



Growing Possibilities...

ACADEMICALLY AND/OR INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED (AIG) PROGRAM

**HANDBOOK ON
PARENTS' RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES
IN GIFTED EDUCATION**

**NOTICE OF GIFTED SERVICES PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS & DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES
PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. § 115C-150.7(b)(7)**

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Glossary of Acronyms in Gifted Services

AIG	Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted
DPI	Department of Public Instruction
ELA	English Language Arts
EOC	End of Course Assessment
EOG	End of Grade Assessment
LEA	Local Education Agency
NCSCoS	North Carolina Standard Course of Study
SBE	State Board of Education

Types of Identification:

AI	Academically and Intellectually Gifted
AG	Academically Gifted in Math and Reading
AM	Academically Gifted in Math
AR	Academically Gifted in Reading
IG	Intellectually Gifted

Common Documents

AIG 1	Student Nomination Form
AIG 2	Permission to Test Form
AIG 3	Invitation to Conference Form
AIG 3B	Notification of Decision Form
AIG 3C	Notification of Newly Qualified Form
AIG 4	Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)
AIG 4A	Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP)
MATRIX	Identification Criteria Matrix
STRL	Summer Testing Results Letter

Basics of the Gifted Learner

The basics of the gifted learner are the foundations for DPI AIG Program Standards and the various learning environments, curriculum content modifications, and enrichment opportunities offered in our district. We offer acceleration options and enrichment services for our K-3 students as well as a value-added replacement curriculum in grades 4-8 that transition into subject acceleration options in grades 7-12.

The following research-based reasons are why we offer daily instruction to our AIG students:

- They need something different than everyone else to have their needs met: The spectrum of gifted education is diverse with students who have a variety of academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs that are different from same-aged peers.
- They require a more challenging, differentiated curriculum, and differentiated instruction: Gifted learners think with more complexity and learn at a faster rate.
- They require time with others who are like them: Gifted learners thrive in environments with intellectual peers because they already understand.
- They require access to support systems and counseling to meet their unique social-emotional needs and assure affective well-being.

- They require educators who have the necessary knowledge, skills, and understandings to meet their unique needs.

The Handbook on Parent Rights and Responsibilities in Gifted Education is for parents/guardians whose child has entered the formal evaluation process from an informal screening and/or their child has met the identification criteria to qualify for services.

The Screening Process

The screening process is a collection and evaluation of student data to make further recommendations. This process is different depending on the time of year, enrollment status of student, or upon request. For more information about the annual district-wide screening process, see our [Screening Process FAQ video](https://goo.gl/UEVbAE) at <https://goo.gl/UEVbAE>.

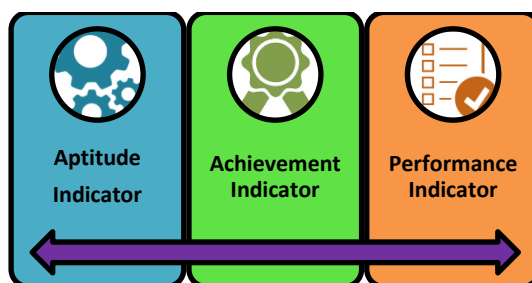
The Basics of the Screening Process

The collection and evaluation of student data works in one of two ways:

1. A screening was requested through the student referral process or upon enrollment, OR
2. Student automatically screened during the annual, district-wide screening process

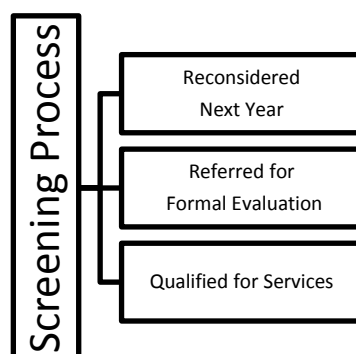
We collect information on the three basic types of indicators:

- Aptitude Indicators
- Achievement Indicators
- Performance Indicators



Using pre-determined cut-scores, evaluation of student data determines one of the following outcomes:

1. The student is reconsidered during next year's annual, district-wide screening process, OR
2. The student is referred for a formal evaluation including further testing, OR
3. The student has met the identification criteria to qualify for gifted services.



Screening Process at Each Grade Level

We screen students in every grade level K-12. This process looks a little different depending on the grade level of the student.

- The screening process for K-3 students is a part of enrichment services provided at each school as part of their Enrichment Services Plan.
- The annual district-wide screening process for grades 3-7 begins at the start of the second semester and ends with the release of state-mandated testing and final grades.
- Students in grades 8-11 can self-nominate by referring themselves for a screening at the beginning of a school year or during the annual district-wide screening process. The referral form is on our AIG Department Website: <https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/Domain/98>.
- The school-site AIG team screen students new to the district during the school year.
- If a child enrolls over the summer, parents need to contact aigsummertesting@ucps.k12.nc.us or call the AIG testing center to schedule a screening. Families who are new to the district should request a copy of the AIG Summer Screening Brochure at the school when enrolling.

For currently enrolled students, the annual, district-wide screening process begins at the start of the second semester and ends with the release of EOG/EOC/NCFE scores and final grades. The collection of all student data is automatic. The combination of the data determines one outcome for every student:

1. The student is reconsidered during next year's annual, district-wide screening process, OR
2. The student is referred for a formal evaluation including further testing, OR
3. The student has met the identification criteria to qualify for gifted services.

The annual, district-wide screening process ends with the school year. We notify parents/guardians of the outcome of the screening process in writing when:

1. The student is referred for a formal evaluation that includes further testing, OR
2. The student has met the identification criteria.

The results of the formal evaluation process and/or student identification process are sent home after the process is completed. The results from the annual district-wide screening process go home after the return of state-mandated testing results and calculation of final grades, which is usually within the last few days of school.

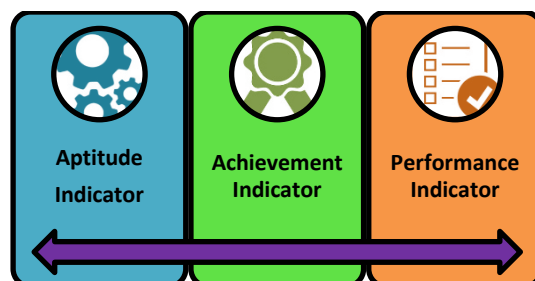
Screening Process for Students New to the District

Students who transfer into UCPS from another LEA/district, charter school, home school, or private school, we start the screening process using information provided by the parent/guardian. This includes but is not limited to current report cards, recent standardized testing data, letters of recommendation, and/or previous identification information to determine the next steps in the process. Our referral form is on our AIG Department website: <https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/Domain/98>.

- **Enrolling during the school year**—screening is automatic upon student enrollment. The school's AIG team handles the screening process.
- **Enrolling during the summer**—parent/guardians need to contact aigsummertesting@ucps.k12.nc.us and provide current data for further recommendations. The schools have the AIG summer testing center's contact information, provided upon request.

Identification Criteria

A student must meet our identification criteria to qualify for gifted services. The data used to meet the identification criteria must be current, which means within the past year. We have a short video for parents/guardians about identification on our AIG department website.



Students qualify for gifted services in a variety of ways (pathways) using a variety of criteria (indicators). We collect three different types of information for every student considered for gifted services.

1. Aptitude indicators (Full Scale &/or Subtest)
2. Achievement indicators (On or Above Grade Level)
3. Performance indicators (Grades, Rating Scales, or Other)

The collection of information on each student is the screening process. The student data, organized within the three different types of indicators, leads to further recommendations. The different combinations of indicators determine the pathway of qualification. The pathway in which the student meets the identification criteria determines the type of identification and service options available to the student.

We consider pathway 2 first because most students qualify this way.

Pathway 2 Identification

In this pathway, a student needs to meet three different criteria between the listed options in the same subject area to form a combination of

- 1-2 aptitude indicators, AND/OR
- 1 achievement indicator, AND/OR
- 1 performance indicator

Pathway Option	Aptitude Indicator	Achievement Indicator	Performance Indicator
Pathway 2 Identification Type: AM, AR, AG	Nationally-Normed Aptitude OR IQ Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Scale Score of 93rd percentile or higher, AND/OR • Subtest Composite score of 90th percentile or higher UCPS local norms are also considered for students who participate in the universal screener in grades 3 & 6.	NC End of Grade Test OR Nationally-Normed Achievement Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC EOG score of 93rd percentile or higher, OR • 85th percentile or higher on an above grade level, nationally normed achievement test 	Grade OR Gifted Rating Scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course grade of 90% or higher (A), OR • Gifted Rating Scale Scores of 90th percentile or higher from two different options. The highest score is used from Academic (Ac) or Intellectual (I), AND Creativity (C), or Motivation (M), Leadership (L), or Artistic (Ar).

Students who qualify for services via Pathway 2, they are identified as academically gifted in math (AM), reading (AR), or in both content areas (AG). Parents/Guardians must consent to or decline services by signing the student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). Placement into services is not automatic.

Although Pathway 2 is considered first when identifying students, student data drives the decision making process. The different pathways allow for different kinds of identification to customize gifted services. This includes but is not limited to students with unusually high aptitude and/or students from traditionally underrepresented groups.

Pathway 1 Identification

After considering Pathway 2, we look to the student's aptitude indicators to determine if Pathway 1 is an option for identification. In this pathway, a student needs to meet four different criteria between the listed options in the same subject area to form a combination of

- 2 aptitude indicators, AND
- 1 achievement indicator, AND
- 1 performance indicator

This pathway allows us to identify particular needs of students—especially those who have a strength in one area and challenge in the other.

Pathway Option	Aptitude Indicator	Achievement Indicator	Performance Indicator
Pathway 1A Identification Type: IG	Nationally-Normed Aptitude OR IQ Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Scale Score of 98th percentile or higher, AND/OR • Subtest Composite score of 98th percentile or higher UCPS local norms are also considered for students who participate in the universal screener in grades 3 & 6.	NC End of Grade Test OR Nationally-Normed Achievement Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC EOG score of 92nd percentile or lower, OR • 84th percentile or lower on an above grade level, nationally normed achievement test 	Grade OR Gifted Rating Scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course grade of 89% or lower (B), OR • Gifted Rating Scale Scores of 89th percentile or lower from two different options. The highest score is used from Academic (Ac) or Intellectual (I), AND Creativity (C), or Motivation (M), Leadership (L), or Artistic (Ar).
Pathway 1B Identification Type: AI	Nationally-Normed Aptitude OR IQ Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Scale Score of 98th percentile or higher, AND/OR • Subtest Composite score of 98th percentile or higher UCPS local norms are also considered for students who participate in the universal screener in grades 3 & 6.	NC End of Grade Test OR Nationally-Normed Achievement Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC EOG score of 98th percentile or higher, OR • 93rd percentile or higher on an above grade level, nationally normed achievement test 	Grade OR Gifted Rating Scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course grade of 90% or higher (A), OR • Gifted Rating Scale Scores of 90th percentile or higher from two different options. The highest score is used from Academic (Ac) or Intellectual (I), AND Creativity (C), or Motivation (M), Leadership (L), or Artistic (Ar).

Pathway 1A identification indicates that a child's intellectual abilities and potential are subject specific and interest driven which means the student has demonstrated high potential as shown with the aptitude indicator, but the other indicators do not meet the criteria to qualify the student for services via Pathway 2 or 3. This type of identification profile usually indicates that the student may be underachieving in school and in need of additional support such as content differentiation, acceleration options, social-emotional support and/or college and career counseling. Students who qualify for services via Pathway 1A are identified as intellectually gifted (IG). Parents/Guardians must consent to or decline services by signing the student's Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP). Placement into services is not automatic.

Pathway 1B identification indicates that a child's intellectual abilities and academic abilities are highly advanced when compared to same age peers in the same school setting. This means that the student has demonstrated high potential as shown with the aptitude indicator and shown high achievement with the other indicators. This

student does meet the criteria of Pathway 2 or 3; however, they may require additional support with content modifications, acceleration options, social-emotional support, and/or college and career counseling. Students who qualify for services via Pathway 1B are identified as academically and intellectually gifted (AI). Parents/Guardians must consent to or decline services by signing the student's Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP). Placement into services is not automatic.

Pathway 3 Identification

Pathway 3 is for a student who has educational or situational circumstances for which traditional testing alone may not be sufficient to identify giftedness. The school's AIG Team completes the application process for a student who has a formal Pathway 3 nomination. Typically, these students are culturally or linguistically diverse, economically disadvantaged, have a physical and/or sensory disability, and/or have a documented learning and/or processing disability.

The design of Pathway 3 allows students more opportunities to demonstrate need for differentiated instruction through non-traditional performance indications along with aptitude and/or achievement indicators. Non-traditional measures include the use of the Gifted Rating Scale (GRS), Scales or Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS), portfolio process, and/or Behavioral Profile (BP).

In this pathway, a student needs to meet three different criteria between the listed options in the same subject area to form a combination of

- 1 aptitude indicator, AND/OR
- 1 achievement indicator, AND/OR
- 1-2 performance indicators

Pathway Option	Aptitude Indicator	Achievement Indicator	Performance Indicator
Pathway 3 Identification Type: AM, AR, AG	Nationally-Normed Aptitude OR IQ Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Scale Score of 93rd percentile or higher, AND/OR • Subtest Composite score of 90th percentile or higher <p>UCPS local norms are also considered for students who participate in the universal screener in grades 3 & 6.</p>	NC End of Grade Test OR Nationally-Normed Achievement Test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC EOG score of 90th percentile or higher, OR • 83rd percentile or higher on an above grade level, nationally normed achievement test 	Grade OR Gifted Rating Scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course grade of 90% or higher (A), AND/OR • Gifted Rating Scale Scores (GRS) of 90th percentile or higher from two different options. The highest score is used from Academic (Ac) or Intellectual (I), AND Creativity (C), or Motivation (M), Leadership (L), or Artistic (Ar), AND/OR • Scales for Identifying Gifted Student (SIGS) Scores of 90th percentile or higher from two different options. The highest score is used from General Ability Index (GAI) or Mathematics (M) or Reading (R) AND Creativity (C) and Leadership (L) • Portfolio score of 85% or higher using the UCPS Product or Portfolio Scoring Rubric. Scoring is conducted by the school's AIG Team, AND/OR • Behavioral Profile (BP) composite score of 17 or higher. The school completes the BP through K-3 enrichment service. The score is calculated at the end of third grade.

Students who qualify for services via Pathway 3, they are identified as academically gifted in math (AM), reading (AR), or in both content areas (AG). Parents/Guardians must consent to or decline services by signing the student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). Placement into services is not automatic.

Gifted Program Overview

Gifted services offered by Union County Public Schools are under the care and responsibility of the AIG Department.

The purpose of the AIG program is to address the needs of students with demonstrated high ability and aptitude for learning. The program provides differentiated instruction and curriculum approaches beyond that of the general education classroom that are evidence-based best practices for serving gifted students.

Gifted services provide an array of learning environment service options, content modifications to the general education curriculum including a value-added replacement curriculum, and enrichment opportunities.

Learning Environment Service Options:

The students' grade level and formal identification type determine the type of learning environment recommended for the student in an AIG Classroom.

- Advanced Subject Grouping
- Cluster Grouping
- Grade Acceleration
- Subject Acceleration

Content Modifications: (aligned to the NCSCoS)

The teacher determines curriculum content modifications based on the individual need(s) of the gifted learner. We offer a district-wide, value-added replacement curriculum for reading and mathematics that is used in our AIG classrooms for grades 4-8 and acceleration options for grade 7-12. We also offer additional content modifications such as

- Curriculum Compacting
- Differentiated Units
- Extended Reading/Writing Activities
- Independent Investigation
- Learning Centers
- Mastery Learning Units
- Problem-Based Learning
- Socratic Seminar
- Student Contracts
- Subject Acceleration
- Technology Based Instruction
- Thematic Units
- Tiered Assignments
- Value-Added Replacement Curriculum

Enrichment Opportunities:

The school determines enrichment opportunities based on availability and volunteers. The AIG Department Website posts an annual list of summer enrichment programs available to gifted learners.

- Academic Competitions
- Field Trips
- Fine Arts Activities
- Future Problem Solvers

- Investigation for Real World Problems
- Mentor Program
- Odyssey of the Mind
- Seminar with School System
- Special Interest Clubs
- Special Interest Labs
- Special Presentations
- Summer Enrichment Programs

Each district within the state of North Carolina has a School Board approved local plan that explains details of the district's gifted services as mandated by Article 9B.

Article 9B

Article 9B provides a state definition for Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students and requires each Local Education Agencies (LEA)/district to develop three-year AIG local plans with specific components, to be approved by local School Board and sent to the State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for review. Article 9B is the current legislation mandating identification and services for gifted education K-12.

The state definition of AIG students in Article 9B (N.C.G.S. § 115C.5):

Academically or intellectually gifted students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific to academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the general educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Local AIG Plan

The local plan addresses each of the North Carolina DPI Gifted Program Standards grounded in evidence-based best practices for gifted learners. There are six standards and forty-five practices addressed within a local plan.

Our local plan is available for download from the AIG Department Website:

<https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/Domain/98>.

The local plan is organized in order of the DPI standards:

1. Student identification practices
2. Comprehensive Programming within a Total School Community
3. Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction
4. Personnel and Professional Development
5. Partnerships
6. Program Accountability

Basics of the Gifted Learner

The basics of the gifted learner are the foundations for DPI AIG Program Standards and the various learning environments, curriculum content modifications, and enrichment opportunities offered in our district. We offer acceleration options and enrichment services for our K-3 students as well as a value-added replacement curriculum in grades 4-8 that transition into subject acceleration options in grades 7-12.

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- They need something different than everyone else to have their needs met: The spectrum of gifted education is diverse with students who have a variety of academic, intellectual, and social-emotional needs that are different from same-aged peers.
- They require a more challenging, differentiated curriculum, and differentiated instruction: Gifted learners think with more complexity and learn at a faster rate.
- They require time with others who are like them: Gifted learners thrive in environments with intellectual peers because they already understand.
- They require access to support systems and counseling to meet their unique social-emotional needs and assure affective well-being.
- They require educators who have the necessary knowledge, skills, and understandings to meet their unique needs.

Gifted Services Curriculum Framework

The North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCoS) specifies what children are to learn in every grade level. Since gifted learners have unique needs for a more challenging, differentiated curriculum, our AIG Program has a curriculum framework that conveys additional learning goals for our students that align with the NCSCoS and extend beyond the standards for general education. Each goal has a set of practices that gifted students master before graduating by being an active participant in gifted services.

It is important to reflect on the curriculum framework when considering a student for gifted services. Look through the curriculum framework to determine if placement in gifted services is the right fit for the student.

A parent/guardian must agree to gifted services before a student can receive gifted services. UCPS recommends that a family be committed to at least one-full year of gifted services unless an extenuating circumstance occurs.

AIG English Language Arts Goals

These goals are representative of the learning that occurs within our gifted services for formally identified students. Each main goal has several practices under it that specify the main goal objectives. These goals include the K-12 spectrum of learning.

1. To advance literary analysis capability

- a. Compare complex literature on key variables: theme/central idea, character/individual, motivation/reason, point of view/perspective, and patterns within a text
- b. Analyze complex literature using literary elements, figurative language, persuasive techniques, and rhetorical devices
- c. Evaluate the effectiveness of complex literature using specified criteria and respond as a literary critic.
- d. Synthesize understanding of complex literature from diverse formats to justify complex ideas supported with relevant evidence, advanced reasoning, and critical thinking

2. To advance persuasive expertise

- a. Formulate sound arguments and reasoning with relevant evidence, clear explanations of connections, use of persuasive techniques, and development of a logical conclusion
- b. Develop open-minded thinking with alternative systems of thought to raise vital questions about mistakes in reasoning
- c. Analyze arguments and reasoning to challenge conceptions and perspectives through Socratic principles.
- d. Justify ideas to challenge diverse perspectives and defend well-reasoned conclusions using rhetorical devices

3. To advance communication capacity

- a. Construct written, digital, and oral communication with credibility, clarity, and concision to emphasize salient points for a specific audience
- b. Explore diverse perspectives to investigate implications and consequences associated with beliefs, actions, and/or policies in order to develop critical understanding of Socratic principles
- c. Influence interdependent thinking through fair-minded leadership by enhancing collaborative efforts and group strengths to accomplish desired outcomes.

4. To advance linguistic competency

- a. Construct advanced vocabulary to demonstrate mastery and application of Latin and Greek stems with unknown words within complex literature
- b. Differentiate the appropriate use of grammar, structure, usage, mechanics, conventions, and syntax of the English language when expressing ideas through diverse communication methods for a specific audience
- c. Originate complex written, digital, and oral expressions that validate mastery of the English language through advanced organization, argumentation, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of multiple sources

5. To advance conceptual understanding

- a. Compare universal themes and generalizations to enhance critical thinking of the relationships within and between complex ideas, expressions, and experiences
- b. Justify conceptual understanding through Socratic principles that engage active thinking and provoke open-ended inquiry
- c. Synthesize a foundation of conceptual understanding to originate well-founded ideas about the interconnectedness and complexity of concepts through multiple texts

6. To advance learner autonomy

- a. Develop learning goals, monitor progress, self-assess outcomes, and reflect on experiences to address misconceptions in understanding
- b. Advance self-regulation and metacognitive skills to construct understanding, focus learning experiences, and refashion approaches/procedures for optimal learning
- c. Demonstrate mastery of thought through open-ended inquiry

AIG Mathematics Goals

These goals are representative of the learning that occurs within our gifted services for formally identified students. Each main goal has several practices under it that specify the main goal objectives. These goals include the K-12 spectrum of learning.

1. To advance conceptual understanding

- a. Recognize the relationship of concrete objects to visual representations to abstract concepts to understand mathematical relationships
- b. Synthesize a foundation of procedural fluency to deepen understanding of mathematics applications through extension and enrichment
- c. Justify understanding of the interconnectedness and complexity of concepts through use of mathematical applications for theoretical and society problem solving

2. To advance strategic competence and problem-solving

- a. Synthesize mathematical knowledge from personal experience to find problems, solve problems, and justify decisions
- b. Compare and manipulate multiple perspectives to arrive at an ethical solution of use/abuse of mathematical tools and knowledge
- c. Conduct collaborative inquiry to develop creative methodology for theoretical and societal problem solving

3. To advance adaptive reasoning and metacognitive skills

- a. Advance metacognitive awareness as a thinker and problem solver to become an autonomous learner
- b. Use flexible thinking to consider multiple perspectives to deepen conceptual understanding to monitor learning and performance
- c. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- d. Advance adaptive reasoning capacity for logical thought, reflection, and justification of outcomes
- e. Attend to precision and solid reasoning

4. To advance growth of the individual student

- a. Advance self-regulation and metacognitive skills to construct understanding, focus learning experiences, and refashion approaches/procedures for optimal learning
- b. Demonstrate mastery of concepts and problem-solving through the use of criteria/evidence-based decision making processes
- c. Investigate concepts of interest using future-ready skills and connect to interdisciplinary perspectives of mathematics
- d. Create original mathematical ideas to solve modern day problems/issues and provide justification for reasoning/proof of concept

AIG Assessment Goals

Assessment goals encompass the learning outcomes we desire our gifted students to possess by actively participating in gifted services. These goals include the K-12 spectrum of learning.

AIG Reading/ELA Goals

- 1. Pre and post curriculum assessment of literary analysis and interpretation of texts to compact and accelerate student learning
- 2. Product assessment demonstrating literary conceptual understanding and advanced reasoning to deepen understanding of conceptual complexity
- 3. Mastery of content standards through a variety of assessments to customize enrichment and extension activities to individualize student instruction and meet student need
- 4. Assessment design through collaboration with gifted learners for independent inquiry-based investigations emphasizing areas of interest

5. Self-regulation and metacognition assessments to measure learner autonomy through demonstrated reflective practices, understanding of and use of problem-solving processes, debriefing after interacting with peers to accomplish a common goal, and overall learning impressions concerning product assessment outcomes and learning processes

AIG Mathematics Goals

1. Pre and post curriculum assessment of mathematical concepts and interpretation of mathematical procedures to compact and accelerate student learning
2. Product assessment demonstrating mathematical conceptual understanding and advanced reasoning to deepen understanding of conceptual complexity
3. Mastery of content standards through a variety of assessment to customize enrichment and extension activities to individualize student instruction and meet student need
4. Assessment design through collaboration with gifted learners for independent inquiry-driven investigations emphasizing areas of interest
5. Self-regulation and metacognition assessments to measure learner autonomy through demonstration of reflective practices, understanding of and use of problem-solving processes, debriefing after interacting with peers to accomplish a common goal, and overall learning impressions concerning product assessment outcomes and learning processes

Procedural Safeguards for Parents/Guardian and Student Rights

Understanding these rights helps parents/guardians participate as a member of the students' AIG team.

Parents/Guardians have the right of consent, the right of refusal, and the right to due process procedures when a formal evaluation begins through student screening. A formal evaluation means that the student has moved from the screening process into a formal evaluation process that results in one of two outcomes:

1. The child qualifies for services at this time, OR
2. The child does not qualify for services at this time

The formal assessment process is a little different depending on the time of year. When we conduct a formal assessment during the school year, the process follows the steps listed in Basic Process of Formal Assessment for Gifted Services explained on the pages 15-16. The formal assessment process is slightly different when we formally assess a student over the summer. With the summer process, the AIG Summer Testing Center handles most of steps 1-10 listed on the next page. The school arranges a day for parents of newly qualified students to sign the AIG 4 (DEP) or AIG 4A (IDEP) prior to the start of the school year.

To protect the rights of the student, the entire process of formal evaluation requires parent/guardian consent on two levels.

1. The first level of consent is the requirement of parent/guardian agreement to further assessment, AND
2. The second level of consent is the parent/guardian agreement for services if the student meets the identification criteria.

The requirement of parent/guardian consent gives the parent/guardian control of the process. The formal evaluation process ends at any time with the right to refusal; however, the parent/guardian cannot change what happened before the withdrawal of consent.

There are times when the Local Education Agency (LEA) does NOT need parental/guardian consent:

- To administer an assessment given to all students in a grade level, OR
- To screen a student for services using existing data

Documentation of the formal evaluation process is the AIG 1 (student nomination form). The formal evaluation is complete with one of the two following outcomes:

1. Creation of the AIG 3 (invitation to conference) AND the AIG 4 (DEP) or AIG 4A (IDEP) for the student that qualified for service(s), OR
2. Creation of the AIG 3B (notification of decision form) for the student that did not qualify for services.

All written documentation is completed and copies are sent home to the parent/guardian as notification of the outcome of the formal evaluation process. The school keeps a set of hard copies in a student AIG folder and uploads electronic copies that are stored within the AIG database.

Parents/Guardians have the right to look at their child's education records and ask for an explanation of any records that they do not understand.

Parents/Guardians may request copies of AIG records. Generally, the LEA must have written permission from the parent/guardian to release any information from the students' AIG records. Although student AIG records are confidential, federal law (FERPA) allows schools to share those records without parent/guardian consent with certain individuals including school personnel with a legitimate educational interest in the AIG student.

The procedure of AIG documentation for any student formally assessed by the AIG department protects the rights of students.

Glossary of forms:

- **AIG 1** (student nomination form)
- **AIG 2** (permission to test form)
- **AIG 3** (invitation to conference form) for students who qualify for services
- **AIG 3B** (notification of decision form) for students who do NOT qualify for services
- **AIG 3C** (Notification of Placement--Newly Qualified Form) for students who qualify for services from the annual, district-wide screening process at the end of the school year.
- **AIG 4** (Differentiated Education Plan-DEP) for students who qualify for services, need parental consent
- **AIG 4A** (Individualized Differentiated Education Plan-IDEP) for students who qualify for services, need parental consent
- **MATRIX** (Identification Criteria Matrix)
- **STRL** (Summer Testing Results Letter)

Basic Process of Formal Assessment for Gifted Services

The basic process of formal assessment for gifted services consideration is the same for any student considered during the school year. The AIG Summer Testing Center functions as the AIG Teacher through step 10 for any student formally evaluated over the summer.

1. Student formally nominated for gifted services formal evaluation via the screening process.
2. AIG teacher completes the existing data column of the AIG 1 (student nomination form)
3. AIG teacher sends home an AIG 2 (permission to test form) or parent/guardian signature and a copy the Handbook of Parents' Rights and Responsibilities in Gifted Education.

4. Parent/Guardian signs AIG 2 (permission to test form) and checks “I agree” consenting permission or “I do NOT agree” stopping the process. The parent keeps the Handbook of Parents’ Rights and Responsibilities in Gifted Education.
5. The AIG 2 (permission to test) is returned to the AIG Teacher.
6. The AIG teacher either administers testing or makes arrangements for the testing specialist or designee to administer the testing.
7. The assessment(s) is/are scored and the results are entered into further testing column of the AIG 1 (student nomination form) and the school-site screening notebook.
8. AIG teacher completes the AIG 1 by checking the appropriate boxes and completing the appropriate pathway column if the student qualifies for services.
9. AIG teacher collects AIG team signatures on the AIG 1 (student nomination form).
10. The AIG teacher notifies the parents of the formal evaluation outcome by sending home the appropriate paperwork (AIG 1 & AIG 3, 3B, or 3C, MATRIX, and/or STRL).

For students who do NOT qualify for services, this is the end of the process (AIG 1, AIG 3B, & MATRIX)

For students who qualify for services:

11. For students who qualify for services, the parents are invited to the school via the AIG 3 (invitation to conference) to sign an AIG 4 (Differentiated Education Plan) or AIG 4A (Individualized Differentiated Education Plan). The type of form is determined by the way in which the student qualified for services.
12. The parent selects their placement decision by checking a box. Check either “I agree” consenting to services or “I disagree” exiting the student from service options, signs, and dates the AIG 4 or AIG 4A.

Both the AIG 4 (DEP) and the AIG 4A (IDEP) require parent consent prior to enrollment into gifted services. The DEP/IDEP protects the right of service for the students in which the parent/guardian grants consent. Further consent is required with transitions between the different levels of school within the district (elementary, middle, and high) because of changes to the service model. Parents/guardians are sent an AIG 3 (invitation to conference) in order to sign the child’s new AIG 4 (DEP) or AIG 4A (IDEP).

Requesting an Exit from Gifted Services

When students qualify for services and the parent/guardian consents to services, the student remains in the gifted program through their graduation as long as the parent/guardian continues to consent to services at each transition level (elementary to middle and middle to high school) by re-signing the student’s DEP or IDEP.

Parents/Guardians can make a request to exit their student from gifted services in one of two ways:

1. Contact the AIG Teacher at the school, AND/OR
2. Check “I DO NOT Agree” on the students DEP or IDEP

A parent/guardian has the right to select the specific content area to exit the student from services. This means that a student who is identified in both reading and math, can be exited from one subject area and remain in gifted services for the other area. The parent will need to sign a new DEP or IDEP to exit a student from services.

Exiting from the gifted program should occur at the end of the school year, prior to the beginning of the next school year in order to adhere to the minimum of a one-year commitment. Once exited from services, a student will need to re-qualify for services.

Due Process Procedures Regarding AIG Eligibility Determination and Services Decision

The rights of parents/guardians are informed consent, right to refusal, and due process procedures concerning

- Failure to identify a student as eligible for services when they have met the identification criteria, AND/OR
 - Failure to provide the services specified within the DEP/IDEP
-

Step 1: Appeal to the School AIG Team/Principal

1. The parent/guardian may request a conference with the academically or intellectually gifted (AIG) Team at the child's school. This request must be made in writing and should include reasons for appeal. If this request concerns test results, then this request must be received by the AIG Team within thirty business days of notification of test results or within thirty business days of the beginning of the school year. The AIG Team should be given ample opportunity (10 business days) to convene all members together for conference.
 2. At this conference, the individual student profile will be examined and discussed. Information used to determine eligibility for service delivery options shall be reviewed with the parent/guardian. If needed, the child's teacher may be asked to provide further documentation concerning student characteristics and achievement by the AIG Team.
 3. At this conference, all information will be shared with parent/guardian, minutes will be recorded, and signatures obtained from those present.
 4. Following the conference, the principal will respond to the concerns in writing within 10 business days of the conference.
 5. If the disagreement is not resolved at this level, proceed to Step 2.
-

Step 2: Appeal to the Director of Academically or Intellectually Gifted Services

1. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the School level AIG Team to the Director of Academically or Intellectually Gifted Services. The parent must in writing explain concerns and specific points of disagreement with the decision of the AIG Team and submit this written appeal within 10 business days of the decision from the school level.

Please submit this appeal to: Dr. Cynthia Hogston
Director of Academically or Intellectually Gifted Services
Union County Public Schools
400 North Church Street
Monroe, NC 28112

The conference shall be scheduled within 10 business days of receipt of this request.

2. The Director of Academically or Intellectually Gifted Services will review the concern and additional information may be requested from the child's teacher, the AIG Team, the parent/guardian, and/or the principal prior to the conference.
 3. Minutes will be recorded and signatures will be obtained from those present at conference.
 4. The Director of Academically or Intellectually Gifted Services shall respond to the concern in writing within 10 business days of the conference.
 5. If the disagreement is not resolved at this level, proceed to Step 3.
-

Step 3: Appeal to the Chief Academic Officer

1. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Director of Academically or Intellectually Gifted Services to the Chief Academic Officer in writing within 10 business days of the decision. The written request must include concerns and specific points of disagreement.

Please submit appeal to:

Dr. William Breedlove
Chief Academic Officer
Union County Public Schools
400 North Church Street
Monroe, NC 28112

2. The Chief Academic Officer will review the written appeal. He/she may request further information from the child's teacher, the AIG Team, the parents, the principal, and/or the Director of Academically or Intellectually Gifted Services.
 3. The Chief Academic Officer shall respond in writing within 10 business days of receiving the appeal.
 4. Minutes will be recorded and signatures will be obtained from those present at conference.
 5. If the disagreement is not resolved at this level, proceed to Step 4.
-

Step 4: Appeal to the Superintendent

1. The parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Chief Academic Officer to the Superintendent in writing within 10 business days of the decision. The written request must include concerns and specific points of disagreement.

Please submit appeal to:

Dr. Andrew G. Houlihan
Superintendent

Union County Public Schools
400 North Church Street
Monroe, NC 28112

2. The Superintendent will review the written appeal. He/she may request further information from the child's teacher, the AIG Team, the parents, the principal, and/or the Chief Academic Officer.
 3. Minutes will be recorded and signatures will be obtained from those present at conference.
 4. The Superintendent shall respond in writing within 10 business days of receiving the appeal.
 5. If the disagreement is not resolved at this level, proceed to Step 5.
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Step 5: State Level Grievance Procedure

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the Superintendent, they may file a petition for a contested case hearing in accordance with Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, the Administrative Procedures Act, of North Carolina.

The issues for review shall be limited to:

1. Whether the local system improperly failed to identify the student as eligible for services within its gifted education program.
2. Whether the local system implemented and provided those services specified within the differentiated gifted education plan.

Following the hearing, the administrative law judge shall serve the final decision. The administrative law judge shall give a copy of written findings and the decision to the parties and to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Attorney's fees are not available to parents in the event they prevail in a due process hearing.

Resources for Parents/Guardians

Davidson Institute @ <http://www.davidsongifted.org/>

The Davidson Institute is a nonprofit foundation focused on recognizing, nurturing, and supporting profoundly gifted young people. They provide opportunities for them to develop their talents to make a positive difference. This website is for parents and teachers of profoundly gifted students. They provide the Davidson Gifted Database, which is a gateway to gifted resources. The most popular database articles for parents are

[“A Place to Start: Is My Child Gifted?”](#)

[“Frequently Asked Questions: Profoundly Gifted Students & Gifted Education”](#)

[“Free Guidebooks”](#)

Duke Talent Identification Program (TIP) @ <https://tip.duke.edu/>

Duke TIP is a nonprofit organization that supports academically talented students in grades 4-12. They offer enrichment resources, year-round learning options, residential summer programs, online courses, and original research to supplement what student receive in school.

Hoagies’ Gifted Education Page @ <https://www.hoagiesgifted.org/>

This website contains information about all-things-gifted, full of resources, articles, books, and links to help and support parents, teachers, and gifted children.

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) @ <http://www.nagc.org/>

This website contains information and resources for administrators, teachers, and parents of gifted children. For parents, they have TIP sheets concerning definitions of gifted, frequently asked questions, glossary of terms, and myths about gifted students. They offer a membership and a newsletter called “Parenting for High Potential.”

Parent Division of TAGT @ <https://www.txgifted.org/parents>

This website has resources for parents and guardians of gifted individuals including links for parents with twice-exceptional students and for parents interested in a parent support group.

UCPS Handbooks & Curriculum Guides @ <https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/domain/142>

These resources are downloadable from the UCPS website.

- Kindergarten Registration Booklet
- Elementary School Handbooks & Curriculum Guides
- Middle School Handbook & Curriculum Guides
- High School Program of Studies Student Handbook

U.S. Department of State Resources for Parents of Gifted Children @

<https://www.state.gov/m/a/os/57518.htm>

This website contains an annotated bibliography of recommended books for parents.

Glossary of Common Terms in Gifted Education

Academically or Intellectually Gifted (State Definition)

Academically or intellectually gifted students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of the same age, experience, or environment.

Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the general educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Article 9B—Academically or Intellectually Gifted Students [N.C.G.S. § 115C-150.5-.8]

Article 9B is the current legislation mandating identification and services for gifted education for grades K-12. Article 9B provides a state definition for Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) students and requires local education agencies (LEA) to develop three year AIG local plans with specific components, to be approved by local school boards and subsequently sent to the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for review.

Formal Evaluation

A formal evaluation means that the student has moved from the screening process into a formal evaluation process that results in one of two outcomes:

1. The child qualifies for services at this time OR
2. The child does not qualify for services at this time

Identification

Identification means the formal process of identifying you child as being eligible or not eligible to receive services through a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) or Individualized Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP). We have a short video on our AIG department website about identification.

Local Education Agency (LEA)

The local education agency is the school district.

Referral Process

The referral process is the recommendation of a student for the screening process. Anyone can nominate a student for screening. The referral form is on our AIG department website.

Right of Consent

The right of consent occurs when a parent/guardian has been fully informed regarding the action of the school system for which parental/guardian consent is being requested. Informed consent is expressed as written permission when a parent/guardian signs a form declaring that they consent to a process that involves their child. In the case of AIG services, this process is either consent to further testing and/or consent to AIG services.

Right of Refusal

The right of refusal occurs when a parent/guardian has been fully informed regarding the action of the school system for which the parental/guardian consent is being requested. Informed consent is expressed as written denial when a parent/guardian signs a form declaring that they do NOT consent to a process that involves their child. In the case of AIG services, this process is either refusal for further testing and/or refusal for AIG services.

Right to Due Process

The right to due process includes informed consent for placement, informed consent for services, and a clear process to resolve disagreements for families that is aligned with Article 9B and district policies. Our due process procedure is outlined on pages 17-19 of this handbook.

Screening Process

The screening process is a collection and evaluation of student data to make further recommendations. This process is different depending on the time of year, enrollment status of student, or upon request. For more information about the annual district-wide screening process, see our [Screening Process FAQ video](https://goo.gl/UEVbAE) at <https://goo.gl/UEVbAE>. We screen students in every grade level K-12. This process looks a little different depending on the grade level of the student.

- The screening process for K-3 students is a part of enrichment services provided at each school.
- The annual district-wide screening process for grades 3-7 begins at the start of the second semester and ends with the release of state-mandated testing and final grades.
- Students in grades 8-11 can self-nominate by referring themselves for a screening at the beginning of a school year or during the annual district-wide screening process.
- The school-site AIG team screen students new to the district during the school year.
- If a child enrolls over the summer, parents need to contact aigsummertesting@ucps.k12.nc.us or call the AIG testing center to schedule a screening. Families who are new to the district should request a copy of the [AIG Summer Testing Brochure](#) at the school when enrolling.

Universal Screener

An identification process where all students in a targeted grade are administered an assessment of some kind. Teachers use the results to individualize instruction for students in the classroom. The AIG department uses pre-determined cut-scores to recommend the next steps in the screening process for each student.