

# Charlottesville City Schools



## Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted 2021–2024

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Each school board must review and approve a comprehensive plan for the education of the gifted. That plan must provide specific explanations of the school division’s implementation of the *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students*. School divisions, working in conjunction with their school boards, should determine the appropriate timeframe of applicability for their division’s gifted plan. Historically, division plans span five years. For the technical review, the DOE will request a division to send their most current, approved plan at the time of the review. The applicable timeframe for the division’s plan does not need to correspond to the collection year of their technical review. Information on the DOE technical review schedule can be found at the gifted education homepage at the Virginia Department of Education’s Web site [Gifted Ed Homepage - http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted\\_ed/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/index.shtml)

Section 8VAC20-40-60A of the *Regulations* states that, “Each school board shall submit a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students to the Department of Education (DOE) for technical review on a schedule determined by the Department. Each school board shall approve a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students that includes the components identified in these regulations.” To assist school divisions and school boards in complying with section 8VAC20-40-60A, the Virginia Department of Education has created this template for developing Local Plans for the Education of the Gifted (revised January 2011). This public document addresses all aspects of local services for gifted students, including, but not limited to, the area(s) of giftedness the school division will serve, an operational definition of giftedness in the division and its supporting identification procedures, program services, professional development, curriculum development, and parent and community involvement.

Each section of the plan should address specific procedures and information for each area of giftedness identified by the school division. If a school division identifies students in general intellectual aptitude (GIA) and specific academic aptitude-mathematics (SAA-M), then the section for referral procedures, for example, should reflect the specific referral procedures for GIA and SAA-M. Throughout the local plan template, school divisions may need to copy and paste the drop down boxes, the insert text form fields, and any pertinent information for each area of giftedness identified by the division. In order to be able to ‘choose an item’ from a drop down box, simply right click on the highlighted ‘choose an item’ wording and the drop down arrow should appear on the right. Right clicking on the arrow will then allow the drop down box choices to appear. If certain procedures or policies apply to more than one area of giftedness, simply copy and paste the drop down selection box to reflect all areas of giftedness that are applicable to the procedures or policy.

Once the completed comprehensive local plan for the education of gifted students has been approved by the local school board, the plan shall be accessible to the public through the division’s Web site. The division shall ensure that printed copies of the plan are available to citizens who do not have online access.

For more information, contact the Virginia Department of Education specialist for Governor’s Schools and Gifted Education at 804-225-2884.

**Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted**

**General Information regarding the Gifted Program in Charlottesville City Schools**

In section 8VAC20-40-40A of the *Regulations*, divisions are required to screen, refer, identify, and serve gifted students in at least general intellectual aptitude or specific academic aptitude. School divisions may identify and serve gifted students in career and technical aptitude or visual or performing arts aptitude, or both, at their discretion. On the chart below, please indicate all areas of

giftedness that are identified and served within the division. Please copy and paste any additional rows as might be needed to address all areas in Specific Academic Aptitude and/or Visual and/or Performing Arts that are identified by the school division.

Area of Giftedness Identified by the Division	Grades Served
General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA)	NA
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) – English	3–12
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) – Mathematics	3–12
Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)	NA
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Visual Arts Aptitude	NA

**Part I: Statement of Philosophy and Local Operational Definition of Giftedness for the School Division (8VAC20-40-60A.1)**

**A. Division Statement of Philosophy for the Education of Gifted Students**

Charlottesville City Schools is committed to developing the talents of every learner, every day with aligned collaborative experiences in general education classrooms. All students should be exposed to rich, rigorous learning experiences that challenge them to stretch their thinking. Our vision is for gifted and talented students to acquire the knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes to achieve their learning potential. They are encouraged to embrace diversity, explore possibilities and aspire to excellence.

**B. Division Operational Definition of Giftedness**

This section should include an operational definition for each area of giftedness (general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, visual and/or performing arts aptitude, or career and technical aptitude) identified and served by the division. An operational definition provides the concrete, observable, and/or measurable criteria for 'giftedness' used by the division in the identification process. Such a definition might include a listing of the evidence of student readiness for gifted educational services, e.g. evidence of gifted behaviors as determined by a valid and reliable teacher checklist or evidence of superior academic performance based on a norm-referenced assessment of aptitude.

Charlottesville City Schools views giftedness through a lens of talent development. We believe that all students are talented and we cultivate their potential through collaborative, high-quality, differentiated instruction. We recognize that the need for students to think and perform at high levels is important for cultivating their potential for advanced learning.

Specific Academic Aptitude: Students who demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate strong reasoning, intellectual curiosity and creative and imaginative problem solving in English and/or mathematics.

**Part II: Program Goals and Objectives (8VAC20-40-60A.2)**

This section should include goals and objectives for the school division's gifted education program. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

**A. Identification:**

Goal: Provide an identification process with a talent development perspective that identifies diverse students from all populations and supports the division's service delivery models.

Objectives:

1. Review annually with a lens of equity the materials used for identification in each school to monitor for the consistent use of evidence and analysis.
2. Continue to increase access to critical and creative thinking instruction as one avenue to observe gifted behaviors to inform identification.
3. Continue to implement and strengthen the use of multiple criteria in screening and identification processes.
4. Determine how best to consider alternative data when results of standardized assessments are not well-aligned with other student data.

**B. Delivery of Services:**

Goal: Provide students with appropriately challenging educational opportunities that address their learning needs and help them develop their talents to the fullest potential.

Objectives:

1. Design services based on research of effective practices that develop a talent development framework.
2. Articulate the components of a talent development framework to school staff, parents and the community.
3. Continue to increase appropriate evidence-based enrichment offerings for all identified students.

**C. Curriculum and Instruction:**

Goal: Provide differentiated curricular options, instructional approaches and resource materials that support the needs of learners in a talent development framework.

Objectives:

1. Assist classroom teachers with instructional planning practices that focus on appropriate extension and rigor and that help students think and understand deeply.
2. Continue to design and/or refine differentiated curriculum that attends to student needs.
3. Monitor the supports and structures in place to facilitate co-planning and co-teaching between classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers.

**D. Professional Development:**

Goal: Provide consistent and on-going professional learning to school staff around best practices in developing the talents of all learners.

Objectives:

1. Continue to provide ongoing professional development around the principles of differentiated instruction and talent development for a broad range of learners.
2. Promote collaboration among gifted resource teachers and with classroom teachers, including the sharing of best practices and differentiated instructional strategies, in order to develop challenging learning experiences.
3. Continue to provide opportunities for the study of gifted education through graduate courses, degree programs and professional learning for school personnel.

**E. Equitable Representation of Students:**

Goal: Use qualitative and quantitative data to identify and develop the talents of all students, including those in historically underrepresented groups.

Objectives:

1. Implement talent development learning experiences in order to observe and foster the potential of all students.
2. Assist teachers with the recognition of gifted characteristics, including non-conforming traits.
3. Monitor the equitable representation of students identified and served by gifted resource teachers.

**F. Parent and Community Involvement:**

Goal: Enrich and expand parent, school staff and community understanding of talent development as a framework for gifted education.

Objectives:

1. Continue to cultivate an effective working relationship with the Gifted Advisory Committee.

2. Use multiple forms of communication, including the division Gifted Education website, to keep parents and community members informed of the processes used to identify and serve students in a talent development framework.
3. Use multiple approaches to solicit frequent feedback on gifted services from students and staff and periodic feedback on the gifted program from parents and the community.

**Part III: Screening, Referral, Identification, and Service Procedures**

**A. Screening Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section should provide screening procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures should include the annual review of student data used to create a pool of potential candidates for further assessment. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

Screening Procedures for Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

Every student in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and beyond is included in annual screening to determine eligibility for gifted services. Data to be reviewed includes classroom performance, division English and/or mathematics assessment results and scores on state and national assessments. Staff members are sensitive to information that highlights the interests, talents and preferred learning styles of students from underserved populations.

*Because students may be found eligible in both English and mathematics, the screening procedures address both aptitude areas.*

**B. Referral Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section provides referral procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures shall permit referrals from parents or legal guardians, teachers, professionals, students, peers, self, or others. These procedures should include to whom referrals are submitted and the timeline for the division to provide parents/guardians with the results of the eligibility process. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

Referral procedures for Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

The division implements equitable referral procedures. On April 1 each year, the division automatically refers every student in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and beyond who is enrolled in the division as of March 1 of that year and was not identified for Charlottesville’s gifted services in previous years. There is no need for parents or teachers to formally refer a student for gifted identification.

Rather than completing a referral, parents can choose to not have their child participate in the gifted identification process. An opt-out form is available at schools, from gifted resource teachers and on the division website. By April 15, a parent must submit an opt-out form to their school for their child to not be referred. The division adheres to the following timeline:

Area of Giftedness	Screening	Referral/Nomination Deadline	Identification Meetings	Timeline for Providing Results
Specific Academic Aptitude	Spring	By April 1 – CCS refers every student enrolled By April 15 – Parent submits opt-out form for the student to <u>not</u> be referred	May/June	June



### C. Identification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section provides identification procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. Identification in GIA programs shall be K-12 and must include a nationally norm-referenced aptitude test. Identification in SAA programs shall be K-12 or as assessment instruments exist to support identification, and must include either a nationally norm-referenced aptitude or achievement test. Identification in CTA and VPA programs shall be at the discretion of the school division. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

In a talent development model, the purpose of identification is to inform standards-aligned differentiated instruction and consider the most appropriate decisions for the student. The division recognizes that significant potential exists among many more students than have been traditionally identified and is implementing identification practices for all students. Each referred student is considered for gifted identification based on the individual's strengths. No single instrument, score or criteria may be used to exclude a student for eligibility.

Prior to the point of gifted identification, classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers offer all students multiple, ongoing opportunities to develop their potential. Through talent recognition and development opportunities, the abilities of all students are nurtured.

Gifted identification begins at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and goes through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The eligibility process is annual, beginning April 1. Each school's gifted identification committee reviews student data with the lens of identifying learners who respond fully to Tier 1 instruction in the general education classroom setting and participate in assessments based on grade-level standards. Eligibility decisions are communicated to parents at the end of the academic year.

#### 1. Multiple Criteria Listing (8 VAC 20-40-40D.3)

This section includes the three or more criteria that divisions shall include to develop a profile or composite for each student being considered. This listing of criteria should be repeated for each area of giftedness identified by the division. Please copy and paste the section below to support all identified areas of giftedness. NOTE: Selection of either item 5a or 5b or both counts as single criteria.

The division recognizes that gifted students exist in diverse populations and uses multiple criteria to identify them. Information is considered holistically with a focus on talent development.

A high priority is placed on identifying students from all underserved, culturally diverse, low socio-economic, limited English proficient, and disabled populations. No single instrument, score or criterion is used to exclude or include a student for eligibility.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

- 1. Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio
- 2. Record of observation of in-class behavior
- 3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires

- 4. Individual interview
- 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s) and/or
- 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
- 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.)
- 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures  
Specify: ACCESS for ELLs 2.0  
Advanced Placement examinations  
Phonological Awareness Literacy (PALS)  
Virginia Standards of Learning Tests

This section provides procedures for the placement of gifted students in each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures include information about the identification and placement committee.

#### D. Placement Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

##### 1. Identification/Placement Committee (8VAC 20-40-40D)

- a. This section includes the **number** of persons comprising the Identification/Placement Committee by category.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

- 2 Classroom Teacher(s)
- 2 Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s)
- Counselor(s)
- School Psychologist(s)
- Assessment Specialist(s)
- 1 Principal(s) or Designee(s)
- Gifted Education Coordinator
- 2 Other(s) Specify: ESL Teacher, Special Education Teacher

- b. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

- School-level                       Division-level

**2. Eligibility (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section includes a chart detailing all criteria that could be considered in the identification process for a specific area of giftedness identified by the division. A description of the eligibility process used by the committee to make decisions regarding eligibility for services shall follow the chart. It includes a timeline for making eligibility decisions within 90 instructional days of the school division's receipt of the parent's(s') or legal guardian's(s') consent for assessment.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

Measure	Administered/ Completed by	Scored by	Provided to the committee by
<i>Ex. Behaviors checklist</i>	<i>Current classroom teacher</i>	<i>School gifted education teacher</i>	<i>School division gifted education coordinator</i>
Progress reports; CTSS tier	Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher
Student academic performance and achievements	Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher	Gifted resource teacher
PALS assessments	Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher	Gifted resource teacher
Inquiry Design Model activities	Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher	Gifted resource teacher
Division Term Tests	Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher	Gifted resource teacher
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	Classroom teacher and/or gifted resource teacher	Scoring service	Gifted resource teacher
College Board PSAT and SAT	School Testing Coordinator	Scoring service	Gifted resource teacher
VA Standards of Learning Tests	Classroom teacher	Scoring service	Gifted resource teacher
WIDA ACCESS for ELLs	ESL teacher	Scoring service	ESL teacher and/or gifted resource teacher

**Eligibility for Specific Academic Aptitude**

Each school convenes an identification committee to review student data by aptitude area: English and mathematics. The committee reviews student data with the lens of identifying learners who respond fully to Tier 1 instruction in the general education classroom setting and participate in assessments based on grade-level standards.

The committee completes a holistic evaluation of the student. It reviews all data on the spreadsheet and looks for at least two pieces of supporting documentation. Based on this information, committee members reach consensus on eligibility decisions. The division does not allow one single criterion to guarantee or deny access to gifted identification

The eligibility process is annual, beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> for every student in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and beyond who is enrolled in the division as of March 1<sup>st</sup> of that year and was not identified for Charlottesville's gifted services in previous years. Within 90 days of this date, eligibility decisions are forwarded in writing to the candidate's parents/guardians.

### 3. Determination of Services (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section describes the process of determining appropriate educational services for identified K-12 students.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

Together gifted resource teachers, classroom teachers and administrators at the school determine for identified students the appropriate talent development options. As these services integrate with the general education program and occur in general education classrooms, parental permission to participate is not required.

Parents are kept informed of the services available to their child through regular communication from the school. Adjustments in services or changes in placement are made as needed with parental notification.

### Part IV: Notification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.4)

This section includes the procedures used for (a) notifying parents/guardians when the individual identification process is initiated; (b) requesting permission for individual testing and/or collection of additional information; (c) requesting permission for provision of appropriate service options; and, (d) parents/guardians wishing to file an appeal of the identification outcome, change in placement, or exit decision. Any procedural differences pertaining to a specific area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

#### 1. General Information

Through division events and resources such as meetings, newsletters, audio messages and web sites, parents and guardians are kept informed of gifted identification procedures and timelines.

#### 2. Permission for Evaluation

The division communicates to families that it evaluates annually every student in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and beyond for gifted identification. Parents/guardians who do not want their child considered have the option of submitting the opt-out form to the school by April 15.

For identification purposes, the division uses national-normed achievement tests that are given at least annually to all students in grade 3 and above. If additional testing is required, the parents/guardians are notified and written permission to administer the test is requested. If there is no response to the first communication sent home, the school makes at least one additional attempt to obtain permission and information. Consent via a phone conversation or email is acceptable. The school documents its communication efforts with the candidate's parents or guardians.

3. Permission for Placement

At the end of the academic year, eligibility decisions are forwarded in writing to the candidate's parents/guardians. The communication contains the person to contact if parents/guardians would like more information or have questions regarding the decision. The letter also includes a request for permission to place the student in the program. Parents/guardians are asked to sign the form and return it to the child's school.

4. Notification of the Right to Appeal

Parents/guardians of students not found eligible for gifted identification receive written notification of the decision. The communication includes the title of a person to contact regarding the decision and the timeline for submitting a written appeal if they wish to do so.

5. Appeal Process

Parents/guardians who choose to appeal a gifted identification decision must submit a written request for review to the Coordinator of Gifted Education within fifteen (15) instructional days of contacting the school and discussing the appeals process. An appeal is based on the evidence that was reviewed at the original identification meeting. If new evidence is to be presented, the case may be brought to the next regularly scheduled identification meeting.

The Appeals Committee has fifteen (15) instructional days to complete the appeal. The Coordinator of Gifted Education serves as chairperson of the Appeals Committee and directs the appeals process, including all communication. Personnel serving on the committee may include the coordinator, the Chief Academic Officer, a gifted resource teacher, a school counselor and a classroom teacher who taught the candidate. A majority of the members of the Appeals Committee shall not have served on the committee that rendered the original decision, but at least one member shall have served on the identification committee.

Decisions made by the Appeals Committee are of two types:

1. The student is eligible for gifted identification.
2. The student is not eligible for gifted identification at this time.

The chairperson forwards written copies of the Appeals Committee decision to the appropriate school principal and the candidate's parents/guardians within ten (10) instructional days of the Appeals Committee meeting. The decision of the appeals committee is considered final. The student is eligible for re-nomination the next school year.

6. Change in Student Placement

The division does not reevaluate students who have been identified as gifted by the Charlottesville City Schools as long as the student maintains enrollment in the division. The student retains such identification until graduation unless the parent or guardian formally requests removal from the program.

7. Making an Exit Decision

At any time, parents/guardians may request that their child not be identified gifted. The request must be in writing, is placed in the student's file and is immediately honored.

**Part V: Change in Instructional Services (8VAC20-40-60A.5)**

This section includes the policy for written notification to parents or legal guardians of identification and placement decisions, including initial changes in placement procedures or exit policy from the program.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

Parents/guardians of students identified gifted receive written notification of the decision. The notification includes school contact information. A student identified retains such identification until graduation unless the parent or guardian formally requests removal from the program.

At any time, parents/guardians may request that their child not take part in any gifted services that occur outside the general education classroom. The request must be in writing and is placed in the student's file. The request is immediately honored.

Any student withdrawn by a parent may be reconsidered at any time. Parents or the student may initiate such a request to an administrator, gifted resource teacher or classroom teacher. Participation resumes when reasons for withdrawal change.

**Part VI: Evidence of Appropriate Service Options (8VAC20-40-60A.10)**

This section provides evidence that gifted education service options from kindergarten through twelfth grade are offered continuously and sequentially, with instructional time during the school day and week to (i) work with their age-level peers, (ii) work with their intellectual and academic peers, (iii) work independently; and (iv) foster intellectual and academic growth of gifted students. Parents and legal guardians shall receive assessment of each gifted student's academic growth. Career and Technical aptitude programs and Visual and/or Performing Arts programs are offered at the discretion of the school division.

**A. Service Options are Continuous and Sequential**

This section provides evidence that the division's program of curricula and instruction for gifted learners is continuous and sequential. GIA programs need to provide evidence from kindergarten through twelfth grade. SAA programs need to provide evidence that service options are continuous and sequential from identification until twelfth grade.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English & mathematics)

Through talent recognition and development opportunities in grades K–3, classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers offer all students in the general education classroom multiple, ongoing opportunities to develop their potential.

Beginning in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, students who are identified as gifted receive services in English and/or mathematics in the general education classroom. At all levels, they have access to differentiated curriculum and instruction that is responsive to the educational needs of the learner. The program is grounded in the core curriculum but is differentiated, modified and expanded to

provide appropriate learning challenges. The level and pace at which the content is delivered is dependent on the academic readiness level of the student.

Elementary School (3–6): Collaboration efforts between and among classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers allows for services that integrate with the general education program. Differentiated English and/or mathematics instruction results from professional learning for all teachers, collaboration between teachers, extension activities, whole group lessons and small group configurations based on student interest, readiness and learning profile.

Middle School (7–8): At the middle school level, students can choose a “leveled-up” option with their academic course work. In addition, the mathematics program is designed to enable students to accelerate the pace of their learning in the traditional math sequence of courses.

High School (9-12): At the high school level, students can choose a “leveled-up” option, dual enrollment, and Advanced Placement classes in English and mathematics. Carefully planned curricula provide experiences that extend the learning to meet student needs. The gifted resource teacher and the guidance department work in consultation with students, teachers, parents and administrators to provide academic resources and support.

**B. Service Options Provide Instructional Time with Age-level Peers**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies or program model that allows gifted students to interact with their age-level peers during the school day and week.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English & mathematics)

Students have multiple opportunities to learn with age-level peers in experiences that include investigations, projects, presentations and collaboration. Gifted resource teachers work with classroom teachers to adapt the core curriculum to meet learners’ needs while also providing time for students to interact with their classmates.

**C. Service Options Provide Instructional Time with Intellectual and Academic Peers**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies used in the division to accelerate and enrich the content for gifted learners beyond the grade-level or course expectations for all learners. The description should include how these academic needs are met during the school day and week.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English & mathematics)

Students have opportunities to learn with intellectual and academic peers through flexible grouping. Gifted resource teachers work closely with classroom teachers to extend and accelerate the core English and/or mathematics curriculum as well as provide supplemental learning experiences. Instructional strategies can include small group instruction, whole group instruction, project-based learning, cross-curricular units, Socratic seminars and differentiated instruction using available research-based materials.

**D. Service Options Provide Instructional Time to Work Independently**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies or program model used in the division to allow gifted learners to work independently during the school day and week.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English & mathematics)

Students have opportunities to participate in research projects, inquiry design model experiences and/or self-selected independent work. They are encouraged to become self-directed, independent learners while developing their organizational, research, and communication skills. Classroom teachers and/or gifted resource teachers monitor student progress and provide opportunities for students to become proficient in using rubric-based assessments.

**E. Service Options Foster Intellectual and Academic Growth**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies used in the division to foster intellectual and academic growth during the school day and week.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English & mathematics)

Classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers work collaboratively to provide appropriate academic services that challenge and engage all learners. Students participate in activities that promote mental development and stimulate academic and creative achievement. Curriculum considerations include an emphasis on the processes of analysis, synthesis and evaluation; the use of divergent thinking skills; a balance between figural and verbal tasks; the complexity and abstractness of a topic; a balance among oral, written and kinesthetic modes of expression; and a variety of whole group, small group and individual activities. Students are encouraged to think critically; consider complex problems using higher thought processes; create new and original ideas; produce divergent responses; and develop the confidence necessary for risk taking.

**F. Procedures for Assessing Academic Growth in Gifted Students**

This section includes a description of the procedures used by the division to assess the academic growth for gifted learners.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English & mathematics)

Assessment practices are an integral part of the learning process and include both formative and summative evaluation procedures for English and mathematics. Formative assessments help teachers shape future lessons and provide appropriate challenges. In addition, they help learners reflect on their work and make improvements. Throughout the year, students have opportunities to assess their own performance, set academic goals and evaluate their progress in reaching these goals. Summative assessment is used to record student growth.



State standards, project criteria, and product goals are the basis for evaluation by teacher, students, and others. The purpose of the evaluation is to allow students to fully display their skills and understandings and set new goals for further learning and growth.

Student academic growth is documented and communicated to parents annually.

**Part VII: Program of Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction (8VAC20-40-60A.11)**

The *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students* defines appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction as curriculum and instruction adapted or modified to accommodate the accelerated learning aptitudes of identified students in their areas of strength. Such curriculum and instructional strategies provide accelerated and enrichment opportunities that recognize gifted students' needs for (i) advanced content and pacing of instruction; (ii) original research or production; (iii) problem finding and solving; (iv) higher level thinking that leads to the generation of products; and (v) a focus on issues, themes, and ideas within and across areas of study. Such curriculum and instruction are offered continuously and sequentially to support the achievement of student outcomes, and provide support necessary for these students to work at increasing levels of complexity that differ significantly from those of their age-level peers. This section provides a description of the school division's appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction demonstrating accelerated and advanced content for gifted learners.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

The division works to ensure that the curriculum is rigorous, relevant and recognizes the academic needs of high-ability learners in English and mathematics. There is no one size fits all approach to teaching advanced learners and it is important to design curricula that taps the potential of many students and promotes a growth mindset. The curriculum and instruction must be flexible enough to address the needs of a diverse population of learners.

Division curriculum guides serve as a framework from which teachers develop instruction that provides access to high-level thinking strategies. The division also works to ensure learners have access to experiences that are in-depth, complex and culturally responsive. The curriculum is based on the requirements set forth by local, state and national guidelines as well as best practices in each field of study.

**DIFFERENTIATION**

Strategies of differentiation allow students to be challenged by a variety of instructional practices suited to individual readiness levels, interests and learning styles. These strategies are incorporated throughout the units of study and form the foundation of teacher-training efforts. The development and delivery of differentiated curriculum for advanced learners relies on the adjustment of content, process and product based on students' readiness and interests.

To differentiate **content** in English and mathematics, teachers:

- Organize content around major concepts and key understandings,
- Allow for pacing of material through acceleration,
- Allow for in-depth study through content enrichment,

- Design lessons that require problem finding and problem solving,
- Integrate experiences across the disciplines, and
- Allow for student choice.

With differentiated **content**, learners:

- Focus on content that is complex, abstract, and multifaceted,
- Use multiple and varied advanced materials, and
- Offer independent study, as appropriate.

To differentiate **products** in English and mathematics, teachers:

- Allow for a range of product alternatives; combine teacher and student choice,
- Teach skills of planning and production,
- Design evaluation methods that are appropriate to the assignment,
- Make assessment criteria explicit by using rubrics and/or checklists ,
- Provide opportunities for students to self-evaluate based on specific criteria,
- Offer project-based performance tasks, and
- Allow for student choice.

With differentiated **products**, learners:

- Grapple with real and relevant issues,
- Modify existing ideas or create new ones, and
- Use multiple modes of expression/presentation.

To differentiate **process** in English and mathematics, teachers:

- Adjust the pace of instruction,
- Emphasize complex-level thinking strategies,
- Expect students to go beyond the information given to see what is implied,
- Scaffold instruction based on the needs of the learner,
- Use tiered activities,
- Adjust instruction based on ongoing assessment of students, and
- Allow for flexible grouping and student choice.

With differentiated **process**, learners:

- Use logic and reasoning processes to think through complicated issues,
- Ask complex-thinking questions about the topic,
- Reflect on their thinking and justify their responses,
- Work in different group configurations, and
- Complete independent work.

To meet student needs in English and mathematics, classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers employ a variety of strategies, including the use of special resources shown to build problem-solving skills and support the development of critical and creative thinking. Possible components include:

<p><u>English:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Independent study</li> <li>● Inquiry Design Model activities</li> <li>● Jacob’s Ladder</li> <li>● Literature Circles</li> <li>● Novel studies</li> <li>● Philosophical Chairs</li> <li>● Project-based performances</li> <li>● Socratic Seminars</li> <li>● Touchpebbles/Touchstones</li> <li>● Writing competitions (e.g. Writer’s Eye)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Mathematics:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Challenge Math (work by Edward Zaccaro)</li> <li>● Investigations</li> <li>● Hands-on-Equations</li> <li>● Math contests (e.g. VA Mathematics League)</li> <li>● Mathematical Mindsets (work by Jo Boaler)</li> <li>● Project M2 and Project M3 Mentoring Mathematical Minds</li> <li>● Project-based performances</li> <li>● Virtual courses (e.g. Virtual Virginia)</li> <li>● YouCubed (work by Jo Boaler)</li> </ul>
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**Part VIII: Policies and Procedures for Access to Programs and Advanced Courses**

(8VAC20-40-60A.12)

This section provides the school division’s policies and procedures that allow access to programs of study and advanced courses at a pace and sequence commensurate with the learning needs of the gifted student.

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

Students are encouraged to plan a course of study that prepares them to meet their academic and career goals. Policies and procedures aim to support open student access to opportunities including advanced coursework. Below are several policies related to access to programs and acceleration.

CCS Policy IGBI: Advanced Placement Classes and Special Programs (June 19, 2018)

Students and their parents are notified of the availability of dual enrollment, Advanced Placement classes; career and technical education programs, including internships, externships, apprenticeships, credentialing programs, certification programs, licensure programs, and other work-based learning experiences; and Academic Year Governor’s School Programs; the qualifications for enrolling in such classes, programs, and experiences; and the availability of financial assistance to low-income and needy students to take the Advanced Placement exam. Students and their parents are also notified of the program with a community college to enable students to complete an associate’s degree or a one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies concurrent with a high school diploma and eligibility for course offerings at the University of Virginia for students who have successfully completed all courses in the high school program of studies in a particular content area. The Superintendent promulgates regulations to implement this policy, which ensure the provision of timely and adequate notice to students and their parents.

CCS Policy IKEB: Acceleration Programs (June 18, 2018)

The curriculum and schedule of elementary, middle and high schools shall provide flexibility in placing certain students in programs or subjects normally considered above their grade level. Scheduling eighth grade students into subjects above the normal grade level is done with

counseling based on evidence of ability, past scholastic achievement and cooperation of the individual student and his parents or guardian.

When students below the ninth grade successfully complete courses offered for credit in grade 9 through 12, credit shall be counted toward meeting the standard units required for graduation provided the courses are equivalent in content and academic rigor as those courses offered at the secondary level. To earn a verified unit of credit for these courses, students below ninth grade level must meet the same requirements applicable to other students.

In any high school credit-bearing course taken in middle school, a parent may request that the grade be omitted from the student's transcript and the student not earn high school credit for the course. Such requests shall be made in the format and by the deadline set forth in regulations developed by the superintendent.

### **Part IX: Personal and Professional Development (8VAC20-40-60A.13)**

School divisions must provide evidence of professional development based on the following teacher competencies outlined in 8VAC20-542-310 below.

1. Understanding of principles of the integration of gifted education and general education, including:
  - a. Strategies to encourage the interaction of gifted students with students of similar and differing abilities; and
  - b. Development of activities to encourage parental and community involvement in the education of the gifted, including the establishment and maintenance of an effective advisory committee.
2. Understanding of the characteristics of gifted students, including:
  - a. Varied expressions of advanced aptitudes, skills, creativity, and conceptual understandings;
  - b. Methodologies that respond to the affective (social-emotional) needs of gifted students; and
  - c. Gifted behaviors in special populations (i.e., those who are culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, or physically disabled).
3. Understanding of specific techniques to identify gifted students using diagnostic and prescriptive approaches to assessment, including:
  - a. The selection, use, and evaluation of multiple assessment instruments and identification strategies;
  - b. The use of both subjective and objective measures to provide relevant information regarding the aptitude/ability or achievement of potentially gifted students;
  - c. The use of authentic assessment tools such as portfolios to determine performance, motivation/interest and other characteristics of potentially gifted students;
  - d. The development, use, and reliability of rating scales, checklists, and questionnaires by parents, teachers and others;
  - e. The evaluation of data collected from student records such as grades, honors, and awards;
  - f. The use of case study reports providing information concerning exceptional conditions; and
  - g. The structure, training, and procedures used by the identification and placement committee.
4. Understanding and application of a variety of educational models, teaching methods, and strategies for selecting materials and resources that ensure:
  - a. Academic rigor through the development of high-level proficiency in all core academic areas utilizing the Virginia Standards of Learning as a baseline;
  - b. The acquisition of knowledge and development of products that demonstrate creative and critical thinking as applied to learning both in and out of the classroom; and
  - c. The development of learning environments that guide students to become self-directed, independent learners.
5. Understanding and application of theories and principles of differentiating curriculum designed to match the distinct characteristics of gifted learners to the programs and curriculum offered to gifted students, including:
  - a. The integration of multiple disciplines into an area of study;
  - b. Emphasis on in-depth learning, independent and self-directed study skills and metacognitive skills;
  - c. The development of analytical, organizational, critical, and creative thinking skills;
  - d. The development of sophisticated products using varied modes of expression;
  - e. The evaluation of student learning through appropriate and specific criteria; and

- f. The development of advanced technological skills to enhance student performance.
6. Understanding of contemporary issues and research in gifted education, including:
  - a. The systematic gathering, analyzing, and reporting of formative and summative data; and
  - b. Current local, state, and national issues and concerns.

Areas of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

The Charlottesville City Schools mission for professional learning is to enhance and support the knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs of staff to create high levels of learning for all students. The division believes that highly effective professional learning is student focused, purposeful, collaborative and job embedded. To effectively improve the academic achievement of students identified as gifted and meet the goals of the division's Strategic Plan, structures for professional learning strive to increase the capacity of all staff. Professionals must continuously update their skill and knowledge base to meet the ever-changing needs of the diverse student body. Professional learning opportunities must reflect learning styles and time constraints of all stakeholders and must be embedded through varied structures, such as meetings, classes, curriculum institutes, virtual courses and conferences. In addition, the division uses research-based professional development structures that include professional learning communities, coaching/mentoring and teacher leadership.

With the ultimate goal being to increase student achievement, the division approaches professional learning in three ways. First, it provides professional learning based on district-defined knowledge and skills that lead to the effective performance of all employees. Next, professional learning at the school level includes on-going data-driven training that meets the needs of staff members at that site. Finally, personal professional learning focuses on data-driven training based on the needs and desires of the individual.

#### Professional Learning for Gifted Resource Teachers

- Local training on educational experiences offered through a talent development framework
- Local training in strategies for differentiating curriculum and instruction for gifted learners
- Local training on instructional materials appropriate for talent development
- Local training on gifted identification procedures
- Monthly staff meetings for collaborative planning and program articulation and implementation
- Readings on topics related to current best practices in gifted education
- Participation in professional learning sponsored by universities and professional organizations, such as the National Association for Gifted Children and the Virginia Association for the Gifted

*The gifted resource teacher is asked to either have or be working towards an endorsement in gifted education.*

### Professional Learning for CCS Staff Members

The gifted program coordinator, the literacy coordinator, the math coordinator, gifted resource teachers and content teachers facilitate professional learning opportunities for staff members across the division. Through faculty sessions, individual and grade level conversations and professional learning community meetings, staff at each building receive information on topics that include:

- Local training on a talent development framework for gifted identification and services
- Local training on recognizing talent and the non-traditional characteristics of gifted students
- Local training on gifted identification procedures
- Local training on strategies to meet their academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners
- Training on differentiating instruction for gifted learners in English and mathematics
- Professional learning sponsored by professional organizations/companies that includes conferences, trainings, webinars and workshops.

### **Part X: Procedures for Annual Review of Effectiveness (8VAC20-40-60A.14)**

This section provides the procedures for the annual review of the effectiveness of the school division's gifted education program, including the review of screening, referral, identification, and program procedures toward the achievement of equitable representation of students, the review of student outcomes and the academic growth of gifted students. School divisions may decide to focus on one or more areas to review each year. However, reviews shall be based on multiple criteria and shall include multiple sources of information.

Areas of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (English and mathematics)

The annual review of the effectiveness of the gifted education programs for the Charlottesville City Schools is based on criteria that includes:

1. The annual report for the Virginia Department of Education.
2. A report on the gifted identification process that includes the number of students found eligible by subgroups, including historically underrepresented subgroups.
3. The number of students who take high school Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment classes in English and mathematics, including those from underrepresented subgroups.
4. The number of Advanced Placement course offerings and the number students who score at each level (1–5) on an Advanced Placement exam.
5. The progress made toward reaching the program goals and objectives as outlined in Part II of the division's Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted.

Using Charlottesville's *Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted* as its basis, the Gifted Advisory Committee delineates areas of focus for the annual review. These include program goals and objectives as outlined in the Local Plan, elementary and upper elementary services, secondary services and professional learning. The program coordinator and gifted resource teachers, in conjunction with the committee, identify accomplishments in each area and set goals for the next school year. Each spring, the Gifted Advisory Committee shares this information with the Superintendent and the School Board in a written report.

**Part XI: Procedures for the Establishment of the Local Advisory Committee**  
(8VAC20-40-60B)

Each school division may establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members who are appointed by the school board. This committee shall reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division. This section should include the school division's procedures for the establishment of the local advisory committee for the gifted program if the division has elected to establish a committee.

The Gifted Advisory Committee is composed of two parent/community representatives from each school in the division as well as a School Board representative. Gifted resource teachers, support staff and the program administrator attend committee meetings as ex-officio members.

Each spring, and if necessary again in the fall, nominations are solicited from building administrators, gifted resource teachers at each school and current advisory committee members. The Coordinator of Gifted Education reviews these recommendations to guarantee membership represents all components of the division's gifted education program and reflects the ethnic and geographic composition of the community.

The School Board approves appointments to the committee for a one-year term that can be renewed.

**Part XII: Assurances** (8VAC20-40-60A.6; A.7; A.8; A.9)

In accordance with the *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students*, the following assurance must be provided by the school division:

- Assurances that student records are maintained in compliance with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations;
- Assurances that (i) the selected and administered testing and assessment materials have been evaluated by the developers for cultural, racial, and linguistic biases; (ii) identification procedures are constructed so that those procedures may identify high potential or aptitude in any student whose accurate identification may be affected by economic disadvantages, by limited English proficiency, or by disability; (iii) standardized tests and other measures have been validated for the purpose of identifying gifted students; and (iv) instruments are administered and interpreted by trained personnel in conformity with the developer’s instructions;
- Assurances that accommodations or modifications determined by the school division’s special education Individual Education Plan (IEP) team, as required for the student to receive a free appropriate public education, shall be incorporated into the student’s gifted education services; and
- Assurances that a written copy of the school division’s approved local plan for the education of the gifted is available to parents or legal guardians of each referred student, and to others upon request.

Pursuant to these requirements, I hereby certify that the school division is in compliance with this language.

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Division Superintendent’s Signature

Printed Name

Date