

## Recommended Updates to the Local Plan for the Gifted

Recommendation #:	Recommendations Made from the Local Plan Steering Committees:	Rationale for the Recommendation:
1	Adopt a Talent Development Model Theoretical Framework as a foundation of gifted programming in ACPS.	<p>The Talent Development theoretical framework posits that we should identify services necessary to develop high potential. Giftedness is not viewed as an absolute or fixed state of being. Instead, it is considered a developmental set of behaviors that can be applied to problem-solving situations. Gifted behaviors emerge in certain people, at certain times, and under certain circumstances.</p> <p>One theoretical framework for talent development in giftedness is the Talent Development Process Model, proposed by Paula Olszewski-Kubilius and colleagues. The Talent Development Process Model includes three components: potential, practice, and performance. According to this model, the development of talent involves the identification of potential, the acquisition of skills through deliberate practice, and the demonstration of performance in a specific domain. It is up to educators and families to offer students as wide an array of enriching experiences as possible so students can discover the areas in which their potential is greatest; then, students must be given opportunities to pursue those areas of interest and high potential.</p>
2	Change the program name to Advanced Academic Services (AAS) from Talented and Gifted (TAG).	Over the years, we have heard and listened to families and educators discuss what the impact of labeling a student as gifted can mean. The association with the current program's title has not always been positive. Educators and parents must be aware of the potentially negative ramifications of labeling students as gifted and address this problem from many fronts, including changing the system's culture regarding how high academic achievement is nurtured and developed. Therefore, we propose a paradigm shift to call ACPS's program Advanced Academic Services, which many school systems are moving to across the country. Within this shift, we identify the services each student needs. We will move away from labeling students as gifted and talented and transition to a mindset of identifying different levels of advanced academic services students require for their potential to be developed and their needs met.
3	Develop an advanced academic services model incorporating the	A service model in alignment with the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), formerly known as Response to Intervention (RTI), is a tiered system of intervention that includes advanced

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	<p>Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) used across ACPS that focuses on intervention services.</p>	<p>academic services. Tier 1 is for about 80% of students and aligns with the district curriculum and grade-level content with some remediation or advancement of material. All students have access to differentiated resources and instruction. For Tier II, the focus would be on extra challenges or extra help, and for Tier III would be intense interventions. The ultimate goal is to expand our notion of advanced services to discuss different levels or tiers of rigor based on the duration, frequency, and intensity of services.</p> <p>Research suggests that aligning the Gifted Talent Development Model and the Multi-System of Support (MTSS) Model can benefit gifted learners' academic and social-emotional development. For example, in a study by Rizza and colleagues (2020), the authors discuss how an MTSS framework can be adapted to support gifted learners through enrichment activities and differentiated instruction. The authors note that “a tiered model of support is an excellent vehicle for meeting the needs of gifted learners, who are often overlooked in the general education classroom” (p. 81).</p> <p>Moreover, the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) recommends that schools use an MTSS framework to support gifted learners. According to the NAGC (2020), “an MTSS framework can support gifted students by providing a systematic approach to identify their needs, providing the appropriate level of challenge, and monitoring progress over time” (p. 2). In summary, research and professional organizations suggest that aligning the Gifted Talent Development Model and the Multi-System of Support Model can provide targeted support for advanced learners within a comprehensive framework for meeting the needs of all students.</p>
4	<p>Provide access to rigor for all students through high-quality, Tier 1 instruction.</p>	<p>This recommendation is to ensure access to instructional rigor for all students in ACPS through high-quality Tier 1 instruction. It would entail adopting critical and creative thinking resources and instructional strategies across all school levels. Some examples of these strategies are Project Based Learning, 9 Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies, Socratic Seminars, debates, rich-math tasks, and Document Based Questions (DBQs). All of which align with a talent development model and mindset.</p>

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5	Align the Local Plan for the Gifted with other ACPS initiatives.	The Local Plan must be aligned with other ACPS initiatives, including various policies on gifted programming and acceleration, engagements with Project-Based Learning, equity work, and the middle and high school projects. If we update our local plan in isolation, our work will be outdated and unaligned as the other initiatives and projects unfold.
6	Update Policy IGBB: Programs for Gifted Students to Support the Intended Purpose of the Local Plan	The policy IGBB: Programs for Gifted Students, needs to be updated to support the intended purpose of the Local Plan. It also currently needs to be aligned with updated state policy. The TAG office is working with the Policy Revision Team to make these changes.
7	Update Policy IKEB: Acceleration Policy & Regulation	<p>Within the state policy on acceleration, it requires schools to address acceleration as it relates to students taking high-school-level courses prior to high school. It also offers students at elementary, middle, and high school flexibility to take subjects or programs above their grade level.</p> <p>The recommendation is to move information that does not belong in the current acceleration policy to the updated Local Plan for the Gifted. The Local Plan for the Gifted will address screening procedures and programming options for single-subject acceleration, whole-grade level acceleration, and dual-enrollment and advanced placement, as these are various types of advanced academic services.</p> <p>The TAG office is working with the Policy Revision Team to make these changes.</p>
8	<p>Staff Central Office and Schools to Support Rigorous Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Staff <b>two</b> Advanced Academic teachers/coaches at each Elementary School and K-8 School.</li> <li>b. Provide a Secondary Advanced Academic Specialist to support secondary needs.</li> </ul>	<p>The steering committee's recommendations support the mission of our work in ACPS to ensure success by inspiring students and addressing barriers to learning. The current gifted programming is not working for many of our students. In order to shift the program to align with best practices in gifted education, provide equitable access to services, and support teachers in implementing the changes, staffing for the program needs to shift to include additional human support.</p> <p><b>Phase 1:</b> Staff <b>two</b> TAG (Advanced Academic) teachers/coaches at each elementary and K-8 School. Our most underrepresented schools are the schools that have the largest student body, the smallest gifted classes, and only one gifted resource teacher. When a</p>

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	<p>c. Provide a TAG (Advanced Academic) coach at Minnie Howard and one at ACHS King Street.</p>	<p>school has one gifted resource teacher, the delivery of services focuses most on the Grades 4-5 pull-out model, which leaves little time to co-teach and model rigor in grades K-5, as well as nurture potential in the early elementary grades.</p> <p>Provide a Secondary TAG (Advanced Academic) Specialist to support secondary needs. A secondary advanced academic specialist would work with our middle and high school honors teachers, support AP and Dual Enrollment teachers and administrators, and support The Governor’s School. In addition, the specialist would work with our math, social studies, literacy, and science specialists, similar to the support our EL and Specialized Services specialists provide our general content specialists. In 2017, our external review pointed out a need to strengthen our gifted secondary curriculum. The need is still there.</p> <p><b>Phase 2</b> Provide a TAG (Advanced Academics) coach at ACHS Minnie Howard and one at ACHS King Street. Currently, no TAG (Advanced Academics) resource teachers are assigned to either of these schools. With almost every core academic teacher teaching at least one Honors, AP, or Dual-Enrollment course, and only 36 teachers at the secondary level have their gifted endorsement, the schools, and teachers need support in using researched-based best practices in gifted education. The coaches would provide support to teachers through professional learning, modeling, and co-teaching.</p>
9	<p>Throughout this updated Local Plan for the Gifted, explore opening advanced opportunities in other areas of giftedness, including <b>Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)</b>.</p>	<p>The Talent Development theoretical framework supports the identification of students who demonstrate outstanding performance or potential in “intelligence outside the normal curve”. Gifted students tend to have wide-ranging areas of interest that reach beyond typical academic coursework. Including CTA in a continuum of gifted and talented services can provide students with challenging and relevant course material and high levels of technical expertise in a wide range of occupational areas not found in traditional academic offerings.</p> <p>The state focuses CTA services on students who demonstrate or have the potential to explain superior reasoning; persistent technical curiosity; advanced use of technical language; exceptional problem solving; rapid acquisition and mastery of</p>

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		facts, concepts, and principles; and creative and imaginative expression beyond their age-level peers in career and technical fields.
10	Throughout this updated Local Plan for the Gifted, explore opening advanced opportunities in other areas of giftedness, including <b>Visual or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPAA)</b> :	<p>The Talent Development theoretical framework identifies creativity as the trait that encompasses curiosity, originality, ingenuity, and a willingness to challenge convention and tradition. For example, there have been many gifted scientists throughout history. Still, the scientists whose work we revere, whose names have remained recognizable in scholarly communities among the general public, are those scientists who used their creativity to envision, analyze, and ultimately help resolve scientific questions in new, original ways.</p> <p>The state focuses on CTA services for students who demonstrate or have the potential to explain superior creative reasoning and imaginative expression; persistent artistic curiosity; and advanced acquisition and mastery of techniques, perspectives, concepts, and principles beyond their age-level peers in visual or performing arts.</p>
11	Implement an Early Childhood Talent Development Model Approach in Grades K-3	<p>The benefits of transitioning to a talent development model for K-3 students are numerous and well-documented. The model allows all students to receive appropriate levels of challenge and support. This ensures that all students are engaged in learning and have the opportunity to grow and excel in areas that are meaningful to them. Focusing on developing each student's individual strengths, students will develop a sense of self-efficacy, which is essential for their future success. Additionally, the Talent Development Model promotes equity in education. Under the talent development model, all students receive the support they need to achieve their full potential regardless of their background or socioeconomic status. The focus on the Early Childhood Talent Development Model would move the shift from formal identification of general intellectual aptitude services to developing talent and using flexible grouping to provide services. This model also would include further expansion of ACPS's Young Scholars model, which is a talent development model ACPS has been implementing for over six years.</p>
12	The Advanced Academic Services program will focus on Specific Academic	The state requires either Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) or General Intellectual Aptitude services. ACPS will continue implementing SAA services. SAA services are for students who

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	Aptitude Services (SAA) as the primary service for gifted instruction within ACPS.	demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate superior reasoning; persistent intellectual curiosity; advanced use of language; exceptional problem solving; rapid acquisition and mastery of facts, concepts, and principles; and creative and imaginative expression beyond their age-level peers in selected academic areas that include English, history and social science, mathematics, or science.
13	Implement Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) services in Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science for Grades 4-12.	<p>The state says, "Identification in a specific academic aptitude area may occur as assessment instruments exist to support identification. If the school division elects to identify students in one or more academic aptitude areas, it shall provide service options through twelfth grade." Based on ACPS's historical data, our students have a more robust portfolio for screening during the 3rd-grade year. Therefore, screening for SAA services will begin in third grade, for placement in Grade 4 or higher. The focus on services will be in the four core content areas of language arts, math, science, or social studies.</p> <p>For the time being, the pull-out model in Grades 4-5 will continue for Specific Academic Aptitudes in Math and Language Arts for the 2023-2024 school year as we build the capacity to implement new changes through a phased-in approach.</p>
14	Update the approach to Specific Academic Aptitude Services in Mathematics to focus on advanced math, a combination of enrichment of grade-level standards, and exposure to the above-grade levels standards based on student need.	<p>The Virginia Department of Education strongly encourages school divisions to continue to examine acceleration practices to ensure that students have sufficient time to recover unfinished learning while still allowing adequate time for the development of knowledge, skills, and processes in the new grade level. Rushing students through missed content from the previous school year, while attempting to instruct in new content at an accelerated pace, could have detrimental results in student understanding during the upcoming school year and beyond. Rather than push students faster, districts are encouraged to differentiate their mathematics instruction to help all students deepen their mathematical learning. Research suggests that acceleration can intensify the disparity among student outcomes in mathematics.</p> <p>Furthermore, students currently enrolled in accelerated mathematics courses with the compacted curriculum (addressing content from more than one grade level of the Mathematics Standards of Learning) designated to move to another accelerated mathematics course in 2023-2024, have the</p>

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		<p>potential to experience “doubly compacted” curriculum, which could compound learning disparities.</p> <p>Advanced math would focus on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Enrichment</b> in on-grade-level or above grade-level standards through in-depth instruction.</li> <li>● <b>Acceleration</b> by a standard based on data-driven practices.</li> <li>● <b>Pace</b> - the rate instruction is delivered.</li> <li>● <b>Problem-solving</b> deepens understanding and explanation of mathematical processes used to arrive at solutions.</li> <li>● <b>Connections</b> across concepts and subjects</li> <li>● <b>Process</b> - incorporate the five process goals of mathematical understanding (e.g., problem-solving, communication, reasoning, connections, and representations).</li> <li>● <b>Time</b> for mathematical discovery</li> </ul> <p>A phased-in approach for advanced math would begin in Grade 4 during the 2023-2024 school year. Students in Grades 5 and above in 2023-2024 will continue to follow the current math progression.</p>
15	Use a portfolio approach to screening in Grades 4-8 using multiple data points for a committee to determine a need for SAA services.	The National Association for Gifted Children recommends using multiple data samples to determine a need for higher-level invention services. The committee recommends moving to a portfolio approach. The portfolio would include higher-level work samples in the area of screening, observation scales, commentary narratives, ability scores, achievement scores, progress reports, anecdotal notes, and growth reports.
16	The need for accelerated services can be determined for a student who may need more <b>than the child’s implemented SAA services in Grades 4-12.</b>	The Local Plan will address how a student may have the opportunity to be screened for accelerated advanced services either for single-subject or whole-grade acceleration. The acceleration screening process will include a school-based local screening committee to do a records review on grades, standardized assessments (MAP, SOL), work samples (rich math tasks), CogAT/NNAT scores, and classroom differentiation. The Local Screening Committee will determine if additional testing is needed to determine acceleration. If the committee requests additional information gathering, all the data will be collected and brought back to the local screening committee to determine

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		if the child requires acceleration, if a plan needs to be developed for the current grade level differentiation, or if the child's current services are appropriate at the time of screening.