are provided with differentiated guidance services to meet unique socio-emotional development. All JCPS teachers are encouraged to refer underachieving gifted students for counseling services with the schools' guidance counselors and/or contract services.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Examples of student programming

- Survey results

Other Comments:

Practice H

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: The system articulates and implements a clearly defined process for determining acceleration.

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

Description: Grade Acceleration/Double Promotion

Highly gifted students may be considered for grade skipping/grade acceleration/double promotion. Only those students who score at the 98 or 99 percentile on both achievement and aptitude tests will be considered for this learning environment option. Such students are typically performing two grade levels above their same age peers and may be better served in an educational setting that is developmentally more appropriate. These students will be considered for grade acceleration only after exhibiting a desire to be so accelerated. In addition, a team of professionals will be assembled to complete the Iowa Acceleration Scale to determine the appropriateness of acceleration and make planning decisions. The members of the team will include, but not be limited to: principal, parents, current teacher, potential receiving teacher, AIG Coordinator, school counselor, etc. All other service delivery options must have been considered before this learning option is available. Jackson County Schools will follow state board policy for early entry to Kindergarten. See Appendix D.

For more information regarding grade acceleration, consult the following: The Academic Acceleration of Gifted Children, W. Thomas Southern and Eric D. Jones, eds., Teachers College Press/Columbia University, NY, copyright 1991 and Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom, Susan Winebrenner, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis MN, copyright 1992. [The JCS AIG Coordinator has copies of both texts.]

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Evidence of accelerations

- Minutes from meetings

- Acceleration options available and communicated

Other Comments:

Practice I

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice will remain a focused practice to allow more time to develop a plan for the ELL students. IDEPs are developed for twice-exceptional students.

Goals: Develop a programming plan for differentiation to meet the needs of ELL students.

Description: • Collaborate with the Jackson County Schools English as Second Language (ESL) Coordinator to provide guidance and resources for programming.

- Explore AIG programming for ELL students in other LEAs
- Examine system data to determine trends for ELL and other student subgroups in AIG

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Intentional programming service options

- Student data
- DEPs/IDEPs

Other Comments:

Practice J

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: Extra-curricular programs are encouraged and broadly disseminated through the Jackson County Public Schools AIG Website.

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

Description: Examples of Enrichment Options*

Accelerated Reader
Art Club
Battle of the Books

Chess Club
Debate Club
Drama Club
Duke University Motivation for Academic Performance (MAP) Program
Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP)
Essay Contests
Foreign Language Club
Future Problem Solving
Geography Bee
Governor's School
History Day
Mathcounts
Math Superstars
Mentorship Program
Model U.N.
National Youth Leadership Conferences
NC Legislature Page Program
North Carolina Junior Science and Humanities Symposium
Odyssey of the Mind
Optimist Club Speech Contest
Orchestra
Paideia and Junior Great Books
Quiz Bowl
Science Fair Competitions
Science Olympiad
Seminars
Spelling Bee
Summer Programs for Gifted Students
Super Saturday Program
Tarheel Junior Historians
University Workshops

*Options may vary from year to year

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Survey results

- Student participation in extra-curricular options
- Options and opportunities shared on system website

Other Comments:

Standard 5: Partnerships

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a maintained practice because stakeholder survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction in the degree to which the District shares with stakeholders and intentionally involves stakeholders in the AIG Program.

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

Description: Provisions are made for regular parent participation, K-12, in the development of the annual Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) and the Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP). AIG specialists meet annually with parents of each student enrolled in the AIG Program to discuss the DEP and/or IDEP. Each school maintains an AIG Needs Determination Team that meets as needed to review student information and make determinations concerning placement and services. The AIG Advisory Board meets twice a year to serve in an advisory capacity and ensure the implementation and annual review of the local AIG Plan. The district maintains an AIG website, sharing information about the AIG program with parents and the community, including, screening, referral and identification procedures, the local AIG plan, and opportunities for students. News from classrooms and student accomplishments are submitted to the local newspaper, and an AIG brochure and letter is sent home to the family of each third grade student prior to the mass screening explaining the AIG program.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • DEPs/IDEPs

- Survey Results
- AIG Brochure
- AIG website

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will become a maintained practice because stakeholder survey results indicate a high

level of satisfaction in the degree to which the District shares with stakeholders and intentionally involves stakeholders in the AIG Program.

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

Description: The AIG Advisory Board meets twice a year to serve in an advisory capacity and ensure the implementation and annual review of the local AIG Plan. The district maintains an AIG website where information about the AIG program is shared with parents and the community, including, screening, referral and identification procedures, the local AIG plan, and opportunities for students. News from classrooms and student accomplishments are submitted to the local newspaper for printing. An AIG brochure and letter is sent home to the family of each third grade student prior to the mass screening.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Survey Results

- AIG Brochure
- AIG website with posted plan
- Letter sent home to third grade families

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a maintained practice because stakeholder survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction in the degree to which the District forms partnerships with stakeholders representative of diverse groups.

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

Description: Opportunities for the overall involvement of school community, parents, and local community representation in the ongoing implementation of the local plan, monitoring of meeting plan goals, and the integration of education services for gifted students are available for all stakeholders. A semi-annual review meeting of the AIG plan includes parents, community members and student representatives from each school in the district. Teachers identify special populations and extend invitations to parents and community members to serve as representatives in the planning process to ensure inclusion of underrepresented populations. Input and feedback is encouraged from all stakeholders. Amendments may be recommended as needed.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • List of AIG stakeholders

- Sign-in sheets from semi-annual stakeholder meeting
- Surveys that include diverse groups from the community

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a maintained practice because stakeholder survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction in the degree to which the District shares with stakeholders and intentionally involves stakeholders in the AIG Program.

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

Description: Parents and community members are regularly informed about the education of gifted students in the school district through Jackson County Public Schools AIG brochure, AIG link on the system website, and semi-annual meetings of the AIG Stakeholder Committee. Translators from the ESL Program and community at large are provided for meetings as needed. Written translations of information and forms are available.

Additionally:

- Information regarding AIG opportunities will be sent to parents electronically
- AIG specialists will provide AIG Coordinator with accurate, up-to-date parent email list.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • AIG website

- Brochures
- emails

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice needs to remain as a focused practice because little progress has been made.

Goals: • Develop a time/talent survey to be completed by stakeholders indicating areas of expertise that AIG specialists can access to supplement instruction in their classrooms.

8/8/2013

- Partner with Western Carolina University to share resources.

Description: • Make survey available at beginning of each academic year

- Have both paper and electronic copies of survey to increase likelihood of multiple responses.
- Invite professors from Western Carolina University's AIG program to serve on the AIG Advisory Board.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Survey results from Time-Talent Survey

- AIG Advisory Board agendas and minutes

Other Comments:

Standard 6: Program Accountability

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

Practice A

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: An AIG plan is completed with input from the AIG Advisory Board and submitted to the local Board of Education for approval.

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

Description: The development of the AIG Plan is a cyclical process. All improvement begins with examining current status. This is done through a needs assessment. The AIG Advisory Board examines survey data, plan review/comment from DPI, and assessment data. Using the information from the needs assessment, committees complete the Self-Assessment by standard and develop the program, rationales, and determine the focus practices for each standard. The local board of education approves the plan and it is submitted to DPI for review. As the plan is implemented, and annual review is conducted to determine if goals are still appropriate or need to be adjusted. The cycle continues with the next needs assessment. (See Appendix E)

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Local Plan and DPI comment
• AIG Advisory Board meeting minutes and agendas

Other Comments:

Practice B

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a Maintained Practice as stakeholders recognize there is a process in place to monitor the implementation of the AIG program and plan. Additionally, the request for information to be shared through emails and district website is being addressed.

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

Description: Each year, the AIG Coordinator, AIG specialists, and other stakeholders, meet for the purpose of program and plan evaluation. Prior to that meeting, each participant reviews the AIG program goals and makes notes re: necessary plan/program changes, plan/program achievements, and/or plan/program areas for reflection. At the annual meeting, goal progress is reviewed, updated, and modified if necessary.

Every three years, the AIG plan/program as a whole is evaluated and necessary revisions to the plan [this document] are made. The revisions are then be submitted to the Board of Education for approval, after which the revised plan is forwarded to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for further review and response if necessary.

Stakeholders are updated on plan reviews and revisions through emails and website postings.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Parent/teacher/student surveys

- Disaggregate EOG/EOC data
- Stakeholder meeting agendas and minutes

Other Comments:

Practice C

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: In order to maximize student services, the local board is committed to ensure at least a half –time AIG specialist at each school, with four schools housing full-time specialists. The majority of state AIG funds are used for salaries and benefits. For this reason, this will remain a Maintained Practice.

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

Description: Jackson County Public Schools serve a total population of 3,624* students, of which 348* are currently identified and served as Academically and Intellectually Gifted. The allotment the Board of Education receives for PRC 034 is used to pay the salary and related benefits of 2.50 AIG specialists, reimbursement for teachers seeking AIG Add-on Licensure, supplies and materials, including testing supplies. The specialists paid with these funds teach students who are identified pursuant to the plan required by G.S. 115C-150.7. In addition, the Board of Education funds three AIG teaching positions with local funding, provides reimbursement for AIG teachers working toward AIG Add-on Licensure, supplies and materials, and pays for the Renzulli subscription.

*The numbers indicating JCPS student population and AIG headcount are current as of April 1, 2013.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Annual budget statement

- Purchase orders for materials and curriculum products

Other Comments:

Practice D

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a Maintained Practice. Discussion will take place with stakeholders of a possible exit survey to determine reasons for drop-out decisions.

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

Description: When annual drop-out information is provided by the state, the AIG Coordinator will disaggregate the data to show trend information of AIG drop-outs. This information will be posted to the local AIG website, along with annual performance data for all AIG subgroups. Discussion of disaggregated performance and drop-out data is part of the monitoring of the local AIG program and plan.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Disaggregated EOG/EOC data
• AIG Drop-out data

Other Comments:

Practice E

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will be a Focused Practice to address a systematic process and procedure to examine the under-represented populations in the local AIG program.

Goals: Develop a systematic procedure to collect and analyze subgroup and disproportionality data.

Description: Mass screening of all third grade students is accomplished each spring using the Naglieri Non-verbal Ability Test (NNAT). This test was selected because of its culture-fair format, allowing for reliable and valid evaluation of the ability of students from many backgrounds. Referrals for AIG evaluation are addressed during two testing windows each year (spring and fall). Referrals can be made by parents, teachers, and students, allowing for diversity in placement decisions.

The AIG Coordinator will maintain data regarding referral and identification trends based on student demographics.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Enrollment data in upper level courses

- Stakeholder surveys
- Evaluation instruments
- Data on under-represented populations in AIG program
- Procedure for examining these data

Other Comments:

Practice F

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a Maintained Practice because stakeholders feel this is addressed completely.

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

Description: The AIG Coordinator will review with the Personnel Director the credentials of all AIG Specialists at the beginning of each academic year. Specialists will be surveyed annually to determine professional development needs as they relate to the AIG program.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Licensure reports

- Professional development records
- PRC 034 budget

Other Comments:

Practice G

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a Maintained Practice because an advisory group is in place with representation of all stakeholder groups.

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

Description: Meetings of the AIG Stakeholder committee, to include community members, parents, students and AIG Specialists, will be held twice a year to allow for review of the program. The AIG

Coordinator will plan and schedule these meetings with the assistance of the AIG Specialists. Meetings will be held at a time to allow for most stakeholders to attend.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Agendas and minutes from quarterly stakeholder meetings.
• Invitations to serve on committee

Other Comments:

Practice H

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will remain a focused practice to continue examining more effective ways to elicit feedback.

Goals: • Distribute a stakeholder survey every other year that can be completed on either a paper form or on-line.
• AIG Specialists will have students complete an exit survey whenever they leave the AIG program, except in the case of graduation.
• Evaluate how surveys are distributed to ensure maximum results

Description: • Stakeholders will review former survey questions and determine their appropriateness. Other questions will be developed if needed.
• Utilize free web-based survey site on which to post system survey
• Notify stakeholders of upcoming survey through posts on website, ConnectED, and written notices home, to ensure large response
• Include the exit survey in the AIG specialist notebook and provide direction during yearly training on the use of the survey.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Minutes from stakeholder meeting to develop survey
• Survey and results

Other Comments:

Practice I

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice will remain a Maintained Practice as a clear process for continuous improvement is in place.

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

Description: Meetings of the AIG Stakeholder committee are held twice a year to allow for review of the program. Meetings are held at a time to allow for stakeholders involvement. Data sources for review include stakeholder surveys, summative assessments, referral and placement in AIG program, DEPs, and graduation and drop-out rates for AIG students. Review of Focused Practices are conducted to determine progress. Plan is revised as needed to ensure continuous improvement.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Agendas and minutes from stakeholder meetings.

- Invitations to serve on committee
- Plan revisions based on data review feedback

Other Comments:

Practice J

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

This practice is a Focused Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This practice will become a Focused Practice to work on a wider dissemination of a plan evaluation report to all stakeholders.

Goals: Develop a local AIG Plan Evaluation Report dissemination plan to better reach all stakeholders.

Description: The newly developed AIG website will be used to disseminate plan evaluation information and data. Information will also be sent via emails, ConnectED calls, school newsletters, etc. Once a new plan dissemination plan is in place, this description will be updated.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Annual Report distributed via website, newsletter, emails, memos, etc.

Other Comments:

Practice K

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

This practice is a Maintained Practice for 2013-2016.

Rationale: This will become a Maintained Practice as stakeholder concerns were identified and addressed during the 2010-2013 plan cycle. Stakeholders feel that the Grievance Procedure and programming plan for students remaining in the AIG program and receiving services in the general education classroom are appropriate.

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

Description: JACKSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Procedure to Disagree

LEVEL I – School Site Grievance Procedure

When the parents or any person, organization, or agency acting on the behalf of a child fails to agree on the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or educational services of a child, a written complaint should be submitted to the Grievance Committee of the school in which the child is enrolled. The school Grievance Committee will be composed of the AIG Needs Determination Team, the Coordinator of AIG Services, parent(s), and the principal of the school who will chair the committee.

Step 1 – A written grievance should be submitted at least 48 hours before the regularly scheduled AIG Needs Determination Team meeting is scheduled.

Step 2 – If no regular meeting is scheduled, there should be a called meeting within the next five school days.

Step 3 – If the grievance is not resolved, the written complaint and the minutes from the local grievance committee should be submitted to the Jackson County Administrative Grievance Committee for further action.

LEVEL II – Jackson County Administrative Grievance Review

If the disagreement is not resolved at the school site, the parent may appeal in writing to the Coordinator of Academically and Intellectually Gifted Services who will convene the Jackson County Administrative Committee composed of the superintendent or assistant superintendent, a school board member, and a school administrator not involved in the dispute. The Coordinator of Academically and Intellectually Gifted Services will serve as an ex-officio member. They will review the case and respond to the parents and principal in writing within ten days of receipt of the appeal.

Representatives from the child's school, such as the AIG teacher, school administrators, guidance counselor, member of local grievance committee, and/or classroom teachers, may choose to attend the meeting and present information or answer questions. The party bringing the grievance may come to the meeting to present clarification of the written grievance and answer questions the committee may have.

The Jackson County Grievance Committee will meet on an as-needed basis. The chairman of the committee will respond in writing to the complainant within five days of the meeting.

LEVEL III – Appeal to Board of Education

If agreement is not reached through the Jackson County Grievance Committee, the parents(s) may appeal in writing to the Jackson County Board of Education who will hear the complaint in closed session at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

LEVEL IV – Mediation

If agreement cannot be reached administratively, the school system will arrange for mediation with an impartial facilitator within ten day.

LEVEL V – Administrative Law Hearing

If the Board's decision fails to resolve the disagreement satisfactorily and mediation fails, the parents may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. The scope of the hearing will be limited to consideration of whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an AIG student, or whether the local plan of services for the student has been implemented appropriately.

Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will make a decision based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law. The decision of the administrative law judge is final, binding on all parties, and is not subject to further review under Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. Attorney's fees are not available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The Jackson County Board of Education affirms the principle that every student-regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, cultural or economic background, or disability-should be given an equal educational opportunity for educational development. Further, no student, on the basis of sex, marital status, pregnancy, or parenthood, will be excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity conducted by the district. The school district will treat its students without discrimination in regard to course offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance and extracurricular activities.

Any student, parent, or guardian who feels that this policy has been misinterpreted, misapplied, or violated may file a grievance in accordance with Board Policy 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure.

The Title IX Coordinator is:

Susan Griesinger, Director of Human Resources

Jackson County Public Schools

398 Hospital Road

Sylva, NC 28779

(828) 586-2311 ext. 223

Students in grades 4-8 wishing to remain in the AIG program but receive services in the general education classroom will request a meeting of the AIG Needs Determination Team (NDT) at their school. The AIG NDT will review all student data, including any information provided by the student, and consider the request. If the request is granted, an Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) will be developed for the student to be implemented within the general education class.

Planned Sources of Evidence: • Documentation of complaints and subsequent LEA responses and changes

- Interviews with parents/guardians and school personnel where disagreements have occurred.
- Procedure in place to serve AIG students with IDEPs in the general education classroom

Other Comments:

Glossary (optional):

Appendix (optional):

FLOWCHART OF DECISION MAKING PROCESS AND MULTIPLE INDICATORS Appendix A.pdf
(Appendix - Standard 1)

PROGRAM SERVICE OPTIONS Appendix B.pdf (Appendix - Standard 2:3:4)

PERSONNEL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MATRIX Appendix C.pdf (Appendix -
Standard 3)

STATE STANDARDS FOR EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN Appendix D.docx (Appendix
- Standard 4)

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR AIG Appendix E.pdf (Appendix - Standard 6)