



Haywood County Schools

AIG Handbook 2025-2028

Article 9B

North Carolina has legislation, passed in 1916, that mandates identification and services of AIG students.

Article 9B. Academically or Intellectually Gifted Students. § 115C-150.5. Academically or intellectually gifted students. The General Assembly believes the public schools should challenge all students to aim for academic excellence and that academically or intellectually gifted students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. (1996, 2nd Ex. Sess., c. 18, s. 18.24(f).)

HCS Vision

The Haywood County Board of Education is committed to the HCS vision: **Success for today**, through the cooperative involvement of students, parents, educators, and the total community; **Preparation for tomorrow** through academic achievement for all students and the development of thinking and reasoning skills; and **Learning for a lifetime** which assures well-informed, productive citizens for the future. Our mission for the AIG program is to identify and nurture the unique strengths and potential of all gifted learners through equitable, comprehensive, and responsive practices. We are committed to fostering academic, intellectual, social, and emotional growth by delivering differentiated instruction, intentional programming, and strong partnerships with families and the community. We envision a learning environment where every gifted student is recognized, supported, and empowered to achieve their fullest potential. Through inclusive identification practices, rigorous curriculum, and a commitment to excellence and equity, we aim to cultivate lifelong learners, innovative thinkers, and compassionate leaders prepared to thrive in an ever-changing global society.

Identification Process

Formal Written Referrals	Referral Forms may be submitted all year
Screening/Identification – Fall Semester	January
Screening/Identification – Spring Semester	May - June, August

Referral

Referral forms, which include characteristics of gifted students outlined in the Gifted and Talented Children's Education Act, are available for teachers, parents, and self-nominating students. These forms, available on the HCS AIG website, provide a clear set of criteria that align with the key traits often seen in gifted learners, such as exceptional problem-solving skills, creativity, intellectual curiosity, and the ability to quickly grasp complex concepts. A Referral Form may be completed and submitted to an AIG specialist year-round.

Screening

The screening process builds a comprehensive learner profile based on data collected from state summative assessments, district benchmark assessments, classroom formative data and observations and/or IQ/Aptitude testing.

Universal Screener

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) will be administered as a universal screener in the spring of Grade 2 for all students with the exception of students meeting the criteria for the Extended Content Standards. The CogAT may also be utilized for further testing at other grade levels if necessary. The CogAT measures a student's reasoning and problem-solving skills in the areas of verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal thinking.

Identification Criteria

Students must meet the established criteria in at least 2 of the 3 following areas: **Aptitude Testing, Achievement Testing and/or State-normed Grade Level Assessments.**

Academic Reading (AR)

- Aptitude
 - 92nd percentile or greater in Verbal subscore composite (VN or VQ) or 92nd percentile in full-scale composite (VQN)
- Achievement
 - 92nd percentile or greater in the area of reading
- Grade Level Assessment
 - 95th percentile or greater on BOG/EOG Reading or EOC English II assessment

Academic Math (AM)

- Aptitude
 - 92nd percentile or greater in Quantitative subscore composite (QN or VQ) or 92nd percentile in full-scale composite (VQN)
 - 92nd percentile or greater NNAT3
- Achievement
 - 92nd percentile or greater in the area of mathematics
- Grade Level Assessment
 - 95th percentile or greater on EOG Mathematics or EOC NC Math 1 or NC Math 3 assessment

Academically Gifted Reading and Math (AG)

- Meets the identification criteria for **BOTH** Academic Reading and Academic Math

Intellectually Gifted (IG)

- 96th percentile overall composite (VQN) score in aptitude test but does not meet criteria in achievement or grade level assessments
- OR**
- 96th percentile NNAT3 but does not meet criteria in achievement or grade level assessments

Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AI/AIG)

- Meets the identification criteria for Academically Gifted Reading and Math **AND** scores 96th percentile or greater on aptitude full-scale composite (VQN)

OR

- 98th percentile or greater on aptitude full-scale composite (VQN)
(Automatically qualifies in all areas without additional testing)

Aptitude or Abilities Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)• Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT3)• Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT)• Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)
Achievement Tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT IV)
Grade Level Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• End of Grade• End of Course• Beginning of Grade 3 Reading

**Aptitude and achievement scores will be used for student identification and placement purposes for a period of three years. Students may be administered an aptitude or achievement assessment no more than once every other year.*

Transfer Students

Haywood County Schools will honor the AIG identification for any student transferring in from a school/district within the state with an approved NC AIG plan. The AIG team (teacher, principal, assistant principal, lead teacher, AIG specialist, AIG director) will analyze test scores, performance data and teacher observations to determine appropriate services in HCS. The AIG specialist will meet with the parent/guardian and the DEP will be updated to reflect current services. Records will be reviewed for students transferring from a private/charter school within the state without an approved NC AIG plan or transferring from outside the state of North Carolina. These students will be required to meet HCS AIG identification criteria for placement. Additional testing will be conducted, if necessary.

Services

In order to effectively meet the unique learning needs of K–12 students identified as Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG), the district develops and implements a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) that outlines the differentiated curriculum and instruction services to be provided. This plan serves as a living document, reviewed and revised annually, to ensure alignment with the student's evolving needs, strengths, and educational goals.

The DEP is developed through a collaborative process involving a team that typically includes AIG specialists, classroom teachers, parents or guardians, students, and school counselors and administrators when needed. This collaborative approach ensures that the plan reflects a comprehensive understanding of the student's profile and supports their academic and social-emotional development.

The development of the DEP is informed by a variety of data sources to ensure an appropriate match between the student's needs and the services provided. These data sources may include cognitive assessments and the aptitude student profile narrative, standardized achievement data from district benchmarks or End-of-Grade/End-of-Course assessments, teacher observations and recommendations, classroom performance, student work samples or portfolios, interest inventories, and student interviews. This ensures that the services outlined in the DEP are both targeted and responsive to the individual learner.

Elementary and Middle School

Each DEP includes the student's identified areas of giftedness and the specific differentiated services that

will be provided. These services might include differentiated instruction within the classroom, resource class, an AIG course, curriculum compacting, subject or grade acceleration, cluster grouping, consultation, and access to advanced coursework. The plan also outlines content modification, special programming, instructional strategies and enrichment activities that align with the student's learning style and interests.

High School

The four-year plan outlines specific services and options such as enrollment in Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), Career and College Promise (CCP), CTE or dual enrollment courses. It may also include independent study opportunities, internships, project-based learning, or academic competitions. The plan is updated annually as the student grows and their interests and long term goals evolve.

Grievances

To ensure transparency, fairness, and due process in matters related to AIG identification and services, the district has a multi-level procedure for resolving disagreements. This process provides parents and guardians with structured opportunities to address concerns through school, district, and state-level channels, ensuring that each concern is given thoughtful consideration and timely resolution.

Level I - School Review If parent/guardian has a concern or question about AIG identification and/or services, the parent/guardian should contact the classroom teacher and the AIG specialist at the school. If after conferring with the teacher and AIG specialist, the parent/guardian has a disagreement concerning screening, nomination, identification, or services, he/she shall request in writing a meeting with the AIG Leadership Committee (Needs Determination Team, principal, lead teacher). The meeting will occur within 10 days of receipt of the written request.

Level II - Administrative Review If the disagreement is not resolved at the school level, the parent/guardian may appeal in writing within 10 days of the school level decision to the Assistant Superintendent and the district AIG Director. The disagreement will be reviewed and a response will be issued to the parent/guardian in writing within 10 days of the appeal.

Level III - School Board Review If an agreement cannot be reached administratively, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Board of Education in writing within 10 days of receiving the response from the Administrative Review. The Board will offer a written decision to the parent/guardian within 30 days.

Level IV - State Level Hearing The parent/guardian may file a petition for a contested case hearing under Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. This must be done within 30 calendar days of the local School Board's decision. The scope of the review shall be limited to (1) whether the local school administrative unit improperly failed to identify the child as an Academically/Intellectually Gifted student; or (2) whether the local plan for Academically/Intellectually Gifted Services has been implemented appropriately in regard to the child. Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will make a decision based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law. The decision of the administrative law judge becomes final, is binding on all parties, and is not subject to further review. Attorney fees are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Contact Information

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