

AL Plan Executive Summary for 2007 Revisions

A plan for serving the Accelerated Learner (AL) is submitted to NC DPI every three years. This is a summary of how the 2007 plan differs from the 2001 plan that is attached. Following this summary you will find the rubric from which DPI will evaluate the plan.

A steering committee of parents, principals, AL teachers, Curriculum Facilitators, and Central Office staff worked on the plan revision over the course of the 06-07 school year. The group recommendations were expressed in several themes:

1. work to better serve more under-represented populations
2. address the affective domain of gifted students
3. continue high quality AL professional development including increasing the number of AL certified general education teachers
4. improve communication to all stakeholders

<i>Element</i>	<i>2004 Plan</i>	<i>Proposed 2007 Plan</i>
Mission	Not required	Mission: To provide rigorous, student-centered learning that affirms diversity and ensures growth for gifted students. Definition of giftedness amended to include nurturing.
Purpose	Not required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide services for identified students ➤ Nurture under- represented students ➤ Monitor regulations and practices
Needs Assessment	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Comprehensive screening ➤ AG staff well trained ➤ Testing all students ➤ Targeted underrepresented groups ➤ Menu in High School <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inconsistency in AG program ➤ Perceived lack of administrative support ➤ Lack of coordination elementary, middle to high school ➤ Alternative id for low income ➤ Need stronger teacher preparation 	<p>Surveys, parent forums, steering committee are measures of need Teacher, principal, community, and parents provided input in needs assessment</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stronger, more rigorous curriculum ➤ Improved communication ➤ Elementary menu-driven program ➤ Administrative organization ➤ Increased underrepresented groups <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More monitoring of K-2 service options ➤ Social/Emotional aspects ➤ Collaboration ➤ Differentiation in general education classrooms ➤ Furlough criteria ➤ Information system ➤ Close achievement gap

<i>Element</i>	<i>2004 Plan</i>	<i>Proposed 2007 Plan</i>
Goals/ Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Targeting greater access for underserved populations ➤ Nurturing potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Articulate plan for addressing social/emotional needs ➤ Cross-departmental communication ➤ Information system ➤ Curriculum alignment with SCOS ➤ Cross-departmental communication ➤ Information system ➤ Increase the % of licensed AL teachers in the general education classroom
Nurture	Not required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bright Idea ➤ FOCUS ➤ 7% AL inclusion ➤ Grade 3 whole class instruction
Screening	Efforts to identify underserved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For all Grade 3 students ➤ Emphasis on portfolio ➤ Greater specificity for K-2 screening procedures ➤ Sub-scores of available standardized aptitude test may be used.
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong Needs identification required A average ➤ Teacher checklist for Id. Used a cut-off score ➤ Eligibility Criteria: Elem. 4/5; Mid School 3 of 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong Needs identification requires B average ➤ 93% achievement and aptitude ➤ TAL plays a greater role in K-5 identification ➤ New checklists are piloted
Placement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Purpose and use of Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) is more clearly defined. ➤ Parents partner with TAL to create IDEP
Program Service Options		Service for moderate need students may vary school to school according to plan menu
Curriculum and Instructional Practices	Teacher dependent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social studies will be integrated with language arts in grades 3-5 ➤ Research based curriculum design both teacher written and commercially designed ➤ Concept-inquiry-based ➤ Self-directed learning ➤ Students who are pulled out of general education classes for AL services are not expected to complete missed classwork

<i>Element</i>	<i>2004 Plan</i>	<i>Proposed 2007 Plan</i>
Evaluation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aligned with system and plan goals ➤ Executive of Accountability and Research Officer data analysis for growth
Personnel & Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parallel Curriculum ➤ NC SCoS staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advocate for additional allotment ➤ Increase % of certified staff through partnership with High Point University ➤ PD Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social/emotional needs ➤ Writing an extending curriculum ➤ Training of trainers on differentiated instruction ➤ Gifted Characteristics ➤ Singapore math ➤ Bright IDEA ➤ Training on new information system ➤ Balanced Literacy ➤ Regulations and monitoring
Parents and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advisory Board reviewed Plan ➤ Community presentations on underserved populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advanced Learner website that is linked to GCS ➤ Revise and distribute AL brochure ➤ Meet with VSN parents about curriculum extensions
Links to System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explore.Net Quality Teaching and Learning ➤ Grant-writing ➤ PF's on Academic Coach Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ AL Department participates and collaborates on the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Advanced Technology Training ➤ GCS Literacy Framework ➤ Springboard ➤ Student Services Department regarding the Affective Domain curricula
Procedure to Disagree		No Change
System Commitment		Dr. Grier's letter of support
Social-Emotional	Not Required	Plan for social emotional needs will be developed and implemented

<i>Element</i>	<i>2004 Plan</i>	<i>Proposed 2007 Plan</i>
Timeline		Fall 2007 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Information system ready for use ➤ Brochure ready for distribution ➤ Update AL website 2007-08 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Translation of essential documents ➤ Curriculum Development for VS ➤ Increase staff members who are gifted certified 2007-2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Differentiation strategies staff development ➤ Evaluate goals and procedures annually
Budget		Contingent upon State allotment

Guilford County Schools
Advanced Learner (AL) Plan
May 2007

Steering Committee

Revision of Plan for Advanced Learners Program 2007

Monica	Adams	Parent
Susan	Allen	Principal
Frank	Beck	AL Program Facilitator
Charles	Blackmon	Parent
Charles	Blanchard	Principal
Lori	Braxton	Principal
Laura	Brown	Parent
Mary	Burritt	Parent
Kim	Carson	Parent
Bonnie	Crissman	AL Program Facilitator
Linda	Daniels	Teacher
Sandy	Edwards	AL Program Facilitator
Pam	Herndon	Parent
Summer	Hunter	Teacher
Marilyn	Lange	AL Program Facilitator
Benita	Lawrence	Principal
Rebecca	McKnight	Teacher
Kathy	Meyer	AL Program Facilitator
Kathy	Moore	AL Program Facilitator
Dr.	O’Koyah	Parent
Amos	Quick	School Board Member
Terry	Ramsey	Parent
Robin	Rettew	Parent
Terri	Roberts	AL Teacher
Toni	Roland	AL Teacher
Donna	Rubenzer	AL Program Facilitator
Ann	Sebesan	AL Teacher
LeeAnn	Segalla	Curriculum and Instruction
Ruth	Spaulding	Parent
Dawn	Spencer	Principal
Denise	Stephens	AL Teacher
Bill	Stewart	Principal
Nola	Taylor	Principal
Erin	Vazques	Parent
Sara	Voight	Teacher

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The Community of Guilford County

Guilford County, population 421,048 is located in the Piedmont area of North Carolina, and is anchored by the cities of Greensboro and High Point. Greensboro is the county seat of Guilford County and High Point is considered the furniture capital of the world. High Point also is the home of the 2004 American Idol, Fantasia Barrino. Jazz Legend the late John Coltrane and Metropolitan Opera tenor, Antonio Griffey.

There is much diversity in Guilford County an expanse of 629 square miles and boasts both rural areas and urban centers. The economic mix for Guilford County is divided primarily between services, manufacturing, government and retail trade. Tobacco and avionics are large employers in the county. A broad range of other industries add to the increasing labor base. A huge decrease in the textile and furniture-making industries in Guilford County has occurred in the last five years.

Several public and private colleges and universities in Guilford County provide area residents with a wide choice for their higher education. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNC-G) and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T), both a part of the sixteen campus state university system, are located in Greensboro. Additionally, Bennett College, Greensboro College, Guilford College and High Point University are private institutions which attract students from throughout the state and nation. Guilford Technical Community College offers valuable training opportunities as well.

Attractions such as High Point's International Home Furnishings Market (twice yearly) and a renovated, expanded Greensboro Coliseum Complex bring many visitors to the area. The completion of a new baseball stadium in 2005 greatly contributes to the area's appeal. The stadium is home to a minor league baseball team and the Carolina Dynamo Soccer also calls Greensboro home. Sporting events such as the Wyndham PGA Championship of Greensboro golf tournament and the Atlantic Coast Conference Championship basketball tournament attract many fans as well as national media coverage. The Eastern Music Festival, the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, the Greensboro and High Point Historical Museums, the Natural Science Center, The Greensboro Children's Museum, the Greensboro Symphony, the Piedmont Opera Company, and the Center for Creative Arts are but a few cultural offerings which draw people to Guilford County. Guilford County was also the site of several battles in the Revolutionary War. These sites have been declared historic and are well preserved for re-enactments and are popular for family outings.

Guilford County Schools

(www.gcsnc.com Click on Community, click on annual report- 12 pages of information)

As of July 1, 1993, three school systems in the county merged to become the third largest school system in the state, the Guilford County Schools (GCS). With 9700 employees, the school system is the second largest employer in the eleven-county Piedmont Triad Region. More than 68,722 students attend the system's 112 schools—65 elementary, 22 middle, 21 high and 4 special schools. The population shows its diversity through its 55% minority population and by almost 12,400 students for whom English is a second language and who speak more than 117 languages and/or dialects. There are 116 cultural and ethnic groups.

The curriculum offered in GCS is based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study with differentiation as an emphasis to address the needs of individual learners. The system has numerous Magnet Schools and opportunities for students to attend Year-Round and Extended Day programs are also available. Expanded learning opportunities in high schools are available such as Academy programs. (e.g. Business, Education, Health Sciences, Technology and Visual/Performing Arts) Middle colleges are located on four college campuses; these permit students to enroll in some college courses during high school. The Early College for highly gifted students is located on another college campus and permits students to be dually enrolled for two full years of college. Three other high schools permit dual enrollment for seniors. Additionally the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program is offered at three high schools and the Guilford County Schools Advanced Placement Diploma at all high schools which offer a full range of AP courses.

Guilford County Schools benefit from a wide range of parent and community participation. Several hundred businesses in Guilford County and an army of parent volunteers participate in programs designed to strengthen and enhance the quality of education. A number of initiatives to enhance academic achievement and build learning communities through school, parent and community collaboration are on-going. PTA members conduct fund-raising and service projects as well as organize special events to benefit schools and students.

Guilford County Schools Mission and Core Values

The Mission and Core Values expressed by Guilford County Schools (GCS) provide the foundation for the GCS Program for Advanced Learners. The GCS Mission and Core Values are:

District Mission

Guilford County students will graduate as responsible citizens prepared to succeed in higher education, or in the career of their choice.

District Core Values

The Board in partnership with parents and community members wants to share these district core values in order to strengthen our schools and improve the quality of life for all of our citizens.

Diversity. GCS is committed to creating an educational organization where a variety of persons and perspectives are welcome. We are committed to providing an environment where students and staff from all cultures and backgrounds may succeed.

Empathy. GCS is committed to developing a culture where our employees identify with and understand the feelings of our students and parents and their colleagues.

Equality. GCS is committed to creating a school system where everyone is appreciated and judged based solely on their contributions and performance. Through the work of this institution, we will create awareness of and develop strategies to understand and eradicate prejudice, discrimination and racism on the individual and organizational level.

Innovativeness. GCS is committed to fostering a work environment where the goal is not to manage innovations, but to become innovative. Problems are identified, ownership of those problems is assumed by the adults in the district, and everyone works together as agents of the solution until the problems are solved. We will not stop until obstacles are removed, solutions found and clear and compelling goals are established.

Integrity. GCS is committed to creating a school district that acts with honesty and forthrightness, holding ourselves to high academic and ethical standards, and dealing with everyone with respect.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Advanced Learner Department is to provide rigorous, student-centered learning that affirms diversity and ensures growth for gifted students. The program is committed to the belief that gifted students require guidance in discovering, realizing and developing their talents. The department assumes the responsibility of maintaining rigorous curricula in Guilford County Schools. It also assumes the leadership for promoting differentiated instruction for all students, particularly as it applies to enrichment..

Students with outstanding abilities come from all ethnic, geographic and socio-economic groups. Academically or intellectually gifted students perform, or show potential for performing, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience and environment. They exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas and/or specific academic fields. These students require differentiated educational services both in and apart from that which is provided in the general education program.

Using this definition of giftedness, school personnel have the responsibility and privilege of recognizing and nurturing the gifted characteristics in students in a consistent manner from the time a student enters school. The Advanced Learner program requires a strong partnership between the school system and community.

Purpose

The purpose of the GCS Advanced Learner program is to support gifted education in Guilford County as defined by Article 9B. Its purpose is to facilitate and monitor services for eligible students in/through a variety of educational settings such as the general education classroom, pull out resource services, consultation, and advanced coursework and enrichment. The AL department represents advocacy for the AL students of GCS and believes that all students can learn, that students respond positively to high expectations, that schools exist for students, that diversity is of great value, and that students learn best when they are actively involved in learning. The AL department supports students, school personnel and parents in developing rigorous and relevant curriculum to meet the needs of Advanced Learners. The GCS AL program provides a continuum of services to address the varying needs for a differentiated instructional program as determined through the identification process. The support of the socio-emotional needs of AL students requires that an array of assessments is provided for screening, identification and placement. The AL department commits to continuous monitoring of the student learning environment, scheduling and grouping for instruction methodologies in order to review and revise any aspect of the procedures as needed. Accuracy of student records is strengthened through the use of a specifically designed information technology system that provides current information on each student.

Needs Assessment

Parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members provided input regarding program needs by using structured rating instruments, open-ended questions and forums every three years. Additionally, significant input was provided from a district wide steering committee. Conclusions and recommendations included reflection of the past needs assessment to ascertain changes and growth in the program.

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Needs/Concerns</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AL curriculum is differentiated by nurturing the gifts of all students. • The curriculum is rigorous and relevant. • There are many course opportunities for AL students in high school. • There is greater monitoring and program/student achievement accountability for advanced high school students. • AL teachers have continuing professional development in gifted education. • The screening process is comprehensive and well understood by general education personnel. • Procedures and processes are established to promote regular communication between and among AL teachers, general education classroom teachers, school administrators, and parents. • Provides an elementary menu-driven program to address student needs. • Administrative organization better meets the needs of schools for support and professional development. • Students participating in the AL program consistently out perform all other students. • Increased numbers of students in underrepresented populations are receiving AL service. • Direct instruction of all Grade 3 students has resulted in enhanced nurturing and screening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling to meet individual student needs continues to be a challenge. • K-2 service options need to be more explicit and more carefully monitored. • The emotional aspects of gifted learners need greater attention programmatically. • Collaboration between general education teachers and AL teachers would enhance a more articulated program for each identified student. • A mechanism for more parent input into AL services is needed. • Increased AL allotment would provide opportunities for more comprehensive service. • Efforts to differentiate instruction continue to be a challenge at all levels. • Probation criteria need to be articulated and monitored. • The achievement gap in the AL program mirrors the gap in the general GCS population. • An information system would enable program development through better analysis historic data/trends.

Recommendations

Based on the data that is summarized in the Strengths and Needs/Concerns table, the following recommendations are suggested to enhance the GCS AL plan of service delivery:

- Increase opportunities for AL teachers to collaborate with all school personnel.
- Include the affective domain as part of the AL instructional program.
- Continue to align the AL curriculum with the SCOS and the GCS pacing guide.
- Advocate for increased AL allotment to enhance service delivery.
- Continue the high quality of professional development for AL teachers.
- Continue to generate strategies to address the achievement gap among all students.
- Build on the current efforts to serve underrepresented populations in the AL program.
- Continue to offer the wide variety of service options.
- Continue to develop processes that enhance communication and involvement among all stakeholders.
- Acquire an information system that enables the GCS AL program to analyze data historically and to account for program services.

These recommendations have been discussed with the Steering Committee and have been presented to the Cabinet and Board of Education. The recommendations will also be communicated through alignments with the Parent Brochure and Procedural Manual. This plan will be posted on the AL page of the GCS website.

Goals and Objectives

Goals developed from the self-assessment, philosophy, review of strengths and needs, and annual evaluations are as follows:

1. To improve and refine identification procedure by piloting 3-5 checklists of characteristics of gifted learners in 10% of the elementary schools before 2010.
2. To provide an array of service options and educational experiences which support individual growth at varying levels of abilities, needs and interests, and which allow students to learn and move through advanced material at their own pace.
3. To include social-emotional aspects of the gifted learner in the comprehensive staff development program available to all school personnel.
4. To actively involve parents and other community members in an effort to enrich and extend the learning opportunities of advanced learners by encouraging and supporting the activation of the Parents for the Advancement of Gifted Education (PAGE) organization.
5. To increase public awareness, through special parent meetings, celebrations, and Achievement nights, as well as a link to Advanced Learners Program on the GCS website, of learning characteristics and best practices in advanced learner education.
6. To assure fair access to all students throughout the Guilford community without regard to ethnic group, socio-economic status, gender and learning difference, to include but not be limited to: access to services of traditionally under-served populations through the provision of additional and alternative assessments, including the use of an alternative portfolio and additional testing opportunities, and to nurture ESOL students through collaboration with the ESOL staff, as well as providing translations of the Advanced Learner brochure and all parent communications in predominate languages.
7. To support a critical thinking/problem-solving effort in K-3 to nurture academic and intellectual potential, and develop the skills of all students, which will contribute to closing the achievement gap.
8. To have a clearly defined set of grade level standards for advanced classes, supported by appropriate curricula aligned with the SCOS and the GCS pacing guides.
9. To increase the percentage of classroom teachers who are licensed in gifted education by 10% yearly. To continue the expectation that all Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists be licensed in gifted education.
10. To ensure cross-departmental communication by AL staff serving on project teams and/or committees.
11. To refine the AL component of the GCS information system to analyze data historically and to account for program services.

Nurture

The Advanced Learner Department partners with the entire school staff to develop ways to recognize and document gifted characteristics in children utilizing various research-based approaches. The Advanced Learner teachers and the classroom teachers create learning experiences to observe how students solve problems when the solution is not immediately known. Detailed documentation is used to create a talent pool and possible inclusion in Advanced Learner classrooms. Advanced Learner Nurture Programs are designed to recognize and nurture the gifted characteristics of all students.

Bright IDEA

Project Bright IDEA uses an integrated approach that transforms the classroom for kindergarten, first and second graders into a vibrant community of learners and problem solvers. This unique K-2 research model, funded by the Javits Program of the United States Department of Education, is designed and implemented by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the American Association for Gifted Children at Duke University. Project Bright IDEA has four goals: 1) to increase the number of gifted students from underserved populations via changing teacher dispositions and capacity to wisely choose curricula tailored to teaching these students; 2) to study the extent to which such activities increase the number of third graders from underrepresented populations who enroll in gifted and talented programs; 3) to advance the quality of these students' meta-cognitive and cognitive skills and; 4) to create a research-based multi-dimensional, pre-identification model for gifted intelligent behaviors (Costa, Frazier).

Bright IDEA data is being collected in Guilford County at four elementary schools. (Northwood, Murphey, Allen Jay and Sedgfield)

FOCUS

(Fostering Outstanding Critical/Creative thinking, Conceptual Understanding and Self-esteem)

Students from underserved populations in grades 3-5 may receive instruction from the Advanced Learner teacher in Language Arts and Math. The nurture classes are called FOCUS which is an acronym for Fostering Outstanding Critical/Creative Thinking, Conceptual Understanding and Self-esteem. The cognitive skills emphasized in FOCUS lessons (Parks) are describing, finding similarities and differences, sequencing, classifying, and forming analogies. Instruction is geared to include the skills necessary for success, including child and parent commitment, study skills, organization and planning. The lessons are developed by Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists using multicultural literature. Students are encouraged to respond in complete sentences in oral and written communications. Habits of Mind are integrated into the curriculum to help meet student's social and emotional needs.

Third Grade Whole Class Instruction

AL teachers plan and implement whole class instruction during the first semester of third grade to nurture the gifted characteristics of all students discussed in the chart below (Frazier, Costa, Johnson). While teaching Building Thinking Skills (Parks) and creating experiences where students complete authentic tasks, general education classroom teachers observe how students solve problems when the solution is not immediately known. The focus is on student growth in the cognitive and affective domains. Detailed documentation of these observations is used to create the talent pool for AL.

Gifted Characteristics

Communicator	richness of cultural expressions, imagery, elaboration and fluency
Humorous	sees unusual relationships, shows unusual emotional depth, perceives situations originally
Innovative	generates numerous ideas for solutions; novel, original, clever products to address perceived needs or interests
Insightful	grasps new concepts, makes connections, draws conclusions, listens to different perspectives
Inquisitive	asks questions to fill the gap between what they know and what they need to know; experiments with ideas and materials
Problem Solver	effective, systematic, inventive problem solvers, risk takers
Determined	pursues and completes self-directed activities, demonstrates self-confidence and independence of thought
Thinker	inner awareness, wealth of information on a particular topic, thinks flexibly, makes connections

Advanced Learner Inclusion

Students at elementary schools have an opportunity to participate in Advanced Learner programs based on 7% of the entire grade level population at the student's school. Students who perform or show the potential of performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience or environment are included in Advanced Learner classrooms. An alternate portfolio will be developed for each of these students.

Screening

“In light of the research on gifted programming, a system using multiple criteria is best employed. Multiple criteria refer to a means of obtaining “comprehensive” information about a student’s abilities by gathering and interpreting results from a number of data sources. This type of review provides not only a mechanism for determining the need for high ability program services, but also a way to plan other educational programs and services. Additionally, multiple criteria provide a format for evaluation of student growth and development”. (Frasier, 1995)

Addressing the needs of students in a differentiated continuum of service options is a decision-making process that includes searching, assessment (using both formal and informal measures) and implementation of appropriate service options. Multiple research based instruments (parent inventories, interest and attitude inventories and learning style inventories) are available for screening purposes.

Searching

The initial step in the decision-making process is searching. This phase represents efforts designed to review all students to determine which students may need differentiated services. On-going staff development and monitoring will be utilized to assure that students from populations traditionally under-represented are included in the search process. These groups include students from diverse cultures and socio-economic backgrounds or students whose test performance may be affected by their disability. These students will be carefully monitored by the TAL in each school. Though equitable representation and diversity are goals of the Plan for Advanced Learners, the eligibility standards must be met by all students. Special search procedures are in place to facilitate the inclusion of under-represented groups. For parents whose English is limited, information regarding the AL program will be translated.

Screening Options for Kindergarten-First Semester 3rd Grade students with Moderate Need for Differentiation

Through informal assessments in the general education classroom, students who are achieving above the level of most of their peers in language arts and/or math will be grouped together for instruction in language arts and/or math, either within their classroom or within their grade level (with one teacher instructing advanced learners). The Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialist (ALCS) and the general education classroom teacher(s) will work together to plan appropriate differentiated activities.

Screening Options Kindergarten-First Semester 3rd Grade students Strong Need for Differentiation

Students who demonstrate through informal assessment that they may have a strong need for differentiation will be referred to the TAL for review. (Note: the parent of the Kindergarten-First Semester 3rd Grade student will be invited to sit on the TAL when his/her child's need for differentiation is being determined.) Indicators of a strong need for differentiation include the following:

- **reading two or more years** as documented by performance on the K-2 Literacy Assessment, (DRA) and/or 3rd grade Pre-EOG used in the Guilford County Schools
- **performing in math two or more years above grade placement.** In the case of grade acceleration (grade-skipping) full instruction in all SCOS strands of the current grade and the grade to be skipped must be well documented
- **work sample file** containing work samples completed at school which indicate exceptional mastery of content and skills above grade level
- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the four most recent grading periods is rated as excellent by the TAL

Screening Options for Students in Grades 3 – 8

Each school site will develop a local pool of students who may be in need of differentiated services. The following criteria will be used for determining which students are in the pool:

- (1) On an annual basis, scores from system-wide end-of-grade (EOG) and/or an aptitude test at the 85th percentile or above will be used to search for students. Each school must maintain a list of students scoring at this level and review these students' needs for differentiated services. All students with two or more of the required criteria for service will be referred to the Team for Advanced Learners (TAL) for consideration.
- (2) Students from under-represented populations as noted above will be included in the search pool and referred to the Team for Advanced Learners (TAL) for consideration if classroom performance and teacher input indicates that such consideration is appropriate. One or more of the following initiatives will be used to nurture the potential of these students: pilot projects in nurturing potential (FOCUS), Project Bright IDEA, and/or 7% Inclusion Project.
- (3) The following indicators will be used for an ongoing, year-round effort to search for students to be reviewed for differentiated services:
 - Teacher recommendations
 - Observation checklist developed from research samples.
 - Parent, student or community referral
 - Standardized test results other than those listed in #1 above
 - Student identification in another school system
 - Outstanding student performance as indicated in the student's cumulative record such as grades, academic contests/competitions.

- Portfolio documenting outstanding student accomplishments and gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria.

Informational sessions are held with teachers and administrators to explain procedures and define gifted characteristics.

Team for Advanced Learners (TAL)

- (1) Each school site develops a TAL to review student eligibility, to determine if further assessment is needed, or to refer for appropriate services. Transfer students who have been previously identified as gifted will be reviewed for differentiated services upon entering the Guilford County Schools utilizing the criteria in place for identifying needs of district students. This review will be initiated as soon as the TAL is informed of the transfer students' previous placement. In addition, responsibility will include in-school monitoring and evaluation of the school's efforts for advanced learner students, assisting in the development and implementation of school-wide enrichment opportunities, acting as a resource for individual parents who seek further assistance from the school in meeting the needs of a particular child, assisting in the development and implementation of mechanisms for helping teachers learn more about the needs of advanced learner students and for helping teachers learn more about teaching methods appropriate for serving the needs of advanced learner students, and helping communicate to parents the general features of the advanced learner education program at the school.
- (2) The elementary TAL will include a teacher representative from each grade level, the school principal, the teacher of the student being considered for eligibility, the ESOL teacher and the Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialist. TAL membership should reflect the diversity of the student population of the school and should include a member representing the student's ethnicity and gender when possible. A designated professional staff member of the TAL will serve as the contact for parent questions and concerns. Parents will be included on this committee when the committee is dealing with issues other than individual student eligibility. It is recommended that at least one parent be a member of the TAL. Parent representatives should also reflect the diversity of the student population.
- (3) The middle and high school TAL will include teacher representatives from core curriculum areas and each grade level, the school principal, a teacher of the student being considered for eligibility, and the school counselor. TAL membership should reflect the diversity of the student population of the school and should include a member representing the child's ethnicity and gender when possible. A designated professional staff member of the TAL will serve as the contact for parent questions and concerns. One of the members of the TAL will be designated as the advanced learner education contact for the school. Parents will be included on this committee when the committee is dealing with issues other than individual student eligibility. It is recommended that at least one parent be a member of the TAL. The parent representatives should also reflect the diversity of the student population of the school.

Searching strategies should lead to a determination that a student either (1) requires further assessment to determine a need for differentiated instruction, or (2) is already in a learning environment that is appropriate, or (3) is eligible for AL services based upon available

information, or (4) will participate in a group that nurtures potential. This decision will be made by the Team for Advanced Learners (TAL).

Assessment

When search results indicate that more in-depth screening is warranted, parents are notified and given the opportunity to conference with appropriate school staff regarding the assessment.

Screening tools used as multiple indicators will come from the following categories:

1. **Observation** documented on an inventory focusing on linguistic and logical thinking learner characteristics, motivation and interests, and other qualities that indicate a need for differentiation
2. **Portfolio** that contains documentation of outstanding student accomplishment and documented demonstration of gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria
3. **Achievement measures** - an indicator of a student's knowledge in specific content areas. This may be shown through End-of-grade test scores in grades 3-8 or other standardized achievement test scores.
4. **Aptitude measures** - an indicator of a student's potential for learning. Aptitude may be shown by a standardized test score.
5. **Performance data** - indicators of how well the student is performing in the regular classroom. Grades will be reviewed as indicators of performance and will include grades from at least two of the four most recent grading periods.

School site recommendations regarding the need for differentiated services will be made based on the information gathered on students and the decision by TAL will be documented on the Student Eligibility Record. The decision will be selected from one of the following:

- A. Differentiated services are recommended.
- B. The student should be included in a specified group that nurtures potential.
- C. The student should continue to be reviewed throughout the year for further indication of need for differentiation.
- D. No services are recommended at this time.

The completed student profile of eligible students is sent to the District Oversight Committee for review and approval of all decisions made by the school site committee.

Screening procedures for the AL program will be communicated to the community through the following procedures:

- Invitations will be sent to parents of prospect students to attend an introductory session at the beginning of the school year. This session will include information about the initial screening process as well as informing parents of their student's level of service and services that will be made available to the student for the current school year.
- The AL Website which is located within the GCS website will help inform parents about the AL program and procedures for requesting screening for their child/children.
- Brochures will be made available and distributed to the school offices for parents to review. These brochures will be available in both English and Spanish.
- The AL Coordinator will attend ESL events as well as Right Start (for new teachers) to inform both parent(s) and teachers of the screening options for students.
- ALCS teachers and Program Facilitators will inform teachers of the screening procedures at their respective schools

The GCS AL program makes use of an information management system that is GCS server-based and that is dedicated to promoting reliability of the processes used for screening and eligibility for every student in GCS. Each student who is eligible and any students who are reviewed by the Team for Advanced Learners (TAL) for inclusion in any of the AL department initiatives are input into the information management system by ALCS and Middle School Program Facilitators. The information is available to Elementary Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists and Elementary and Middle School Program Facilitators.

By using this system, a student whose record is on the information system will have immediate access to the appropriate action if he/she were to move to another school within GCS. The system also allows for the Program Facilitators to carefully review the input of student information to assure and verify accuracy, and to reflect the most recent data available on students. The system is used to produce rosters during the summer for the school year ahead, and advances the cause of accurate information for scheduling and planning. This system was created to provide the most recent information. It is not useful for historical data.

The Advanced Learner procedural notebook outlines the process for multiple reviews of student information on the AL information system. All students who are screened have their records reviewed by the Team for Advanced Learners at the local (school) level and they are all input into the information system. When TAL declares a student eligible, the records are sent to the District Oversight Committee (DOC) for another review and signatures. Other circumstance in which the DOC actively reviews students is upon the submission of a portfolio, and when other special circumstances as outlined in the procedures arise. Students who do not meet the criteria are reviewed at different points in the year to determine whether any of the criteria scores have changed and appropriate action is taken. All students in GCS are reviewed each year for the Advanced Learner program.

Identification

The ability to learn well beyond the expected level of one's peers indicates a need for differentiated instruction. This need can be discovered through outstanding student performance in the form of grades, work samples, high test scores, community involvement, sustained keen interest or passion in an area of interest, or through observable characteristics. These abilities are sometimes muted in students by unfavorable environmental circumstances and need to be actively developed.

- Within any indicator, a single criterion may reveal a need for review, no single indicator can eliminate a student from consideration for some level of service.
- Information from any and all indicators may be used in matching students with appropriate service options.
- Information used from each indicator should be directly related to the service option considered.

Multiple indicators considered are:

APTITUDE
ACHIEVEMENT
PERFORMANCE (GRADES)
OBSERVATIONS
PORTFOLIO

Elementary (3-5) Advanced Learner Eligibility

Various program options and opportunities are required to meet the wide range of individual needs demonstrated by advanced learners. A continuum of services allows for the individual needs of a student to be identified and addressed through a variety of learning environment structures and a variety of strategies for content, process, and product differentiation. Students from different cultural or language backgrounds, the economically disadvantaged, and students with sensory impairments or other disabilities are often underrepresented in programs for the gifted. To ensure that the abilities of students from underrepresented groups are accurately assessed, they should be evaluated with an instrument that is sensitive to cultural, linguistic and economic differences or is intended for students with sensory or physical disabilities. When appropriate, individualized assessments will be administered.

(Grades 3-5) Identification of Students with Moderate Need for Differentiation

Students who demonstrate through informal assessment that they may have a moderate need for differentiation, will be referred to the TAL for review. Students demonstrating a moderate need for differentiation will meet four of the five following criteria:

- **percentile score of 85 or higher on available standardized aptitude test** and any sub-score of the available standardized test may be used.
- **percentile score of 85 or higher on available standardized achievement test** in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed to determine if differentiation is needed
- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the four most recent grading periods which indicates grade(s) in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed are a B average or higher
- **portfolio** that contains documentation of outstanding student accomplishment and documented demonstration of gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria
- **observation** documented on an inventory focusing on linguistic and logical thinking learner characteristics, motivation and interests, and other qualities that indicate a moderate need for differentiation

(Grades 3-5) Identification of Students with Strong Need for Differentiation

Students demonstrating a strong need for differentiation will meet four of the five following criteria:

- **percentile score of 93 or higher on available standardized aptitude test**, and any sub-score of the available standardized test may be used.
- **percentile score of 93 or higher on available standardized achievement test** in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed to determine if differentiation is needed,
- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the four most recent grading periods which indicates grade(s) in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed are a B average or higher
- **portfolio** that contains documentation of outstanding student accomplishment and documented demonstration of gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria
- **observation** documented on an inventory focusing on linguistic and logical thinking learner characteristics, motivation and interests, and other qualities that indicate a strong need for differentiation

Alternatively, if aptitude and achievement are both at 93 or above, TAL may recommend placement at the Moderate or Strong level. The recommendation will be sent to the District Oversight Committee who will make a final decision on placement.

(Grades 3-5) Identification of Students with Very Strong Need for Differentiation

Students demonstrating a very strong need for differentiation will meet four of the five following criteria, including attaining a percentile score of 97 or higher on both the aptitude and achievement (reading and math) measures:

- **percentile score of 97 or higher on available standardized aptitude test** and any sub-score of the available standardized test may be used.
- **percentile score of 97 or higher on available standardized achievement test** on the two curriculum areas of reading and math. The curricular areas of Science and Social Studies must be at 93rd % or higher on a standardized achievement test.
- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the most recent grading periods indicates grades in all four core curriculum areas are A.
- **portfolio** that contains documentation of outstanding student accomplishment and documented demonstration of gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria
- **observation** documented on an inventory focusing on linguistic and logical thinking learner characteristics, motivation and interests, and other qualities that indicate a very strong need for differentiation

Middle School (Grades 6-8) Advanced Learner Identification

A guiding principle of the advanced learner education program is that all children have the right to receive instruction targeted to their current level of achievement and ability so that all children may be challenged to perform at their highest level possible. The Middle School Advanced Learner Eligibility and Service Delivery Plan assumes that accomplishment of this goal requires (i) the provision of enrichment and special program opportunities, (ii) the utilization of a variety of learning environments, and (iii) the application of content, process, and product differentiation mechanisms. A variety of special programs designed to challenge and stimulate children of all levels of academic ability and all schools should have a well-developed and well-communicated program of academically-oriented clubs and other programs to serve the needs of **all** students in the school.

(Grades 6-8) Identification of Students with Moderate Need for Differentiation

Students who demonstrate through informal assessment that they may have a moderate need for differentiation will be referred to the TAL for review. Achievement, performance and teacher observation of authentic assessment are considered good indicators of a student's need to participate in advanced classes. Students demonstrating a moderate need for differentiation will meet three of the four following criteria:

- **percentile score of 85 or higher on available standardized achievement test** in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed to determine if differentiation is needed
- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the four most recent grading periods which indicates grade(s) in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed are a B average or higher
- **portfolio** that contains documentation of outstanding student accomplishment and documented demonstration of gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria
- **observation** documented on an inventory focusing on linguistic and logical thinking learner characteristics, motivation and interests, and other qualities that indicate a moderate need for differentiation

(Grades 6-8) Identification of Students with Strong Need for Differentiation

Students demonstrating a strong need for differentiation will meet three of the four following criteria:

- **percentile score of 93 or higher on available standardized achievement test** in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed to determine if differentiation is needed

- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the four most recent grading periods which indicates grade(s) in the curriculum area(s) being reviewed are a B average or higher
- **portfolio** that contains documentation of outstanding student accomplishment and documented demonstration of gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria
- **observation** documented on an inventory focusing on linguistic and logical thinking learner characteristics, motivation and interests, and other qualities that indicate a strong need for differentiation

(Grades 6-8) Identification of Students with Very Strong Need for Differentiation

Students demonstrating a very strong need for differentiation will meet four of the five following criteria, including attaining a percentile score of 97 or higher on both the aptitude and achievement measures:

- **percentile score of 97 or higher on available standardized aptitude test** and any sub-score of the available standardized test may be used.
- **percentile score of 97 or higher on available standardized achievement tests** in the core curriculum areas of reading and math. Achievement test scores in science and social studies must be 93 percentile or higher
- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the most recent grading periods indicates grade averages in all four core curriculum areas are “A”.
- **portfolio** that contains documentation of outstanding student accomplishment and documented demonstration of gifted characteristics that is not apparent through current available criteria
- **observation** documented on an inventory focusing on linguistic and logical thinking learner characteristics, motivation and interests, and other qualities that indicate a very strong need for differentiation

Each middle school will designate one staff member as the lead contact for the advanced learner education program to assist parents in understanding the way eligibility for differentiated services is determined and to provide leadership in addressing questions that parents, teachers, or the TAL may have. In addition, all counselors should have special training in the characteristics of advanced learners and be familiar with all features of the advanced learner education program at the school, including how eligibility for differentiated services is determined, how advanced learners are served and the socio-emotional needs of gifted learners.

PLACEMENT

Assessment tools used for the Advanced Learner Program include both quantitative and qualitative instruments and focuses on the four core subject areas. These assessments include scores derived from the approved test list published by the NC Department of Public Instruction, the use of a variety of research-based checklists and observation instruments, and a variety of checklists and observation tools produced by GCS that will be piloted. Additionally, classroom performance (graded and non-graded), documents and observations by community or school personnel that may result in a nomination and review of the student by the Team for Advancement Learners(TAL) are used.

Placement considerations are influenced by the instruments named in the previous paragraph. To properly support the demonstrated strength(s) of a student, TAL considers a variety of methodologies and settings for services. Those used may be (but are not limited to) flexible regrouping and/or clustering students for instructional purposes, curriculum compacting, subject acceleration and, in rare instances, grade acceleration.

Documentation of a student's demonstrated strength(s), the core subject(s) of eligibility, level of service and learning environment will be documented on the student's Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). The DEP also provides space to document any special needs and the student's participation in special programs at the school level, (i.e. Battle of the Books, Science Olympiad) The signature of a parent is required and indicates the parent's permission for the student to participate in the services provided through the AL program. The parent may also choose to decline services with a signature on the DEP.

The Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP) may also be used for an AL student in involving special needs. The responsibility for defining the appropriate usage of the IDEP lies with the TAL and the AL department. Parents and TAL will work collaboratively developing the IDEP. TAL will consider requests by parents and/or school personnel for the development of an IDEP.

Student needs are reviewed by TAL and any changes that are appropriate are documented on the DEP or IDEP. Changes are made only after a period of appropriate intervention that has been approved and documented by TAL, and parents will be encouraged to be a part of the decision making process. These interventions may include (but are not limited to) counseling (peer and adult) at the school level,

Parents may request that their child be granted a furlough from AL classes. In order for the TAL to consider a parent-initiated furlough, the request must be made in writing. The TAL decision extends through the school year in which the furlough was requested. At the end of the year, the TAL will make recommendations for the appropriate placement for the student for the next school year. Parents will have input into the decision when possible, and they will be notified of the TAL decision as soon as possible.

The TAL may also recommend a furlough for the student if the student is showing signs of excessive stress from the demands of the AL program or because of other concerns that the TAL

or the student's parents might have regarding student performance. Parents are encouraged to participate in this process, and the TAL decision is forwarded to the parent in writing. Parents may request a review of their child's performance, a subsequent change in level of service or a furlough. No changes are made regarding a change in level of service or a furlough for such a student without the written request or the proper documentation of intervention strategies used by school personnel. Documentation of any changes are filed in the AL folder and noted on the DEP.

All Advanced Learners are reviewed each year using the most recent End of Grade scores, cumulative classroom performance for the school year and the classroom teachers' input. Students whose level of service is improved as a result of the review have the change documented in the AL folder and the parents are notified. See the above paragraph for reviews that may result in a furlough.

Students who transfer into Guilford County Schools from other school systems will have their records reviewed for possible AL eligibility. Special consideration will be given to students who present documentation of their eligibility for an AL program in their previous school system.

Program Service Options

Based on established eligibility criteria, students are matched with appropriate service options. General education teachers and the Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists (ALCS) at the elementary level work collaboratively to plan for and deliver needs-appropriate differentiated services. Options for differentiated services are described in the service delivery plans of the elementary, middle and high schools.

The ability to learn well beyond the expected level of one's peers indicates a need for differentiated instruction. This need can be discovered through outstanding student performance in the form of grades, work samples, high test scores, community involvement, sustained keen interest or passion in an area of interest, or through observable characteristics. Students must demonstrate a need for academic differentiation beyond what is typically available in the general education classroom. If the TAL determines a need for differentiation, the following are options for addressing the academic, social and emotional needs of that student:

Clustering: In schools where only a few students are found to have strong or very strong need for differentiation, the principal will assign these students to heterogeneously grouped classrooms in "clusters" of three to five students to facilitate instruction.

Curriculum Compacting: The teacher will adapt the curriculum for one or more advanced learners, eliminating work already mastered or condensing work that might be mastered at a pace more appropriate for student's ability level.

Subject Acceleration: Student will be placed in another grade level for instruction in specific subject area(s) when deemed appropriate by TAL

Grade Acceleration: Student will be moved to a higher grade level for all subjects when Principal and TAL decide it is the most appropriate decision. In the case of grade acceleration (grade-skipping) full instruction in all SCOS strands of the current grade and the grade to be skipped must be well documented

(Grades K-3.5) Service Options

Students who demonstrate through informal assessment that they may have a need for differentiation beyond what is typically provided in the general education classroom, will be referred to the TAL for review. The parent of the Kindergarten-First Semester- 3rd Grade student will be invited to sit on the TAL when his/her child's need for differentiation is being determined. A plan for instruction will be the result of the meeting. The plan may include tutoring, subject acceleration, compacting, etc. The services will be provided by the general education teacher in collaboration/consultation with the ALCS. Decisions regarding which services such students will receive will be documented on **the plan for instruction**.

Indicators of a need for differentiation include the following:

- **reading two or more years** as documented by performance on the K-2 Literacy Assessment, (DRA) and/or 3rd grade Pre-EOG used in the Guilford County Schools.

- **performing in math two or more years above grade placement.** In the case of grade acceleration (grade-skipping) full instruction in all SCOS strands of the current grade and the grade to be skipped must be well documented
- **work sample file** containing work samples completed at school which indicate exceptional mastery of content and skills above grade level,
- **performance** documented on report cards for at least two of the four most recent grading periods is rated as excellent by the TAL.

Service Options for Moderate Level (Grades 3-5) Second Semester 3rd–5th Grades

If the TAL determines that the student demonstrates a moderate need for differentiation, differentiated instruction will be provided within the general education classroom by the general education classroom teacher(s). Weekly direct instruction from the Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialist may vary at respective school sites with approval from the Advanced Learner Department. Students who are achieving above the level of most of their peers in language arts, math, science and/or social studies will be grouped together for instruction in the respective classes. Decisions regarding which services students who demonstrate a moderate need for differentiation will receive will be documented on the **Differentiated Education Plan**. Options for addressing the needs of students demonstrating a moderate need for differentiation include the following:

Clustering: In schools where only a few students are found to have moderate need for differentiation, the principal will assign these students to heterogeneously grouped classrooms in “clusters” of three to five students to facilitate instruction.

Flexible Grouping: Grouping by readiness, skill, and/or interest within a classroom or within a grade level will be used.

Direct Services: Weekly instruction in each subject of eligibility from the ALCS may vary at respective school sites with approval from the Advanced Learner Department.

Appropriate Differentiation Strategies: A range of differentiated instructional strategies used to address diverse achievement and performance levels of students should be preformed by the classroom teacher to address the needs of the advanced learner.

Special Programs: Students found eligible for services in Science at designated grade levels will work directly with the ALCS in special programs designed to nurture those strengths. Social Studies will be integrated into the Language Arts Curriculum.

(Second Semester 3rd-5th Grades) Service Options for Strong Level

If the TAL determines that the student demonstrates a strong need for differentiation, all options for differentiation that are available for the student demonstrating a moderate need for differentiation are available to the student within the classroom. Decisions regarding which services students who demonstrate a strong need for differentiation will receive will be documented on the **Differentiated Education Plan**. Additional options for addressing the needs of students demonstrating a strong need for differentiation include the following:

Curriculum Compacting: The general education classroom teacher will adapt the curriculum for one or more advanced learners, eliminating work already mastered or condensing work that might be mastered at a pace more appropriate for student's ability level.

Subject Acceleration: Student will be placed in another grade level for instruction in specific subject area(s) when deemed appropriate by TAL.

Direct Services: Student will receive a minimum of one and a half hours per week in each of the subjects of Language Arts and/or Math through direct services in a setting, usually apart from the general education classroom, in which eligible students are homogeneously grouped to receive differentiated services provided by the ALCS in the appropriate area(s). Students found eligible for services in Science at designated grade levels will work directly with the ALCS in special programs designed to nurture those strengths.

Cluster Grouping: Students identified with a strong need for differentiation will be assigned by principals to heterogeneously grouped classrooms in "clusters" in such a manner as to approximate, as closely as possible, minimum cluster sizes of 8. These clusters will help to assure appropriate instruction and prevent a student from being educationally isolated.

Flexible Regrouping: Students who demonstrate similar readiness levels in language arts and/or math will be flexibly regrouped for instruction in that subject across a grade level.

Appropriate Differentiation Strategies: This represents a range of differentiated instructional strategies used to address diverse achievement and performance levels of students.

Middle School Advanced Learner Service Delivery

A guiding principle of the advanced learner education program is that all children have the right to receive instruction targeted to their current level of achievement and ability so that all children may be challenged to perform at their highest level possible. The Middle School Advanced Learner Eligibility and Service Delivery Plan assumes that accomplishment of this goal requires (i) the provision of enrichment and special program opportunities, (ii) the utilization of a variety of learning environments, and (iii) the application of content, process, and product differentiation mechanisms. A variety of special programs designed to challenge and stimulate children of all levels of academic ability and to address the socio-emotional needs of the advanced learner are used. Schools have a well-developed and well-communicated program of academically-oriented clubs and other programs to serve the needs of **all** students in the school. Decisions regarding which services for differentiation the student will receive will be documented on the **Student Eligibility Record** and will receive the **Differentiated Educational Plan**.

(Grades 6-8) Service Options for Students with Moderate Need for Differentiation

Curriculum Compacting: The general education classroom teacher will adapt the curriculum for one or more advanced learners, eliminating work already mastered or condensing work that might be mastered at a pace more appropriate for student's ability level.

Subject Acceleration: Student will be placed in another grade level for instruction in specific subject area(s) when deemed appropriate by TAL.

Cluster Grouping: Students identified with a moderate need for differentiation will be assigned by principals to heterogeneously grouped classrooms in "clusters" of a minimum of 8 students. These clusters will help to assure appropriate instruction and prevent a student from being educationally isolated.

Flexible Regrouping: Students who demonstrate similar readiness levels in language arts and/or math will be flexibly regrouped for instruction in that subject across a grade level.

Appropriate Differentiation Strategies: This represents a range of differentiated instructional strategies used to address diverse achievement and performance levels of students

Separate Class Grouping in English Language Arts and Math: All students identified as having a **strong** need for differentiated programming in English Language Arts and/or Math will be provided the opportunity to be served in a class section of this/these subject area(s) specifically designed to meet their needs. Accordingly, all middle schools with sufficient numbers of identified students will have a least one section of Language Arts and Mathematics at each grade level specifically designed to meet the needs of advanced learner students. The students assigned to any particular advanced learner class section may be from any number of class "teams" at that or other grade levels.

(Grades 6-8) Service Options for Students with Strong Need for Differentiation

The Advanced Learner Language Arts and Math section(s) will provide a combination of acceleration, increased depth of study, greater breadth of material covered, and more intellectually challenging assignments in order to provide a demonstrably more enriched, advanced, and rigorous curriculum than that provided in the general education classroom. The number of advanced learner sections that a school will provide in language arts and math will depend on the number of students identified as having a Moderate, Strong or Very Strong Need for advanced differentiated programming in each subject area.

- Students at a grade level who demonstrate a **Very Strong or Strong Need** for advanced differentiated programming in Language Arts and Math should be grouped together in the fewest number of classes so that their instruction can be presented at the pace, depth and rigor required to meet **their** needs.
- Students at a grade level who demonstrate a **Moderate Need** for advanced differentiated programming in Language Arts and Math should be grouped in clusters of no fewer than eight Moderate Need students so that their instruction will be differentiated for them at the pace, depth and rigor required to meet **their** needs. Should there be a Strong Need class that is not full, the highest achieving and performing Moderate Need students, determined by TAL, should be placed in the class.
- Should there be a class with Strong Need and Moderate Need students in it that is not full, the highest achieving and performing students, determined by TAL, should be included in the class. In the case of a school with too few students demonstrating a Moderate, Strong or Very Strong need for differentiation to justify an advanced learner class section in language arts and/or math, such students may be given the option of enrolling in a section of that subject at the next higher grade level at that middle school. A school may also make other options available for meeting the student's needs.

Within Class Content/Instructional Differentiation: In science and social studies, middle schools will provide a demonstrably advanced differentiated program within the context of heterogeneously grouped classes to serve the needs of advanced learner students in those subjects. So that all students may be challenged to perform at their highest level possible, scheduling science and social studies classes that have “clusters” of students without a widespread range of achievement levels would facilitate differentiated instruction. The use of some variety of strategies is presumed necessary to achieve the stated goal, including, but not limited to, within-class achievement-based grouping.

Curriculum compacting will be used whenever appropriate as part of a larger differentiation strategy. The science curriculum will be taught through a “hands on” inquiry approach consistent with best practice recommendations and with the middle school philosophy of the benefits of active learning. In schools where only a few students are found to have an advanced need for differentiation, the principal will assign those students to heterogeneously grouped teams in “clusters” to assure appropriate instruction, rather than isolating them in several teams.

Subject Acceleration: Student will be placed in another grade level for instruction in any subject area as deemed appropriate by TAL.

In addition to the grouping mechanisms described above, a school MAY make available other learning environments for meeting the needs of students identified as having strong need for differentiated programming in language arts and/or math be made available to, provide (*e.g., distance learning*). However the provision of such alternate learning environments may not replace each school providing separate class groupings in language arts and math.

(Grades 6-8) Service Options for Students with Very Strong Need for Differentiation

If the TAL determines that the student demonstrates a Very Strong Need for differentiation, all options for differentiation that are available for the student demonstrating a strong need for differentiation are available to the student. Additional options for addressing the needs of students demonstrating a very strong need for differentiation must include, but are not limited to, the following:

Full-Time Placement in Homogeneous Groups for All Four Core Curriculum Areas, at a designated school(s). Teachers who instruct each core curricular class will be highly qualified and licensed in their discipline and also licensed in gifted education. If an eligible VSN student chooses not to participate in the full-time placement, their needs will be addressed within the Strong need services at their attendance school.

Grade/Subject Acceleration: Student may be moved to a higher grade level for some or all subjects if deemed appropriate by the principal and the TAL as the best possible decision.

Dual Enrollment: *Students may be enrolled in two levels of school (e.g., middle school and high school) simultaneously.* This placement is recommended for course content that is highly sequential.

Decisions regarding which services students who demonstrate a very strong need for differentiation will receive will be documented on the **Student Eligibility Record** and the **Differentiated Education Plan**

High School Program for Advanced Learners *Service Delivery Plan*

Introduction

Various program options and opportunities provided at the high school level address the needs of advanced students. The selection of course level, pursuing selected subjects to a highly advanced level, enrollment in special college level courses and an internationally developed advanced curriculum are all opportunities for high school students who pursue advanced studies.

Eligibility Options

Course selection and special activities available at the high school level are available to all students on a self-selection basis. This self-selection process is supported through counseling and advisement from teachers and school counselors, special course descriptions and syllabi, which communicate clearly the course expectations and requirements. While enrollment is open, decisions will be made carefully and with support. In addition, each high school will adhere to a strict add and drop schedule which will make decisions to enroll or drop advanced courses well considered and not reversible after a determined time. Teachers who instruct each advanced core curricular class will be highly qualified, licensed in their core discipline and licensing in gifted education is preferred.

Guilford County High School Program Descriptions

(consult www.gcsnc.com)

General Information: As an incentive to encourage bright students to take a rigorous course of study, all students who earn an IB diploma or a GCS Advanced Placement diploma will be invited to participate in an annual Recognition Event where they will have the opportunity to win a laptop computer, \$1,500 scholarships or a new car. Honors and AP Classes are offered at all GCS high schools, with limited core subjects available at the AP levels for Grades 9-10. AP exams are required for all students who are enrolled in an AP class. Pre-IB courses and an IB course of study with exams are required for IB Diploma students. Both Honors, AP and IB curriculum offer weighted credit in computing GPA. Site demographics and information on the various programs can be found through the GCS website.

Honors and AP Classes. Grades 9-12. Enrollment for Honors and AP courses is encouraged for any high achieving and motivated student. Both Honors and AP classes offer more demanding and rigorous curriculum than the regular classes. Honors curriculum and instruction matches the advanced needs of the students through adjustments to the pace, depth and rigor of the NC Standard Course of Study. The curriculum for AP is established by the College Entrance Exam Board (CEEB). AP classes allow ambitious and able students to study one or more college-level courses. All AP students must take the AP exam in May and college credit may be awarded by a college to a student whose exam scores are at the appropriate level, as defined by CEEB.

Middle College. Grades 9-12. Application Required. Middle College is a small high school located on a college campus. It offers an opportunity for students who are disconnected from the regular school setting to complete as many as three years of high school on a college campus.

Transportation is provided by GCS to the four sites. The NC A&T site is for males only and targets grades 9-12. The Bennett College site targets females only in grades 9-12. Other sites include Greensboro College and GTCC. The schedules at each school vary slightly.

Early College. Grades 9-12. Application Required. Early College provides two levels of study. These levels are high school and college. This permits students to compact their high school graduation requirements into 2 or 3 years and then to be dually enrolled in high school and college for the remaining 1 or 2 years. All of the 4 core disciplines are offered either at the College Prep, Honors or AP levels. Students in the early college may graduate from high school with both a high school diploma and one or two years of course credit earned from college. GCS provides the college tuition for this program.

International Baccalaureate (IB). Grades 11-12 with preparatory courses in grades 9-10 strongly encouraged. Application Required. This program is designed for the highly motivated student who is committed to hard work. Authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), this program is available at Grimsley High and Smith High, both in Greensboro, and High Point Central High in High Point. The IB program awards an internationally recognized diploma to those who meet the criteria, as defined by the IBO. Among the requirements for the diploma are written and oral exams at the completion of each IB course taken in the junior and senior years.

Weaver Academy. Grades 9-12. Application and audition required. This full-time program for Advanced Technology and Performing and Visual Arts provides development in an artistic discipline and focuses on preparation for a career in the arts.

Dudley Academy of Science, Math & Technology offers a top quality education for highly motivated students who have successfully completed Algebra I or higher math class in the 8th grade. Students who successfully complete 15 hours of the Honors and/or AP Courses will be dually enrolled during their last year of high school on either the A&T campus or UNCG campus. They will earn both high school and college credit and the college tuition will be paid by GCS. Engineering students will have their tuition paid at A&T with the students in the other disciplines choosing one of the two university campuses. 150 hours of community service is required.

The Southern High Academy of Education & Advanced Sciences is for highly motivated rising 9th graders who are interested in Medicine, Agriscience or Education with courses being offered at the Honors and AP levels. 15 hours in this program are required in order to receive local endorsement as an Academy Student.

Fast Forward Program. Offered through UNCG, 16 college courses are offered to high school students that will carry both high school and UNCG credit. Grades through this program are weighted for GPA purposes. Students are required to pay college tuition for these courses, and the courses may be offered through the Information Highway.

Differentiation Terminology

Acceleration: A flexible pacing strategy, which places students at an appropriate instructional level (regardless of age) and, for the most advanced students, may include grade-skipping.

Advanced Computer Technology: Students have instruction on and use of advanced computer technology.

Blocking: Teachers teach an integrated curriculum by teaming together for a longer block of time (Example: Math-Science or English-Social Studies).

Centers: Classroom work stations, based on skills and/or interests, which provide for a variety of learning styles and levels, meeting individual student needs.

Cluster Grouping: Groups of 2-10 advanced students are assigned, administratively, to the same regular heterogeneous classes on grade level to facilitate instruction in their areas of need.

Computer-based instruction: Use of the computer to enrich or remediate the regular curriculum.

Curriculum Compacting: Adapts the regular curriculum to meet the needs of advanced students by eliminating work that has already been mastered or condensing work that may be mastered at a pace more appropriate for the students' ability level.

Differentiated Instruction: Modifying content, instructional strategies, complexity of activities and products to match the learning needs of the student.

Flexible Grouping: Students are grouped and/or re-grouped for instruction differentiation. Grouping patterns may include:

- ability/skill level - students are grouped for instruction based on their ability or level of skill
- across grade (intra- and inter-grade) - students are grouped between classes but within their grade level or across grade levels.
- by interests - students are grouped based upon their interests.
- multi-age - students are grouped with other students without regard for age or grade level.
- subject grouping - students are grouped for instruction based upon achievement level or need in a specific subject area.

Flexible Pacing: allowing students to move ahead, based upon mastery, to appropriate instructional levels

Higher Levels Thinking Skills: Activities that promote thinking levels such as application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Independent Investigation: May be used for acceleration or enrichment. Student displaying content mastery gathers information on a topic of interest. Teacher meets periodically with the student and serves as a resource. Resulting product may be a report, presentation, etc.

Independent Study: Students take Independent Investigation to the next step by creating a real life product and becoming an "expert", develop their own research, etc.

Interdisciplinary Unit: Utilizing a common theme across the disciplines to unify study in each area and to permit students to learn conceptually and to formulate generalizations regarding the theme.

Learning Contracts: Individual or group agreements, between teacher and student, outlining content to be learned, options for the learner and the time frame for completion

Mastery Learning: Teacher designed units that have enrichment and activities that students might pursue, once they have demonstrated content mastery.

Mentoring: Student, with the support of an “expert”, is involved in investigative activities, inquiries and productions in which the learner attempts to think, feel and act like a practicing professional.

Portfolio: A collection of items that demonstrate and/or elaborate on the ability and skill levels, as well as the interests and passions, of an individual student.

Profile: All collected information, about a given student, which is taken into consideration when making a committee decision about whether the student needs differentiated services.

Problem-Based Learning: Enrichment and Extension units that focus on a problem. They involve research skills, group dynamics and problem solving, and operating like a practicing professional in related fields.

Product Modification: To keep expectations high, **all** students should have options regarding the kinds of products they produce. Academically advanced students should have **less** options selected from the higher levels.

Resource Class: Setting, usually apart from the general education classroom, in which eligible students are homogeneously grouped to receive differentiated services offered by a certified specialist.

Seminar: Increased understanding of ideas by means of Socratic questioning using active participation in group discussion in order to generate, articulate, justify and clarify the student’s own ideas.

Separate Setting: Used for intensive differentiation, in core areas of the curriculum and in homogenous settings, provided to students for whom it is appropriate.

Theme: A universal concept or idea that unites understandings between or among disciplines.

Underserved population: Students for whom culture (race-ethnicity) and/or economic disadvantage (free-reduced lunch) has culminated in their being under-represented in programs for high ability students.

Writer’s Workshop: An instructional strategy that classroom teachers utilize to teach the writing process.

ACRONYMS

AL: Advanced Learner

ALCS: Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialist (formerly “AG teacher”)

DEP: Differentiated Education Plan

IDEP: Individual Differentiated Education Plan

PAL: Plan for Advanced Learners

TAL: Team for Advanced Learners

PF: Program Facilitator/Diagnostician

DOC: District Oversight Committee

SER: Student Eligibility Record

LOS: Level of Service

FOCUS: Fostering Outstanding Critical/Creative Thinking Skills, Conceptual Understanding and Self-Esteem

Curricula and Instructional Practices

The Advanced Learner Department utilizes various research-based curricula. Robert Marzano's taxonomy drives the planning of curricula based on the following: 1) how children become engaged in learning; 2) how children think about their thinking to make real-life connections; and 3) how children self-evaluate their learning experiences to become self-directed learners. Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists recognize that the conceptual age of the 21st century demands new expectations and creative environments to nurture the learning possibilities of all children.

Curriculum is designed to include the tools necessary for success, including child and parent commitment, study skills, organization and planning. Teachers incorporate lessons into their classrooms that include, but are not limited to the following: higher level questioning (Bloom), conceptual understandings (Taba), various research models, learning styles ((Silver, Strong), self-discovery, cooperative learning, individual projects, hands-on experiences, writing models, one-on-one conferencing, literature circles, seminars, project-based assessments, facets of understanding (Grant, Wiggins), elements of reasoning (Paul), and Habits of Mind (Costa).

Advanced Learner teachers are committed to using rigorous curriculum that is aligned to and builds on the NCSCOS and Guilford County School's pacing guides. High achieving students have a unique set of learning needs that demand a continuum of differentiated curricula options, instructional approaches and resource materials.

Empowering students to think and create requires changes in the way educators view and write curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to become directors of learning experiences and learning possibilities. Advanced Learner teachers have been provided with resources and training on how to use and/or write curricula. Evaluation of the effectiveness and impact on the curricula is done yearly in a variety of both informal and formal assessments. Self-direction and continuous learning is the desired result of using research based learning experiences with an emphasis on metacognition.

Advanced Learner Curriculum

FOCUS

Fostering Outstanding Critical/Creative thinking, Conceptual Understanding and Self-esteem

The cognitive skills emphasized in FOCUS lessons are describing, finding similarities and differences, sequencing, classifying, and forming analogies. Instruction is geared to include the skills necessary for success, including child and parent commitment, study skills, organization and planning. The lessons are developed by Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists using multicultural literature.

Building Thinking Skills

Building Thinking Skills uses verbal and nonverbal reasoning activities to improve students' vocabulary, reading, writing, math, logic, and spatial skills as well as their visual and auditory skills (Parks).

Jacob's Ladder

The Jacob's Ladder Reading Comprehension Program is a supplementary reading program intended to improve the comprehension skills of third, fourth, and fifth graders. Using a series of skill ladders and designated readings, students move through an inquiry process from basic understanding to critical analyses of the texts read. Students participate in targeted readings from fables, myths, and nonfiction sources.

William and Mary Curriculum

Advanced Learner students participate in an award-winning curriculum developed by the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary, winner of National Association for Gifted Children Studies Division Award for Outstanding Curriculum. The goals of these units are to develop skills in literary analysis and interpretation, persuasive writing, linguistic competency, and oral communication, as well as to strengthen students' reasoning skills and understanding of the concept of change. The units engage students in exploring carefully-selected, challenging works of literature from various times, cultures, and genres and they encourage students to reflect on their readings through writing and discussions. The units also provide numerous opportunities for students to explore interdisciplinary connections to language arts and to conduct research relevant to their own lives. Many research-based models are used in the William and Mary series (Taba, Paul).

Grammar Town

Grammar Town teaches sophisticated concepts with the theme set in a townscape as students are introduced to a four-part grammar analysis. Students learn to identify and use correctly the following: parts of speech, parts of sentences, phrases and clauses (Thompson).

Caesar's English

Caesar's English introduces new word stems with an introductory Latin Stem List. Students learn new vocabulary while participating in the following learning activities:

Latin Stem Talk; Latin Stem Analogy; Advanced Words, Classic Words, Who's That Writer; Latin Stem: English and Spanish; A Roman Fact; and a Latin lesson (Thompson).

Singapore Math

Singapore Math uses complex word problems to teach skills. The focus is on finding different ways to solve and express problems, not simply memorizing formulas.

Research into mathematical problem solving indicates that the ability to identify and model problem situations is the key to mathematical problem solving. Rather than relying on key words and phrases, good problem-solvers look for the relationships within the information given in a problem and construct a visual model to help identify a strategy that will lead to the solution. Singapore Math employs this strategy in the model drawing process. This allows elementary students to be able to solve highly complex and challenging word problems.

In addition to the problem solving element of Singapore Math, each Singapore Math lesson teaches math skills by moving from concrete to pictorial to abstract and quickly progresses from material that is familiar to more difficult and challenging material.

Evaluation

Guilford County Schools Program Evaluation

Evaluation of the Plan for Advanced Learners involves several components. The purpose of evaluation is to determine if the goals of the plan are being met and how effectively the plan meets the needs of advanced learners in the school system.

Continuous evaluation will be done on each of the 11 goals of the plan. Members of the Teams for Advanced Learners at each school, which includes AL specialists, administrators, general education teachers and parents representing each school provide input regarding components and procedures of the plan. This input is considered by the District Oversight Committee and adjustments and adjustments to procedures may result. EOG scaled scores, final grades, and writing test scores where applicable, are analyzed. The analyses are conducted by the GCS Executive Accountability and Research Officer.

Scores from EOC tests, AP and IB exams, and the SAT are reviewed at each high school to determine if AL students are achieving appropriately. Principals, AP/IB Coordinators, AL Specialists and teachers of advanced learners at each school review this data to determine any appropriate changes to the programming and service delivery.

Achievement data in reading, problem-solving and thinking will help to support the Project Bright IDEA pilot results longitudinally. Rubrics that assess intelligent behaviors and habits of mind will be used with these K-2 students.

The success rate of students earning a Guilford County Schools Advanced Placement Diploma or and the International Baccalaureate Diploma are tracked as an indication of successful preparation.

At the end of three years, an AL Steering Committee assesses the progress in achieving each of the program goals and determines additional goals or new emphases for the AL Plan. A summary of the list of accomplishments during the three years in all areas of the plan will be provided to the school board along with the other reports.

Goals to be evaluated are:

1. To improve and refine identification procedure by piloting 3-5 checklists of characteristics of gifted learners in 10% of the elementary schools before 2010.
2. To provide an array of service options and educational experiences which support individual growth at varying levels of abilities, needs and interests, and which allow students to learn and move through advanced material at their own pace.
3. To include social-emotional aspects of the gifted learner in the comprehensive staff development program available to all school personnel.
4. To actively involve parents and other community members in an effort to enrich and extend the learning opportunities of advanced learners by encouraging and supporting the activation of the Parents for the Advancement of Gifted Education (PAGE) organization.
5. To increase public awareness, through special parent meetings, celebrations, and Achievement nights, as well as a link to Advanced Learners Program on the GCS website, of learning characteristics and best practices in advanced learner education.
6. To assure fair access to all students throughout the Guilford community without regard to ethnic group, socio-economic status, gender and learning difference, to include but not be limited to: access to services of traditionally under-served populations through the provision of additional and alternative assessments, including the use of an alternative portfolio and additional testing opportunities, and to nurture ESOL students through collaboration with the ESOL staff, as well as providing translations of the Advanced Learner brochure and all parent communications in predominate languages.
7. To support a critical thinking/problem-solving effort in K-3 to nurture academic and intellectual potential, and develop the skills of all students, which will contribute to closing the achievement gap.
8. To have a clearly defined set of grade level standards for advanced classes, supported by appropriate curricula aligned with the SCOS and the GCS pacing guides.
9. To increase the percentage of classroom teachers who are licensed in gifted education by 10% yearly. To continue the expectation that all Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists be licensed in gifted education.
10. To ensure cross-departmental communication by AL staff serving on project teams and/or committees.
11. To refine the AL component of the GCS information system to analyze data historically and to account for program services.

Personnel and Professional Development

Special Training/Certification Requirements

All Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists and teachers in the Very Strong Need AL classes are required to be certified in gifted education. All teachers assigned to teach core courses in Middle and High Schools must be certified in the content area to which they are assigned, as per No Child Left Behind legislation. Certification in gifted education is preferred, encouraged and facilitated through special arrangements with High Point University, for which GCS provides financial support. The AL department advocates for additional personnel allotments based upon the goals and objectives of the plan and upon the increase in the number of students served by AL staff members. The staff member's job title and responsibilities follow.

GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS JOB DESCRIPTION JOB TITLE: COORDINATOR – ADVANCED LEARNER EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GENERAL STATEMENT OF JOB

Under limited supervision, performs a variety of supervisory and administrative tasks in overseeing and monitoring services and programs for Advanced Learners in Kindergarten through twelfth grade. This position serves to enhance the effectiveness of the educational process for gifted students through the implementation and administration of the Advanced Learner Program, the Advanced Placement Program, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, and other special opportunities offered to this population of students. Employee oversees the implementation of these programs, monitoring their effectiveness, providing staff development opportunities, and ensuring adherence to federal, state and local policies and procedures. Employee also coordinates with outside agencies and organizations to share ideas and services to better meet the needs of these students. Employee supervises a staff of system-wide Advanced Learner Program Facilitators, Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists in elementary schools and Advanced Learner teachers, AP and IB teachers in middle and high schools as well as Academic All-Star Camp teachers. Reports to Executive Director for Title I, Magnet Programs and Special Programs. Work involves coordinating the Advanced Learner Program, the Advanced Placement Program and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. Employee is also responsible for the Academic All-Star Camps, the Governor's School, and College Board partnership activities such as Vertical Teaming, AP Potential, and AP Teacher Training, AP celebration events (Cool to Be Smart), Gifted Education Licensure and staff development in Differentiation of Instruction district-wide. Work requires the use of communication skills and technological skills necessary to maintain and to analyze a current and comprehensive database of the status of all eligible and potential Advanced Learners and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Diploma students to monitor growth, provide pertinent information, and assess progress toward increasing enrollment, particularly minority representation in these programs. Reports to the Executive Director for Title I, Magnet Programs and Special Programs.

COORDINATOR SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Observes, evaluates initiates and directs improvements in services for advanced learners and provides leadership and supervision to staff.

Establishes and maintains the Advanced Learner Program, provides administrative leadership to assure adherence to program guidelines.

Maintains open communications with various groups, facilitates special and related services, assures liaison with the community and initiates and participates in activities which advance the program.

Oversees and monitors the continued development and implementation of the District's Plan for Advanced Learners.

Evaluates the delivery of services to Advanced Learners.

Assists in the development of a projected annual budget for the education of Advanced Learners in K-12 which includes AL students, IB Students, All-Star Camp students, AP students.

Coordinates and supervises the collection and treatment of data needed for the purposes of reporting, planning, and decision-making as it relates to Advanced Learners, Advanced Placement students, International Baccalaureate Diploma Candidates, Governor's School participants, National Merit Scholarship recipients, and Academic All-Star Campers.

Coordinates the development of guidelines and procedures needed to implement all services for Advanced Learners.

Facilitates the dissemination of best practices of curriculum development and instructional methodology regarding differentiation to all of the schools in the district.

Facilitates the resolution of disagreements as it relates to the education of Advanced Learners.

Supervises and evaluates Advanced Learner Program Facilitators/Diagnosticians.

Assists in the observation/evaluation of Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists

Read various publications and attends to various workshops, seminars, etc. to continuously upgrade professional knowledge.

Maintains on-going communication with other departments within Guilford County Schools, with other school personnel, with parents and other community groups and organizations.

COORDINATOR ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Serves as the AP Coordinator for the school system which involves coordinating training for teachers, counselors and administrators, collecting and disseminating information and data, and facilitating events to recognize AP students and teachers. Manages the budget for all of these activities.

Serves as the IB Coordinator for the school system, assisting local school IB coordinators in promoting and managing the IB program. Facilitates the IB Diploma process and incentives related to it.

Directs the Academic All-Star Camps for rising 9th grade students each year. Arranges for the selection of students and the application process. Manages the camp set-up

including facilities, food, faculty and staff, bus transportation, materials, and field trips and the budget for all of those. Serves as liaison to the host institutions or higher education and the corporate sponsors.

Directs the activities, selection procedures and data collection for any programs that specifically involve advanced learners such as Governor's School, National Merit Scholarships, Duke's TIP and MAP programs, NC Scholars, etc.

Advises the Early College administration and supports the selection of candidates and the evaluation and training of faculty.

Performs other related work as required.

COORDINATOR MINIMUM TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Master's Degree in Education, Gifted Education or a related field, Certification in Gifted Education, Certification in Administration and Supervision, and 5 to 7 years of experience working with gifted students (advanced learners) either as a teacher or in an administrative capacity; or any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities to supervise multiple programs, personnel and budgets related to the education of advanced learners.

COORDINATOR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Possession of a valid driver's license issued by the state of North Carolina. Must maintain a safe driving record. An employee assigned to this position is designated as Category "A." Category "A" employees are governed by Guilford County Schools Policy GA and Administrative Procedure GA-P, "Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace," which spells out specific drug testing requirements, procedures and consequences of positive alcohol or drug tests or arrest for alleged violation of any alcohol or drug-related offense. Must possess Certification in Supervision and/or Administration and a valid teaching license in Gifted Education as defined by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

COORDINATOR MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OR STANDARDS REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Physical Requirements: Must be physically able to operate a variety of automated office machines including computers, typewriters, calculators, printers, copiers, etc.

Data Conception: Requires the ability to compare and/or judge the readily observable, functional, structural, or composite characteristics (whether similar to or divergent from obvious standards) of data, people or things.

Interpersonal Communications: Requires the ability to speak and/or signal people to convey or exchange information. Includes receiving instructions, assignments, and/or directions from supervisors.

Language Ability: Requires the ability to read correspondence, reports, forms, billing statements, invoices, financial statements, rosters, insurance forms, turnaround documents, etc. Requires the ability to prepare correspondence, forms, reports, billing statements, invoices, and financial statements using proper format. Requires the ability to speak to people with poise, voice control, confidence and authority.

Intelligence: Requires the ability to apply rational systems to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations where only limited standardization

exists; to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in oral, written, diagrammatic or schedule form.

Verbal Aptitude: Requires the ability to record and deliver information, to explain procedures, to follow oral and written instructions. Must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in standard English and government terminology

Numerical Aptitude: Requires the ability to utilize mathematical formulas; to add and subtract totals; to multiply and divide; to determine percentages and decimals; and to express data in statistical nomenclature.

Form/Spatial Aptitude: Requires the ability to inspect items for proper length, width, and shape.

Motor Coordination: Requires the ability to coordinate hands and eyes rapidly and accurately in using automated office equipment.

Manual Dexterity: Requires the ability to handle a variety of items, office equipment, presentation equipment, etc. Must have minimal levels of eye/hand/foot coordination.

Color Discrimination: Does not require the ability to differentiate between colors and shapes of color.

Interpersonal Temperament: Requires the ability to deal with people beyond giving and receiving instructions. Must be adaptable to performing under minimal levels of stress and when confronted with persons acting under stress.

Physical Communication: Requires the ability to talk and hear: (Talking: expressing or exchanging ideas by means of spoken words. Hearing: perceiving nature of sounds by ear). Must be able to communicate via telephone.

COORDINATOR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Thorough knowledge of federal, state and local policies and procedures regarding gifted students (advanced learners)

Considerable knowledge of School Board policies, procedures and standards regarding education of students in Guilford County Schools

Considerable knowledge of the ethical guidelines applicable to the position as outlined by professional organizations and/or federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations

Considerable knowledge of the current literature, trends, and developments in the field of gifted education

Considerable knowledge of the principals of supervision, organization and administration

Working knowledge of testing and interpretation of educational data

Skill in writing and speaking

Ability to use common office machines and popular computer-driven word processing, spreadsheet, database and file maintenance programs

Ability to maintain complete and accurate records and statistics and to develop meaningful reports from that information

Ability to develop and implement appropriate programs for gifted learners

Ability to select and to develop appropriate curriculum for gifted learners

Ability to assess the effectiveness of programs and activities

Ability to interpret educational policies and procedures

Ability to effectively express ideas orally and in writing

Ability to make oral presentations before large groups of people
Ability to coordinate and supervise the work of other professionals
Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships as necessitated by work assignments.

DISCLAIMER

The preceding job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by employees within this classification. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required of employees to this job.

GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS JOB DESCRIPTION
JOB TITLE: DIAGNOSTICIAN/ PROGRAM FACILITATOR (ED/PF)
ADVANCED LEARNER DEPARTMENT
GENERAL STATEMENT OF JOB

Under general or occasional supervision, performs a variety of tasks to assure appropriate services for Advanced Learners in Guilford County Schools. This position serves as a link to administrators, principals, staff, and Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists to monitor a rigorous, differentiated curriculum. The employee plans, executes and oversees the evaluation services needed to find students eligible for the Advanced Learner and nurture initiatives programs. Through contact with the schools, the employee communicates information to administration, staff members, and parents. The employee also provides staff development to enhance services to meet the unique needs of Advanced Learners. Work involves planning and managing evaluation services, records, resources, and staff development, in order to facilitate a comprehensive program of service to students referred for placement in the Advanced Learner Program. Employee is also responsible for working with others to accomplish the goals and objectives of the District's Plan for Advanced Learners and serves as a communication link to school personnel, parents, and community. Work requires the use of technological skills necessary to maintain and to analyze a current and comprehensive database of the status of all eligible and potential Advanced Learners to monitor academic growth, provide pertinent information, and assess progress toward increasing minority representation. Reports to the Coordinator for Advanced Learners.

ED/PF

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Plans, executes and oversees the evaluation services needed to find students for the nurture programs.

Works with colleagues to accomplish the goals and objectives of the Districts plan for Advanced Learners.

Consults with parents and teachers regarding the evaluation of students referred to the Advanced Learner program.

Maintains a current database of the status of Advanced Learner students.
Participates in the support of staff development for Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists, classroom teachers and administrators.
Provides cognitive coaching to monitor and maintain a rigorous curriculum for Advanced Learners and nurture students.
Assists school personnel with the best teaching practices to increase the number of underserved students in Advanced Learner classes.
Maintains and updates knowledge and skills related to identification and instruction of Advanced Learners.
Serves as a link to administrators, principals, staff, and Advanced Learner curriculum specialists to monitor a rigorous, differentiated curriculum for Advanced Learners and to nurture the potential of all students.
Monitors referrals and services for underserved students.
Serves as a member of a system-wide oversight committee to review eligibility decisions made by school based teams.
Uses current models of curriculum to enhance instruction and to improve student achievement.
Explores new ways to find and to expand upon the use of alternative assessments.
Provides information to school personnel to assure a consistent educational program for Advanced Learners.

ED/PF ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Attends workshops and conferences on best practices.
Writes, plans and presents staff development on best practices.
Participates in all phases of implementation of Bright Idea classrooms to increase the number of underserved students in Advanced Learner classrooms.
Monitors classroom strategies.
Assists with the implementation of Singapore math.
Performs other related work as required.

ED/PF MINIMUM TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Master's Degree in Education, Counseling, Psychology, Special Education, or a related field. The position requires a NC Teaching License, a minimum of 3 years as a teacher, and certification in gifted education. The job requires a broad knowledge of testing/assessment and interpretation of educational data. The position of the diagnostician/program facilitator requires human relation skills needed to communicate with diverse individuals, groups, and organizations.

ED/PF SPECIAL REQUIREMENT

Possession of a valid driver's license issued by the state of North Carolina. Must maintain a safe driving record. An employee assigned to this position is designated as Category "A." Category "A" employees are governed by Guilford County Schools Rev 2/06 2

ED/PF ADVANCED LEARNER

Policy GA and Administrative Procedure GA-P, "Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace," which spells out specific drug testing requirements, procedures and consequences of positive alcohol or drug tests or arrest for alleged violation of any alcohol or drug-related offense.

ED/PF MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OR STANDARDS REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Physical Requirements: Must be physically able to operate a variety of automated office machines including computers, typewriters, calculators, printers, copiers, etc.

Data Conception: Requires the ability to compare and/or judge the readily observable, functional, structural, or composite characteristics (whether similar to or divergent from obvious standards) of data, people or things.

Interpersonal Communications: Requires the ability to speak and/or signal people to convey or exchange information. Includes receiving instructions, assignments, and/or directions from supervisors.

Language Ability: Requires the ability to read correspondence, reports, forms, billing statements, invoices, financial statements, rosters, insurance forms, turnaround documents, etc. Requires the ability to prepare correspondence, forms, reports, billing statements, invoices, and financial statements using proper format. Requires the ability to speak to people with poise, voice control, and confidence.

Intelligence: Requires the ability to apply rational systems to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations where only limited standardization exists; to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in oral, written, diagrammatic or schedule form.

Verbal Aptitude: Requires the ability to record and deliver information, to explain procedures, to follow oral and written instructions. Must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in standard English and government terminology

Numerical Aptitude: Requires the ability to utilize mathematical formulas; to add and subtract totals; to multiply and divide; to determine percentages and decimals

Form/Spatial Aptitude: Requires the ability to inspect items for proper length, width, and shape.

Motor Coordination: Requires the ability to coordinate hands and eyes rapidly and accurately in using automated office equipment

Manual Dexterity: Requires the ability to handle a variety of items, office equipment, etc. Must have minimal levels of eye/hand/foot coordination.

Color Discrimination: Does not require the ability to differentiate between colors and shapes of color.

Interpersonal Temperament: Requires the ability to deal with people beyond giving and receiving instructions. Must be adaptable to performing under minimal levels of stress and when confronted with persons acting under stress.

Physical Communication: Requires the ability to talk and hear: (Talking: expressing or exchanging ideas by means of spoken words. Hearing: perceiving nature of sounds by ear). Must be able to communicate via telephone.

ED/PFKNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Computer skills including word processing and data management using both ACCESS and EXCEL programs.

Review cumulative records of new students to the county who show or have shown AL potential.

Educate parents regarding the policies and procedures of the AL program.

Provide schools, administrators, etc. with rosters, headcounts and nurture reports.

Consult with teachers and parents on students who are not meeting AL expectations and need intervention/academic counseling.

Help with providing best testing practices during countywide administration of the Cognitive Ability Test given to all 3rd graders.
Meet with TAL to review the needs of bright primary students who may need differentiation in the regular classroom or acceleration who are not of age to be served directly in the AL program pull-out program.
Keep abreast of current research and literature in gifted education and seek alternative assessments for diverse populations.
Serve as an advocate for the advanced learner program of GCS.

DISCLAIMER

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GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: ADVANCED LEARNER CURRICULUM SPECIALIST (ALCS)

ADVANCED LEARNER DEPARTMENT

GENERAL STATEMENT OF JOB

Under general or occasional supervision, performs a variety of tasks to provide appropriate direct services for Advanced Learners in Guilford County Schools. This position includes record keeping assistance related to the district's plan for Advanced Learners. The Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialist attends staff development to maintain a rigorous curriculum. They serve as a direct link of communication with administrators, staff, parents and the community. Work involves collaboration, teaching and record keeping. Employee is also responsible for direct services to Advanced Learners and providing instruction to foster the potential of other high performing students. Work requires the use of technology along with the most current teaching practices available. Reports to the principal, AL Coordinator and Advanced Learner Program Facilitator.

ALCS SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Provides direct services to eligible students.
Assists in record keeping related to district's plan for Advanced Learners (gifted students). These may include identification, testing, placement, annual reviews.
Helps regular classroom teachers develop instructional plans and activities for gifted students in their rooms.
Serves as a resource to the regular classroom teacher.
Chairs the TAL (Team for Advanced Learners).
Meets regularly with teams and/or classroom teachers to share materials and ideas and review progress of specific students.
Helps coordinate enrichment activities.
Helps individual student select appropriate topics for independent investigation and monitors their progress.
Conducts individual or small group conferences with students as needed.

Makes students aware of opportunities outside of the regular curriculum.
Helps disseminate information about the program to parents and the community.
Meets with individual parents and parent groups as requested.
Works to assure continuity of services through K-12.
Assists in the evaluation of the Plan for Advanced Learners.
Maintains a record of all services provided students during the year.
Assists in designing and implementing programs to discover and nurture academic potential in under-served populations.
Monitors and reviews student performance, providing feedback to parents.
Assists in developing curriculum appropriate for gifted education.
Sets achievement goals based on sub-group data.

ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Attends workshops and conferences on best practices.
Helps locate mentors and resources to support the program
Provides demonstration lessons on a limited basis, as needed
Performs other related work as required.

MINIMUM TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree in education, North Carolina teaching licensure, certification in Gifted Education and ability to work and communicate with diverse groups/organizations.

ALCS SPECIAL REQUIREMENT

Possession of a valid driver's license issued by the state of North Carolina. Must maintain a safe driving record. An employee assigned to this position is designated as Category "A." Category "A" employees are governed by Guilford County Schools Policy GA and Administrative Procedure GA-P, "Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace," which spells out specific drug testing requirements, procedures and consequences of positive alcohol or drug tests or arrest for alleged violation of any alcohol or drug-related offense.

ADVANCED LEARNER CURRICULUM SPECIALIST (ALCS) MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OR STANDARDS REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Physical Requirements: Must be physically able to operate a variety of automated office machines including computers, typewriters, calculators, printers, copiers, etc.

Data Conception: Requires the ability to compare and/or judge the readily observable, functional, structural, or composite characteristics (whether similar to or divergent from obvious standards) of data, people or things.

Interpersonal Communications: Requires the ability to speak and/or signal people to convey or exchange information. Includes receiving instructions, assignments, and/or directions from supervisors.

Language Ability: Requires the ability to read correspondence, reports, forms, billing statements, invoices, financial statements, rosters, insurance forms, turnaround documents, etc. Requires the ability to prepare correspondence, forms, reports, billing statements, invoices, and financial statements using proper format. Requires the ability to speak to people with poise, voice control, and confidence.

Intelligence: Requires the ability to apply rational systems to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations where only limited standardization exists; to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in oral, written, diagrammatic or schedule form.

Verbal Aptitude: Requires the ability to record and deliver information, to explain procedures, to follow oral and written instructions. Must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in standard English and government terminology

Numerical Aptitude: Requires the ability to utilize mathematical formulas; to add and subtract totals; to multiply and divide; to determine percentages and decimals

Form/Spatial Aptitude: Requires the ability to inspect items for proper length, width, and shape.

Motor Coordination: Requires the ability to coordinate hands and eyes rapidly and accurately in using automated office equipment.

Manual Dexterity: Requires the ability to handle a variety of items, office equipment, etc. Must have minimal levels of eye/hand/foot coordination.

Color Discrimination: Does not require the ability to differentiate between colors and shapes of color.

Interpersonal Temperament: Requires the ability to deal with people beyond giving and receiving instructions. Must be adaptable to performing under minimal levels of stress and when confronted with persons acting under stress.

Physical Communication: Requires the ability to talk and hear: (Talking: expressing or exchanging ideas by means of spoken words. Hearing: perceiving nature of sounds by ear). Must be able to communicate via telephone.

ALCS KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of the NC Standard Course of Study
Communication skills
Computer skills including word processing and database skills
Ability to work with administrators, teachers, parents, and community members
Ability to develop curriculum appropriate for gifted students
Knowledge of testing and interpretation of educational data
Knowledge of current literature and trends in gifted education

DISCLAIMER

The preceding job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by employees within this classification. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required of employees to this job.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff development requirements reflect the plan's emphasis on the shared responsibility for Advanced Learners through recognizing the needs of all students. Administrators and teachers receive an annual overview of the plan procedures, where the role of each of the service providers is clearly defined. Teachers new to the Advanced Learner program receive additional staff development and support from the AL Program Facilitators.

A strong emphasis on awareness of the learning and behavioral characteristics of diverse learners will be strengthened through site-based or county-wide staff development. This training is provided on a continuous basis to assure that all teachers are provided with the skills necessary to recognize and respond to the differing learning needs of children across the system.

Teachers will be afforded multiple opportunities to be licensed in gifted education and to acquire the knowledge, skills and understandings that are essential for successfully implementing instruction for gifted learners. The major focus of this training will be

- characteristics of gifted learners
- effective differentiation instruction
- effective strategies and models of teaching
- use of various assessment tools
- trends and issues related to the education of gifted students.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- All certified staff in each school will be given an overview of the new plan for advanced learners annually. This overview will include any changes in the plan, procedures and/or requirements and the method to be used for monitoring the program.
- Staff development on the curriculum has been developed for VSN students and will be reviewed with all of the teachers who teach the Very Strong Needs classes to assure that instruction focuses on broad concepts and involves students in content and activities with ascending intellectual demand.
- Staff development equips general education teachers in recognizing the demonstrated needs and characteristics of potential advanced learners in general education classes. Members of the underserved student population receive special attention in this training. Members of each Team for Advanced Learners (TAL) receive training in recognizing gifted characteristics.
- ALCS staff development is provided to enable them to train general education teachers in the components of successful differentiation.

- An area of focus for K-2 teachers is to implement Project Bright IDEA in 4 pilot schools. One Kindergarten, first and second grade teacher at each school participate in the Javits Grant. This nurture project will help to develop potential in students and serve as a model for talent development.
- Staff development in the components of Singapore Math will continue for ALCS.
- Advanced Learner Curriculum Specialists (ALCS) will receive on-going training in curriculum and procedures for the Nurture Project called FOCUS (Fostering Outstanding Critical/Creative Thinking, Conceptual Understanding and Self-Esteem) of children with outstanding potential, with a special look at children from economically disadvantaged and/or culturally diverse families. These students are identified for this nurture in our special underserved search procedures. The ALCS participate in writing extended curriculum for these students.
- Staff development providing strategies to address the social-emotional needs of Advanced Learners, will occur annually at the school level. Recognizing that attention, learning, memory, and decision-making capabilities are all intimately connected with emotions, staff development will focus on the use of research based instructional strategies.
- ALCS will receive staff development in the Balanced Literacy program of GCS.
- The AL Program Facilitators will receive training in the use of the new student data information system and will train and monitor the ALCS' usage of the system to assure inter-rater reliability.

Parents and Community Involvement

A key element in any successful program for students is the involvement, support and continuing dialogue between school, home, student, administration, and community. It is a goal of this plan and of the district to develop strategies for the success of communication and involvement with these constituents. The following strategies are used to achieve this goal.

Communication Strategies

1. The Coordinator and Program Facilitators for the Advanced Learner Program conduct informational meetings with the school-based Teams for Advanced Learners (TAL) and chair persons to provide information regarding the implementation of the AL plan at the school and district level.
2. The revised AL brochure will go home with each third grade student at the beginning of the year. Copies will be available at each of the schools and at central administration sites. The brochure will be available in some of the foreign languages that are most encountered in Guilford County.
3. The ALCS or AL Contact will conduct presentations about identification and services at the school level.
4. TAL chairpersons and members hold informational meetings with faculties and parents regarding the implementation of the AL program at their school.
5. The ALCS/TAL will hold Annual Plan and DEP meetings for parents of AL students. On an annual basis, parents will be provided the opportunity to give input on any changes to the DEP or IDEP that may be needed.
6. In each school the Team for Advanced Learners includes a parent representative, who is the liaison to other AL parents in the school. These parents may attend TAL meetings except when individual students are being discussed regarding eligibility. They sometimes publish AL Newsletters at their schools and bring AL ideas and concerns to the attention of the TAL.
7. Individual AL class newsletters may be sent home with students receiving advanced learner services.
8. Information regarding the Advanced Learner Program is provided periodically to the local media through the public information office of the Guilford County Schools.
9. The members of the AL department present the AL plan and program options at individual school faculty meetings and community/parent groups upon request. These may include PTA programs, PAGE group meetings and others.
10. Staff development opportunities will be provided for all teachers on ways to observe, understand and nurture characteristics of underserved populations.
11. Focus groups will be scheduled at schools to answer questions pertaining to advanced learner education.

12. Small group informational meetings will be offered for parents of Very Strong Needs students.
13. Celebrations will continue that recognize and highlight for the public the accomplishments of students who achieve and perform in accelerated and rigorous opportunities.
14. An Advanced Learner website that is linked to the Guilford County Schools website is maintained for the public's interest.

Links to Other System-Wide Efforts

1. Advanced Learner teachers are an integral part of advanced technology training in each school.
2. Advanced Learner teachers serve as members of school improvement teams.
3. The Advanced Learner Plan's goals have several major emphases that address Closing the Achievement Gap initiatives.
4. The Advanced Learner department serves as a major resource in promoting academic rigor through available staff development modules for school personnel.
5. The AL Department is involved in Vertical Team training and planning in each core curricular area.
6. The Advanced Learner Department organizes Academic All-Star Camps for high-achieving rising 9th and 10th graders.
7. The Advanced Learner Program's mission statement correlates with Guilford County Schools' Mission and Core Values Statement.
8. The Advanced Learner Department is involved with Guilford County Schools' Literacy Team Initiative.
9. The AL Department is committed to fostering a strong partnership between the school system and community through achievement night, the AL brochure, the AL website, DEP meetings, TAL meetings, and PTA meetings, etc.
10. The AL Department promotes advocacy for AL students by providing information and offering training in using strategies to meet the social and emotional needs of AL students.
11. The AL Department participates in the GCS academic goal of Total Instructional Alignment, the use of the Springboard initiative and the Modern Red School House initiatives.
12. The AL Department advances collaboration with several local colleges to provide a variety of options to all high school students.
13. The AL Department advances the cause of more gifted licensed professions through its partnership with High Point University.

Procedure to Resolve Differences

Decisions about whether a student needs differentiated instruction and subsequent planning for appropriate services for that student are the responsibility of a designated school level committee (TAL).

When parents/guardians disagree with the decision reached by the committee or how the services are implemented:

1. The committee should be reconvened with the parent/guardian and principal present. The parent should present information showing why s/he does not agree with the decision/plan made by the committee. If agreement cannot be reached at this level,
2. The Advanced Learner Coordinator will meet with the parents and a representative of the school to hear and address differences to come to a mutually agreeable decision. If agreement cannot be reached at this level,
3. The parent/guardian can request mediation by an objective external mediator to hear the unresolved issues and seek agreement. Fees for a mediator are not provided by the school system. If agreement cannot be reached at this level,
4. The parent/guardian has the right to petition an Administrative Law Judge whose decision will be final. Attorney's fees are not available to parents in the event they prevail at this level.

System Commitment see attached

Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling

School counselors and teachers of advanced courses will be offered staff development in the special learning characteristics of advanced learners and in differentiation strategies. This will add to the appropriate support of students and parents in their decisions regarding course selection as well as the social and emotional issues that are characteristic of adolescents.

Social and emotional needs of gifted students must be met for them to develop their strengths. A recent review of the research conducted by a national taskforce for NAGC concluded that all gifted children require certain academic provisions to meet their social and emotional needs. These include the opportunity to learn with others of similar interest, ability, and drive; appropriate level of challenge in the general education classroom; and flexible pacing through the curriculum (Niehart, Reis, Robinson, Moon).

One of the most common means to address the social emotional needs of students is through the use of an affective curriculum implemented by counselors and teachers. With such a program, students are better equipped to deal with a variety of issues such as underachievement, test-anxiety, perfectionism, peer relationships, being “twice exceptional,” and career counseling. (Niehart, Reis, Robinson, Moon). School counselors and teachers of advanced learners (K-12) will be offered staff development providing strategies to address the social-emotional needs of advanced learners. Recognizing that attention, learning, memory, and decision-making capabilities are all intimately connected with emotions, staff development will focus on research-based strategies that contribute to the learning environment for diverse learners. This staff development will be aligned with the district’s affective curriculum. This will add to the appropriate support of the students. Opportunities will also be made available to parents so that they are also informed regarding the social emotional needs of their children.

Guidance and counseling services will include options available for meeting special needs for AL students. These may include peer support groups, mentors, summer enrichment programs and acceleration options (grade-skipping, subject acceleration, concurrent enrollment, early entrance to kindergarten).

Timeline

JUNE 2007 - JUNE 2010

Summer 2007

- Development of curriculum guidelines for the elementary Advanced Learner direct service classes in the four core disciplines using new materials.
- Revise TAL Procedures Handbook to reflect any changes brought about by the AL plan revision. Publish new AL Plan and TAL Procedures Handbook.

- Refine curriculum for FOCUS nurture groups
- Integrate Access database into school system data warehouse via appropriate staff development.
- Revise the AL brochure and prepare it for distribution.
- Continue Bright Idea training and follow-up
- Design a plan for successful implementation of Bright Idea strategies
- Continue efforts to align AL curriculum with GCS pacing guide

Fall 2007

- Develop a consistent set of standards for academic rigor and student expectations for Advanced Learners in AL and general education classrooms.
- Provide staff development for appropriate staff members in new procedures and guidelines related to AL Plan revisions, especially with regard to meeting the social-emotional needs of Advanced Learners.
- Provide on-going staff development in the goals and procedures in the revised Advanced Learner Plan to elementary TAL's and faculties at each school with a focus on the search for and nurture of students with potential in underserved populations.
- Update AL link on the GCS website to reflect revisions in the plan and procedures.
- Distribute AL brochure.

School Year 2007-08

- Continue work on providing translations of the Advanced Learner Program brochure and essential paperwork in some of the most common languages encountered in Guilford County Schools.
- Continue support of efforts to increase numbers of teachers certified in gifted education.
- Continue staff development for K-2 teachers in Project Bright IDEA
- Continue work with the staff at the Very Strong Need level on curriculum development and implementation.
- Expand efforts to reach all communities with information regarding AL services.
- Continue support of GCS efforts toward implementation of differentiation strategies.

2007-2010

- Provide certification courses for AIG licensure for all teachers who teach gifted students.
- Give an overview of the AL Plan's services and the referral and eligibility process for students to all certified staff who are new to Guilford County each fall.
- Continue to offer site-based staff development in advanced differentiation strategies and other best teaching practices for advanced learners to faculties at their schools each year to build knowledge and confidence to appropriately meet the needs of these students.

- Continue staff development for all principals in awareness of the Advanced Learner Plan and its requirements and in techniques for evaluating quality differentiated instruction and academic rigor.
- Evaluate the goals of the AL Plan and student achievement and growth.
- Increase diversity in the AL program.
- Continue staff development opportunities providing appropriate instructional strategies that ensure a relevant and rigorous curriculum.

Budget

The allotted state budget is utilized to implement the Advanced Learner Program. In addition, specific resources to support program goals and procedures are made available such as, computers for data management and instruction, math kits for expanded hands-on math classes, materials to support concept-based instruction and the enhancement of higher level thinking skills. In addition professional development monies support on-going AIG certification classes. Corporate/community and higher education collaborative grants help to support specific initiatives, such as the Academic All-Star Camps. Many schools provide special resources and staff development monies to support the Advanced Learner personnel on staff.

2004 Advanced Learner Program Budget

Revisions for this proposed plan will be made contingent upon 2007 state allotment.

					Budget @ 12/17/00	Expense @ 12/17/00
1	5200	034	121	Teacher	\$1,652,473.00	\$678,425.60
1	5200	034	332	Mileage Reimbursement	\$-	\$1,020.47
1	5200	034	411	Instructional Supplies	\$63,295.00	\$6,506.87
1	5890	034	139	Other Professional Assignments	\$56,732.00	\$24,955.00
1	5910	034	211	FICA	\$130,754.00	\$52,259.78
1	5910	034	221	Retirement	\$121,866.00	\$48,381.51
1	5910	034	231	Hospitalization	\$146,640.00	\$48,813.28
1	5930	034	312	Workshop Expense Travel	\$-	\$430.86
					\$2,171,760.00	\$860,793.37
2	5200	034	121	Teacher	\$-	\$(1,047.71)
2	5890	034	187	Salary Differential	\$-	\$2,050.00
2	5910	034	211	FICA	\$12,629.00	\$3,840.66
2	5910	034	221	Retirement	\$11,768.00	\$3,612.65
2	5910	034	231	Hospitalization	\$-	\$61.52
2	5910	034	234	Dental Insurance	\$-	\$2,451.00
2	5910	034	235	Life Insurance	\$-	\$20.80
2	5920	034	181	Supplementary Pay	\$165,045.00	\$55,718.51
					\$189,442.00	\$66,707.43
					\$2,361,202.00	\$927,500.80

