

TCS AIG Plan

NC AIG PROGRAM 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.*

NC AIG Program Practices Standard 2	LEA Response
<p>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.</p>	<p>TCS classroom teachers play a daily role in serving gifted students’ academic needs. With support from principals, instructional coaches, and/or AIG Specialists, classroom teachers will use differentiation strategies such as tiering, flexible groups, and independent study to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● modify content based on readiness, achievement, or benchmark data ● modify processes and/or products based on student aptitudes or interests ● modify learning environments based on student interests and needs <p>In elementary, middle, and high schools, AIG Specialists may deliver or enrich core instruction by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● facilitating differentiated instruction through collaborative planning or co-teaching with classroom teachers ● extending curricula or providing enrichment through club activities ● [in elementary and middle schools] providing additional enrichment or support to small groups of students in separate settings during grade levels’ Intervention & Enrichment periods ● [in middle school] teaching honors level math and language arts classes comprising high-achieving gifted and nurtured students, using differentiation strategies within those courses ● [in high school] teaching honors, Advanced Placement, or other advanced courses, using differentiation strategies within those courses <p>TCS will continue its acceleration practices, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● early admission to kindergarten in accordance with State Board of Education policy SBE-GCS-J-001 ● <i>for elementary students:</i> cross-grade grouping, grade acceleration ● <i>for middle school students:</i> grade and subject acceleration, including earning high school credits through North Carolina Virtual Public Schools (NCVPS) courses ● <i>for high school students:</i> subject acceleration and Credit by Demonstrated Mastery; advanced high school electives including T.I.M.E. Science, North Carolina School of Science and Math online and distance learning classes, CTE certifications, and internships;

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	<p>and college-level study through Advanced Placement classes, dual enrollment, and online early-admission college classes</p> <p>For criteria for early admission to kindergarten and grade or subject acceleration, see Standard 4g.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>TCS Directors of Curriculum & Instruction and TCS principals understand that academically/intellectually advanced students perform best when they receive academic instruction with their intellectual peers. Through deliberate classroom assignment in elementary school, AIG students are clustered to create true peer groups in classrooms. Through deliberate scheduling in middle school, AIG students are clustered to create true peer groups within teams or classrooms. In high school, students self-select courses, yet AIG clusters are detected each semester in all regular, honors, and AP courses, and the occurrence of each cluster is communicated to department chairs and individual teachers. Creating or detecting clusters provides teachers a foundation for differentiation and better enables instructional coaches, AIG Specialists, and administrators to support their efforts.</p> <p>In grades K-5, teachers use flexible intervention groups to deliver direct instruction according to students' demonstrated readiness and abilities. Students' assignment to intervention groups is adjusted after quarterly and/or benchmark testing and may be adjusted at other points as well.</p> <p>AIG Specialists ensure that gifted learners' DEPs provide teachers insight into students' interests and learning profile. Additionally, TCS has improved DEP forms to recommend specific curriculum and/or learning environment modifications for each child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● [grades 4-5] flexible grouping, subject grouping, learning centers, independent work, parallel curriculum, curriculum compacting, AIG consultation/support, and/or AIG pull-out enrichment ● [middle school] honors math or language arts, other advanced courses through North Carolina Virtual Public School, flexible grouping, AIG consultation/support, and/or AIG enrichment elective class ● [high school learning environment differentiation] alternative culminating products, alternative assessment standards, alternative processes, flexible groupings for ability and interests, independent work, and/or AIG consultation/support ● [high school content modifications] pretests, curriculum compacting, advanced/complex texts, advanced problems/products, thematic/interdisciplinary study, and/or AIG consultation/support

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<p>c) Selects and uses a variety of research-based supplemental resources that augment curriculum and instruction.</p>	<p>During the 2013-2016 AIG plan cycle, as they completed various 12-hour university programs in gifted education, AIG Specialists began reevaluating and updating the supplemental resources which augment curriculum and instruction in TCS.</p> <p>During the 2016-2019 plan cycle, AIG Specialists will collaborate with the district TAG, building TAGs and SITs, and teachers to determine classroom needs and then develop a resource bank informed by the most recent gifted research. In order to effectively put the resource bank to use in each school, AIG Specialists will collaboratively plan with teachers, instructional coaches/lead teachers, and/or other instructional support staff.</p> <p>As applicable, the resource bank will include links to supplemental resources for practices already in use in TCS, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Problem/project-based learning ● Universal design for learning ● Critical thinking and creative problem solving ● Socratic or Paideia seminars and formal debates ● Application of skills/concepts to college- or career-level tasks ● Supplemental or advanced texts for tiered reading assignments, including primary sources, historical documents, and multiple/multicultural perspectives ● Advanced or more complex problems/concept applications for tiered math projects <p>While upper elementary, middle, and high schools have transitioned to be 1:1 environments as described in Standard 2d below, K-3 classrooms include computers for use by small groups or individual students. TCS K-3 teachers use web-based applications such as MathSeeds, ReadingEggs, ABC Mouse, PebbleGo, Starfall, Kahoot, and PBS Kids to augment reading, math, and science curricula.</p>
<p>d) Fosters the development of 21st century content and skills at an advanced level.</p>	<p>TCS is becoming a 1:1 district, issuing Chromebooks to each middle and high school student and LearnPads or similar devices to each 4th and 5th grade classroom. Along with these devices, students have Gmail accounts, giving them access to Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides, and other applications which allow sharing and collaborative editing. Instructional technology facilitators conduct ongoing staff development for using Google apps with students.</p> <p>TCS fosters exposure to the demand for 21st century content and skills in real-world contexts by partnering with Blue Ridge Community College to provide Career Academy, an annual summer professional development opportunity for teachers, counselors, administrators, and other certified</p>

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	<p>staff. Career Academy combines an overview of local economic development and a three-day behind-the-scenes tour of local businesses and industry. Facilitators guide discussions about incorporating 21st century skills into daily instruction and classroom routines.</p> <p>Foreign language offerings begin in middle school and continue in high school. Face-to-face language instruction includes Spanish and French, while North Carolina Virtual Public Schools allows TCS students to choose online instruction in many other European and world languages.</p> <p>Career and Technical Education classes are offered to middle and high school students. Throughout TCS, middle school offerings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career Decisions: career fields and their required education, salary range, the nature of the work, job outlook, workplace laws, and civil rights ● Biotechnology: genetics, hematology, microbiology, the heart and kidneys, parasites, medical ethics, scientists, and history of medicine ● Exploring Technology Systems: construction, manufacturing, transportation, and energy <p>High school CTE curricula include agriculture, allied health sciences, business, construction, digital media, drafting, equine science, family & consumer sciences, finance, foods & nutrition, graphic design, horticulture, marketing, masonry, trade & industry, travel & tourism, and welding. A Marine Corps JROTC program was added in 2015-2016. Students may earn licenses, credentials, or certificates in many CTE fields prior to graduation.</p> <p>The Workforce Development Coordinator arranges job-shadowing and internships for interested students once they turn 16 years old.</p> <p>Elementary, middle, and high schools offer Creation Stations, Maker Spaces, and various clubs to provide students STEM/STEAM experiences.</p>
<p>e) Uses on-going assessment, both formative and summative, to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction and inform flexible grouping practices.</p>	<p>TCS elementary schools use a continuous progress model for curriculum/instruction. Principals, instructional coaches, or lead teachers use results from a school- or district-developed Kindergarten Assessment of basic knowledge, skills, readiness to create heterogeneous regular education kindergarten classes in which teachers differentiate instruction. The results of the 3rd grade Beginning of Grade reading assessment inform initial curriculum/instructional decisions, including differentiation and targeted interventions to ensure students' promotion at the end of the year. Similarly, mClass Reading 3D beginning-of-year and middle-of-year assessments inform differentiated reading instruction throughout elementary school. In 2016-2017, TCS will begin using the Guided Math framework, which</p>

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	<p>incorporates ongoing formative assessment and both small group and whole class instruction.</p> <p>Elementary, middle, and high schools use benchmark testing in core areas to determine proficiency or estimate progress toward achievement. Because TCS receives Carl D. Perkins grant monies, middle and high schools must use VoCATS testing for accountability; however, CTE teachers may use VoCATS pre-assessments as formative assessments, using students’ prior knowledge or needs in their instructional planning.</p> <p>Middle and high school ACT Explore/Aspire, ACT Plan, ACT achievement testing complements the course-specific EOG- and EOC testing data. In response to individual students’ longitudinal growth in science, math, reading, and English as captured by the ACT suite, counselors, AIG Specialists, and teachers may recommend that students pursue particular courses, special programs, or Credit by Demonstrated Mastery. In the classroom, teachers and AIG Specialists may create flexible groups or tiers based on ACT data in order to differentiate instruction for abilities, needs, or readiness.</p> <p>With such wealth of assessment data available, a growing commitment to differentiation, and 2016-2017 implementation of Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), TCS’s culture is primed to critically examine core instruction and learners’ needs. By serving on or advising MTSS teams, AIG Specialists may contribute crucial perspective about differentiating or enhancing curriculum in response to gifted students’ changing academic needs.</p>
<p>f) Creates affective curricular and instructional practices which support the social and emotional needs of AIG students.</p>	<p>TCS strives to meet students’ critical social and emotional needs with School Social Workers, Guidance Counselors, and Student Advocates. Together, they strive to support students who will be first-generation high school graduates, who may become first-generation college students, and/or who feel tempted to drop out of school.</p> <p>In addition to working with individual students on a case-by-case basis, Guidance Counselors and Student Advocates collaborate to deliver to all students the social-emotional curriculum outlined in NC Guidance Essential Standards http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/studentsupport/counseling/essential/</p> <p>During the 2013-2016 AIG plan cycle, TCS AIG Specialists revitalized the Differentiated Education Plan template so that annual writing/revising with parents/families and students would more consistently address both academic and social-emotional development. This change is important to serve gifted learners’ social and emotional needs: it supports increased personalized learning for younger students, and it provides older students with long-range perspective for complex goal-setting.</p>

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	<p>However, TCS recognizes that gifted students' unique social-emotional needs may not yet be comprehensively addressed. During the 2016-2019 plan cycle, AIG Specialists will collaborate with TAGs, SITs, and counseling/support staff to more closely examine and respond to those needs.</p>
<p>g) Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students through purposeful and intentional strategies and differentiated curriculum and instruction.</p>	<p>In K-3, teachers and AIG Specialists identify a pool of students for nurturing prior to formal identification. Observational data may indicate that students performing two grade levels above their peers would benefit from nurturing. Formal indicators that a child may need AIG nurturing include formal assessment data (e.g., Kindergarten Entry Assessment, Reading 3D, and grade-level benchmark assessments).</p> <p>K-3 teachers use flexible grouping in math and reading instruction, allowing them to deliver differentiated instruction daily. Instructional coaches support routine use of differentiation and may assist teachers with adjusting both groupings and instruction.</p> <p>Enrichment or enhancement activities are delivered to the students identified for nurturing, along with identified students, on a rotational basis by the AIG Specialist. AIG Specialists maintain a database to follow nurtured students' services and progress and enter them into the pre-identification pool in 4th grade.</p>
<p>h) Collaborates with AIG personnel and other professional staff, including regular education teachers, special education teachers, other instructional staff, and administrators, to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.</p>	<p>Recognizing that AIG Specialists were isolated professionally from each other, TCS implemented monthly AIG Specialists meetings in its 2013-2016 plan. Through these regular meetings, AIG Specialists have collaborated to improve student identification procedures, raise awareness of gifted students' needs for differentiation and personalized learning in the regular education classroom, expand middle and high school AIG services beyond advanced courses, and increase students' and teachers' interaction with partnering institutions of higher education which support for AIG programs and services.</p> <p>The mantra "AIG: all day, every day" highlights that serving AIG students well requires concerted, consistent effort from all professional staff. Although AIG Specialists cannot work with all gifted and nurtured students "all day, every day," the improved Differentiated Education Plans, as described in (i) below, provide helpful, detailed information. AIG Specialists will share each student's DEP with his/her regular education teachers and professional staff who directly serve him/her.</p> <p>The Media Specialist, Instructional Technology Facilitator, and/or English Language Learner teacher may collaborate with regular education teachers or AIG Specialists to support or augment ongoing classroom differentiation with personalized reading, math, social studies, and science texts/media for</p>

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	<p>students or with additional resources for teachers. Similarly, the Media Specialist, Specials teachers, and/or other core area teachers may facilitate more personalized, thematic/interdisciplinary exploration.</p> <p>Ideally, AIG Specialists will participate in meetings within their schools where AIG students' needs are part of the agenda. These meetings may include department/grade-level meetings and MTSS meetings. With parent/guardian consent, special education teachers, guidance counselors, and AIG specialists may collaborate to plan complementary services or accommodations for students with IEPs or 504s.</p>
<p>i) Develops and documents a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/families to ensure effective programming, provide a continuum of services, and support school transitions.</p>	<p>Upon students' formal identification as gifted, AIG Specialists work with families annually to develop or revise a Differentiated Education Plan. Students take the leading role in drafting the DEP as they transition from middle to high school.</p> <p>Recognizing that the Differentiated Education Plan plays a critical role in communicating students' needs to their teachers and in helping families support their children, TCS has created new DEP templates for elementary, middle, and high school. Now, DEPs highlight students' identified abilities, interests, and appropriate service delivery, such as clustering, advanced courses, extracurricular activities, and special programs. High School DEPs further indicate appropriate classroom differentiation methods, including curriculum compacting, independent study, learning contracts, advanced content, and thematic/interdisciplinary units.</p> <p>To ease the transition from middle to high school and, at the same time, encourage gifted learners to view high school as a stepping stone, high school DEPs incorporate a "Four Year AIG Trajectory." Each student outlines his/her own intended "Trajectory":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● planning advanced, enriched, and/or accelerated paths of study in specific fields ● planning whether to supplement academic classes with related school- and community-sponsored extracurricular activities, special programs, or job-shadowing or internships ● determining whether earning awards and/or attending special schools may boost them toward more opportunities for further advanced studies ● considering how to develop leadership skills and experience ● considering appropriate and fulfilling service opportunities <p>To supplement the information in the DEP, AIG Specialists maintain a DEP folder for each child which includes previous years' DEPs and documentation supporting the child's pathway to identification. Together the current DEP</p>

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	and DEP folder provide a comprehensive, longitudinal learner profile. As students transition or transfer between schools, the students' former AIG Specialist hand-delivers DEP folders to the next AIG Specialist and together they review each student's needs.
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	See Appendix for elementary, middle, and high school DEP templates.
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Ideas/ Strategies for Strengthening the Standard:

- On the @GiftedInquiry Twitter feed and TCS AIG website, feature "teaser text" from National Association of Gifted Children or similar practitioner journals with links to full articles, resources, and lessons. In AIG Specialists meetings, TAG meetings, and district TAG meetings, highlight postings/Tweets and encourage attendees to share with other staff at their schools. Combine interest in postings/Tweets into existing Learning Walk activities, PLC studies, or develop ad hoc study/discussion groups.
- Discuss with middle and high school principals, guidance counselors, and teachers whether TCS students would benefit from tools such as AP Potential, which uses PSAT subtest scores to help identify students who may be ready for Advanced Placement classes and to identify particular Advanced Placement courses TCS could offer for those students. Currently, TCS students may take Advanced Placement courses through North Carolina Virtual Public School if those courses aren't offered face-to-face, but AP Potential may provide evidence of demand for local offerings.
- Discuss with high school principals, guidance counselors, teachers, and students whether TCS seniors would benefit from the Advanced Placement Capstone program. This may provide an alternative from the current practice of including the Senior Project in Advanced Placement English Literature and may allow advanced students, such as TIME Science students, an opportunity to enhance their work and critical thinking skills in a supportive, cross-disciplinary seminar environment.

Sources of Evidence:

Resource bank on TCS AIG website

Early kindergarten enrollment records

Student enrollment in honors/PreAP/AP classes and other advanced electives

Dual enrollment and online class enrollment records

North Carolina Virtual Public School enrollment records

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery records

Documentation of internships and job-shadowing

CTE certifications and WorkKeys results

Career Academy rosters

Teaching assignments, including AIG Specialists' teaching assignments

Elementary class rosters and middle school class/team rosters indicating clustering

AIG clusters detected in high school master schedules and minutes/agendas and/or email chains communicating existence of those clusters

Teachers' lessons/unit plans documenting use of resources from Resource Bank

Submitted to Transylvania County School Board

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Teachers' lessons/unit plans documenting use differentiation and modified content, processes, and/or learning environments

Flexible group assignments and Intervention & Enrichment records indicating data-based adjustments

Club offerings and attendance records

AIG Specialists' coteaching documented in logs, lesson plans, email chains, and/or lesson/unit plans

AIG Specialist, Media Specialist, and Instructional Technology Facilitator collaboration documented in logs, email chains, agendas/minutes, and/or lesson/unit plans

AIG Specialists' participation in and/or AIG items addressed in department, grade-level, and MTSS data team agendas/minutes or other records

Invitations to AIG Specialists to 504 and/or IEP pre-conference meetings or annual review meetings

AIG Specialists' lists of nurtured students

AIG Specialists meeting agendas, including internal DEP folder audits and DEP folder exchanges

Records of AIG Parent/Family meetings for DEP writing/revision

Records of AIG transition activities