

Loudoun County Public Schools

Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

2020-2024

DRAFT (10.09.20)

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Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

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.

General Information regarding the Gifted Program in Loudoun County Public 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)	Grades 4-12
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) - Choose an item.	Grades K-3
Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)	NA
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Choose an item.	NA

(Please highlight, copy, and insert SAA and/or VPA rows as necessary to reflect all areas of giftedness served by the school division.)

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

The mission of Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) is to empower students to make meaningful contributions to the world. LCPS does this through designing authentic, challenging learning experiences for students that lead to deeper learning. Through deeper learning, students can grow into knowledgeable critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators, and contributors.

LCPS recognizes that there are elementary and secondary students who demonstrate high levels of intellectual ability or the potential for high levels of intellectual ability when compared to typical students of the same age, experience, or environment. As such, these gifted learners require an appropriately differentiated curriculum that enables them to reach their full intellectual and academic potential. This differentiated curriculum must challenge them to work at increasing levels of complexity that differ from those of their age-level peers. Gifted learners also need curriculum and instruction that provides them with opportunities to interact and learn with their academic peers and addresses and supports their unique social-emotional characteristics.

To meet the needs of gifted learners, LCPS has developed a gifted education program that is focused on the following goals. By participating in the gifted education program, students will:

- become divergent creative thinkers who recognize problems and solve them.
- construct personal meaning and understanding of others and the world around them.
- develop the capacity for self-assessment.

All students can benefit from gifted programs because these programs emphasize differentiation in the regular classroom, identification of the strengths of all students, and a school-wide focus on higher-order thinking skills. Yet it is critical to recognize that gifted learners benefit from programs that are designed for highly able learners with rigorous curriculum content and the implementation of research-based instructional strategies that support gifted learners. Educational programs or services provided for gifted learners should be based on the aptitude, achievement, and academic/social-emotional needs of gifted learners. They must include extension activities, enrichment opportunities, and acceleration of the core curriculum.

To successfully meet the needs of gifted learners, LCPS supports a team approach. Gifted resource teachers, classroom teachers and other faculty members, administrators, counselors, and parents/guardians make up the instructional team. These individuals must communicate and work together to ensure that students are adequately challenged in a variety of learning settings and that students' social-emotional needs are addressed.

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LCPS understands that students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse groups, students from economically vulnerable backgrounds, and students with disabilities (twice exceptional) are historically underrepresented in gifted education programs.* To better identify students from all backgrounds for gifted services, LCPS uses multiple criteria for identifying eligible students, implements the EDGE program, and puts other practices in place such as universal ability testing at the elementary level.

It is the belief of LCPS that each student's educational needs must be addressed as an integral part of the regular curriculum. Therefore, LCPS is committed to providing educators with ongoing staff development to ensure an appropriately differentiated curriculum for identified gifted learners. (10.09.20)

** In Loudoun County, the following student groups have been historically underrepresented in the LCPS gifted program: African American students, Hispanic students, English language learners, students with disabilities (twice exceptional), and students from economically vulnerable households.*

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.

LCPS defines giftedness as having abilities and/or potential for intellectual and academic accomplishment so outstanding that specialized services are required to meet a student's educational needs. Students who demonstrate exceptional performance in general intellectual aptitude are identified as in need of gifted education services. Such students demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate superior reasoning; persistent intellectual curiosity; advanced use or acquisition of language; exceptional problem solving; rapid acquisition and mastery of facts, concepts, and principles; and creative and imaginative expression across a broad range of intellectual disciplines beyond their age-level peers.

Evidence of a student's need (readiness) for gifted education services includes evaluation of gifted behaviors as determined by teacher and parent rating scales, superior academic performance on norm referenced ability tests, and exceptional presentation on prescribed performance tasks and products. LCPS does not allow any single criterion to deny or guarantee eligibility for gifted education services. (8.2.20)

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:** Administer research-based gifted identification procedures and practices that are implemented in a consistent and efficient manner across the division. Strive to make continuous improvements to ensure that access to gifted services is equitable for all students.
- B. Delivery of Services:** Provide multiple programs and a continuum of services for grades K-12 that are appropriately differentiated for gifted students and enhance the quality of instruction for all students.
- C. Curriculum and Instruction:** Provide gifted learners in grades K-12 with learning opportunities that consist of differentiated curricular offerings, varied instructional approaches, and the use of a variety of resource materials. These learning opportunities should address students' academic and social-emotional needs.
- D. Professional Development:** Provide training for gifted resource teachers, classroom teachers and other faculty members, and school-based administrators in recognizing the characteristics and behaviors of gifted students, understanding their academic and social-emotional needs, and utilizing best practices in gifted education pedagogy.
- E. Equitable Representation of Students:** According to the National Association of Gifted Children, "Identifying and serving culturally and linguistically diverse students enriches the fabric of gifted education and cultivates what is still an untapped national resource." In support of this statement, continue to increase access to gifted services for students from populations historically underrepresented in gifted education programs (e.g., students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse groups, students from economically vulnerable backgrounds, and students who are twice exceptional).
- F. Parent and Community Involvement:** Improve communication and collaboration among gifted education staff, classroom teachers and other staff members, administrators, parents/guardians, and the community in order to enhance awareness and understanding of gifted services in LCPS and best practices in gifted education.
(8.2.20)

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 General Intellectual Aptitude

The LCPS gifted identification process is designed to identify gifted students in grades K-12 from all backgrounds including students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds; students from economically vulnerable households; students with disabilities who may be twice exceptional (2e), and students who are English language learners (ELL). Students may be identified for an evaluation for gifted services through the screening process or by referral.

Information concerning the gifted eligibility process is posted on the LCPS Gifted and Talented webpage and on school gifted program webpages. This information is also included in school newsletters and other school correspondence. Presentations explaining LCPS gifted programs, the gifted eligibility process, and important deadlines are given at gifted information sessions scheduled throughout the year.

Screening Procedures for LCPS Gifted Programs:

SEARCH - Level 1 Gifted Services: The SEARCH program, which is taught by gifted resource teachers for 30-45 minutes every other week, is designed to encourage students in grades K-3 to solve problems through critical and creative thinking. In SEARCH, students are engaged in activities that promote the following thinking keys: reasoning, connecting, perceiving, evaluating, and creating. Students are encouraged to take academic risks during SEARCH lessons.

LCPS students in grades K-3 have access to SEARCH. No screening process takes place.

Differentiated Classroom Instruction (DCI) – Level 2 Gifted Services: The Differentiated Classroom Instruction (DCI) program is designed to provide academic support for K-3 students who demonstrate exceptional academic ability and performance.

Recommendations and referrals are made for DCI to the local school level Identification/Placement committee. The gifted resource teacher collects and reviews data for the K-2 students at her/his assigned school(s). The gifted resource teacher documents services received on the DCI form, which is submitted to the Gifted Education Department at the division level.

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Empowering Diversity in Gifted Education (EDGE) – Level 2 Gifted Services: The Empowering Diversity in Gifted Education (EDGE) program is designed to nurture and challenge students with advanced academic potential from populations historically underrepresented in LCPS gifted programs. The program provides additional academic challenges for students that are designed to develop each student’s individual potential. Classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers work together to nurture academic potential in young learners and help prepare them for more challenging and rigorous academic pathways.

The gifted resource teacher seeks input from classroom teachers and other staff members and consults with school administrators to identify students for the EDGE program. Classroom observations and student work samples are reviewed as part of the screening process.

FUTURA Program – Level 3 Gifted Services: The FUTURA program seeks to enhance and to develop the intellect of fourth and fifth grade students who have been formally identified in need of gifted services. FUTURA is a pull-out program where identified students receive enrichment and challenges one day a week in a FUTURA center. Students are immersed in lessons that correlate to thematic units tied to the Virginia Standards of Learning objectives for the core content areas. FUTURA offers a stimulating environment focusing on higher level thinking skills and activities including:

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Creative thinking and making connections
- Communicating
- Collaborating
- Contributing

School-Based Collaborative Gifted Program – Level 3 Gifted Services: This is a new model for delivering gifted services for fourth and fifth grade gifted learners. It was established to provide gifted services for students at their home schools. A gifted resource teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to challenge gifted learners in their regular classrooms by enriching and extending the general curriculum and by integrating curricula developed for gifted learners (e.g., William & Mary Literature Units, Jacob's Ladder, and Mentoring Mathematical Minds). In addition, gifted learners meet during the week with other gifted learners to collaborate on a variety of challenging, interdisciplinary projects.

In January, the test data for all third graders from the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test), administered in the winter of the second grade, and NNAT (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test), administered in the fall of the third grade, are reviewed. Scores from the subtests of the CogAT and the score from the NNAT are used to create a pool of candidates to be screened for FUTURA and the school-based collaborative gifted program.

Spectrum Program – Level 3 Gifted Services: The Spectrum program is designed to meet the needs of middle school students (grades 6-8) who have been identified in need of gifted services.

The Spectrum curriculum framework focuses on four themes that are explored each year: Business & Economics, Communication & Culture, Technology & Engineering, and Ethics & Perspectives. Students engage in project-based learning, research and inquiry, and problem solving. They are challenged to collaborate, communicate, and apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Learning experiences are designed to develop initiative, creativity, and leadership skills. Spectrum provides students with opportunities for self-assessment and reflection on the demands and responsibilities of the gifted learner.

Students identified for the FUTURA program are eligible for the Spectrum program when they enter middle school. Each year during September and January, Spectrum teachers survey the classroom teachers for student recommendations and referrals for gifted services.

Secondary Advanced Academic Programs: At the secondary level, gifted learners may self-select advanced academic course offerings such as honors-level, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment courses. Gifted learners may also apply for specialized programs such as the Academies of Loudoun, Summer Residential Governor's Schools, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (pending School Board approval). Each of the specialized programs have a separate screening and selection process.

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 General Intellectual Aptitude

The LCPS gifted evaluation process always begins with the submission of a parent/guardian-signed gifted referral form. This form may be downloaded from the LCPS Gifted and Talented webpage or obtained from the school gifted resource teacher. Parents or legal guardians, professional educators, or students may refer students to be evaluated for gifted services. A student may not be referred for gifted identification and placement more than once a calendar year. Schools are responsible for accepting referrals for transferring students moving into their school boundaries once the student is enrolled in and attending a Loudoun County Public School. Beginning with the receipt of the signed referral form, which serves as permission to evaluate a student for gifted services,

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the Identification/Placement committee will have 90 instructional days to determine the eligibility for gifted services.

Information concerning the gifted eligibility process is posted on the LCPS Gifted and Talented webpage and on school gifted program webpages. This information is also included in school newsletters and other school correspondence. Presentations explaining LCPS gifted programs, the gifted eligibility process, and important deadlines are given at gifted information sessions scheduled throughout the year.

Referral Procedures/SEARCH: LCPS students in grades K-3 have access to SEARCH. No referral form is required.

Referral Procedures/Differentiated Classroom Services (DCI): Parents or guardians, professional educators, or students may refer students for DCI (Grades K-2). Referrals may be submitted to the school gifted resource teacher from August through April of the academic school year. Kindergarten students may be referred for DCI starting in January of the kindergarten year.

Referral Procedures/FUTURA: Referrals for FUTURA are accepted during an established referral window in January – February each year. The exact dates of the referral window are posted on the LCPS Gifted and Talented webpage and elementary school gifted webpages. Referrals for students new to LCPS and who were found eligible for gifted services in another school district may be accepted in the fall of each school year. Parents/guardians may contact the gifted resource teacher at their child’s school to find out the exact referral deadline. Referrals for students who are new to LCPS and enroll after the fall referral deadline may be evaluated during the spring semester of the given school year.

Any third-grade student who is not in the district screening pool and students in grades four and five may be referred for gifted services by parents or guardians, professional educators, or administrators. Students may self-refer.

Referral Procedures/School-Based, Collaborative Gifted Program: The referral process for this program follows the FUTURA referral guidelines.

Referral Procedures/Spectrum: For middle school students, the referrals may be submitted to the Spectrum teacher. Referrals for Spectrum are accepted in October (for spring semester services) and during an established referral window in January – February (for fall semester services). The exact dates of the fall referral deadline and the winter referral window are posted on the LCPS Gifted and Talented webpage and middle school gifted webpages. Parents or guardians, professional educators, or administrators may submit referrals. Students may self-refer.

Referral Procedures/High School: For high school, referral forms are available from the school counseling office and should be submitted to the office of the Supervisor of Gifted

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Education. Parents or guardians, professional educators, or administrators may submit referrals. Students may self-refer.

Application Procedures/Secondary Advanced Academic Programs: At the secondary level, gifted learners may self-select advanced academic course offerings such as honors-level, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment courses. Gifted learners may also apply for specialized programs such as the Academies of Loudoun, Summer Residential Governor's Schools, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (pending School Board approval). Each of the specialized programs have a separate screening and selection process. Admission information and timelines for the Academies of Loudoun, Summer Residential Governor's Schools, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology are posted on their respective websites.

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.

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

This section includes the three or more categories that divisions shall include to develop a profile or composite for each student being considered. This listing of categories 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 a single category.

General Intellectual Aptitude

- 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) (must be included for GIA)
and/or

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- 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:

2. Additional identification information for General Intellectual Aptitude

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

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.

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

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

Click here to select area of giftedness.

- Classroom Teacher(s)
- Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s)
- Counselor(s)

- School Psychologist(s)
- Assessment Specialist(s)
- Principal(s) or Designee(s)
- Gifted Education Coordinator
- Other(s) Specify: ELL Teacher/SPED Teacher (as needed)

- b. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

This section indicates the type of Identification/Placement Committee the division uses.

- School-level Division-level

Each elementary school has a local Identification/Placement committee that determines eligibility for DCI for K-2 students. There are local and division-level Identification/Placement committees that make eligibility decisions for the FUTURA program/school-based, collaborative gifted program (elementary), and the Spectrum program (middle school). Students found eligible for FUTURA/school-based, collaborative gifted program services are eligible for Spectrum program services in grades 6-8. Both the local-level and division-level Identification/Placement committees use the same criteria listed above.

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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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

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>
<i>Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) School Form</i>	current classroom teacher(s) and other school professionals who work with the student	gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher
<i>Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) Home Form</i>	parents/guardians	gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher
<i>Differentiated Classroom Instruction Teacher Report</i>	current classroom teacher(s) and other school professionals who work with the student	gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher
Student Portfolio - Performance-based writing/reading, math, and creative thinking assessments	gifted resource teacher or faculty designee (middle school only)	District-level Identification/Eligibility Placement Committee	gifted resource teacher
Student work samples/products	classroom teacher, gifted resource teacher, parent/guardian, and/or student	Identification/Eligibility Placement Committee	gifted resource teacher
CogAT data Grades 2-8	classroom teacher, gifted resource teacher	Testing Services/gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher
NNAT data Grades 3-8	gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher
KBIT data Grades K-2	gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher	gifted resource teacher

Eligibility Decisions

General Intellectual Aptitude identification data are collected by the gifted resource teachers for grades K-5, by the Spectrum teacher for grades 6-8, and the high school gifted resource teacher and/or school counselors for grades 9-12. Measures collected include the following:

- Classroom teacher observations and response to *Scales for Identifying Gifted Students*
- Student Profile folder (parent questionnaire *Scales for Identifying Gifted Students-Home*), portfolio of performance tasks, student work submitted by teacher or parent)
- Ability test scores

Eligibility Decisions: Differentiated Classroom Instruction (DCI) - LCPS maintains a school-level Identification/Placement Committee for each elementary school. A Gifted Education Services/Eligibility Summary Form is completed by the school's gifted resource teacher for each student referred for gifted identification/placement in DCI. The student profile folder is read and evaluated by the school-level Identification/Placement Committee to ensure equity. To determine if the student meets the eligibility requirements, the school committee reviews the collected data. No single instrument, score, or criterion may be used to exclude or include a child for eligibility. The committee indicates its decision on the form which is forwarded to the Supervisor for Gifted Education.

The Supervisor of Gifted Education is responsible for system-wide record keeping regarding student identification and for promoting consistency among schools in the use of identification guidelines. The identification process is complete when the Supervisor of Gifted Education signs the eligibility form to indicate, to the school and the parents, that the criteria have been evaluated correctly. The information is placed in the countywide computer database. A copy of the form is returned to the school, and the school places this copy in the student's cumulative record. The school principal sends a letter of notification to the parent/guardian.

If found eligible for DCI services, the student will be challenged with enrichment and extension activities that supplement the core classroom curriculum in grades K-3. The gifted resource teacher will support the classroom teacher by sharing curriculum resources and providing guidance on implementing instructional strategies designed for gifted learners such as curriculum compacting.

Eligibility Decisions: Empowering Diversity through Gifted Education (EDGE) - To identify students for the EDGE program, gifted resource teachers collaborate with classroom teachers, SPED teachers, ELL teachers, and school administrators. In addition, they review classroom observation data and student work samples to support student participation in the program. Parents/guardians are notified about the program by letter.

Eligibility Decisions: FUTURA/School-Based Collaborative Gifted Program and Spectrum - For FUTURA, the school-based collaborative gifted program, and Spectrum, the division Identification/Placement Committee reads and evaluates the Student Profile Folder to ensure equity of access across the division. The Student Profile Folder, which includes the Student Portfolio, the *Scales for Identifying Gifted Students* (School and Home), and submitted student work samples, is read by members of the division Identification/Placement Committee until four readers agree that the evidence in the Student Profile Folder is supporting or non-supporting of the need for gifted education services. Each Student Profile Folder is evaluated by the readers using a holistic method where all of the information is considered together.

To determine if the student meets the eligibility requirements, the local school committee reviews the evaluated Profile Folder, and testing data noted on the Eligibility Summary Form. No single instrument, score, or criterion may be used to exclude or include a child for eligibility. The committee indicates their decision on the Eligibility Summary Form which is forwarded to the Supervisor for Gifted Education, who reviews the decision and officially notifies parents of the committee's decision. The supervisor also enters the status of the referral in the Student Information System.

Eligibility Decisions: High School - At the secondary level, gifted learners may self-select advanced academic course offerings such as honors-level, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment courses. Gifted learners may also apply for specialized programs such as the Academies of Loudoun, Summer Residential Governor's Schools, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (pending School Board approval). Each of the specialized programs have a separate screening and selection process. Admission information and timelines for the Academies of Loudoun, Summer Residential Governor's Schools, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology are posted on their respective websites.

Gifted Education Eligibility Timelines -

Within 90 instructional days of receiving written permission from the parent or guardian,

- the student is identified and is eligible for services, or
- the student is not identified or eligible for services at this time.

If a referred student is found ineligible for Level 2 or 3 services, the parent or guardian may appeal in writing by completing a Gifted Education Appeal form within 10 school days. The school system will respond within 20 school days to this appeal.

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

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

General Intellectual Aptitude

Insert Process of Determining Educational Services

Following the determination of eligibility, appropriate instructional services are determined by the individual school's Identification/Placement Committee through a review of the student's profile and of available placement options. The Identification/Placement Committee will study the strengths of the student and determine what instruction is appropriate for the student. Parents are informed of the recommendation of the committee and appeal procedures. Written parental permission is required prior to placement. Loudoun County Public Schools is committed to providing services in settings that encourage differentiation of instruction. Gifted services are provided through school-based activities which comply with LCPS School Board and state objectives. Gifted services address the unique abilities, interests, and needs of gifted learners through differentiated curriculum and instruction as well as enrichment, extension, and/or acceleration opportunities. School-based services are based on county-wide objectives for gifted education and are delivered in the following ways:

- In the regular classroom setting, students are instructed based on readiness, interest, and/or learning style.
- Students are challenged with extension activities and enrichment opportunities that build upon the core curriculum in the regular classroom and in gifted classroom settings.
- In the regular classroom setting, it is the building administrator's responsibility to accelerate students based on individual needs. The Gifted Department may provide assistance to building administrators by administering the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* to collect data to inform acceleration decisions.

At the secondary level, students may self-select from a variety of course options that are designed to meet the needs of gifted/high-ability learners. These courses include honors-level instruction, Advanced Placement courses, Dual Enrollment courses, technical/career-focused courses, online courses, elective courses, and independent study courses. (8.2.20)

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Eligibility information is available to the public on the LCPS website under *Gifted and Talented*.

a. Parents are notified at the beginning of each school year of the gifted identification process on the LCPS gifted and talented webpage, school gifted webpages, school newsletter articles, and through parent information sessions. Each year in September, parents of 3rd graders receive a letter explaining that the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT2) will be given in October/November. Each school cluster holds an informational meeting in September/October and January/February to explain the referral and identification processes for gifted services and programs. These information meetings are announced through LCPS and school websites, press releases, and flyers.

b. In February, a letter explaining the creation of the pool of students for screening and possible identification for program-based gifted services is sent to parents of third grade students whose scores on the NNAT2 or two sub-tests of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) are 97% or higher. A request for permission to evaluate the student for eligibility for gifted services and permission to collect additional information is sent to the parents/guardian(s) of each student in the district screening pool. The same request is sent to parents of students not in the pool who are referred for gifted services.

c. Parents receive written notification of all Identification/Placement committee decisions. Permission for placement must be given in writing before students are placed in gifted programs and/or services. The Supervisor of Gifted Education sends all parents the initial letter to seek such permission for placement. The permission forms are returned to the local school principals for placement in the students' files. Students will not be placed in programs or transported on school buses without signed permission (placement form signature) on file in the gifted education office.

d. If a parent or teacher wishes to appeal a gifted placement decision regarding eligibility or program placement, he/she must contact the Supervisor of Gifted Education in writing within 10 days of the receipt of the letter notifying the parents of the eligibility or placement decision. Appeals must contain new information (not in the original screening file). Specifications will be listed in the appeal notice. This may include student-generated work samples, letters from adults who know of the child's advanced abilities,

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and/or individual intelligence testing. If parents include intelligence testing from outside the school division, it must be administered by a private Virginia licensed psychologist. Upon receipt of the request for appeal, the Supervisor of Gifted Education Programs must respond in writing within 20 working days to the person making the request explaining that an appeals committee will review the case. The Appeals Committee will be chaired by the Supervisor of Gifted Education (non-voting) and consist of at least three voting members: a gifted resource teacher, a guidance counselor/or school psychologist, and an administrator. No member of the appeals committee will have served on the original Identification/Placement committee. The appeals committee will meet within 30 working days of receipt of the initial letter.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the results and/or data from any outside testing or additional information are received by the appeals committee's meeting date. There are no grounds for delaying the appeal review meeting date beyond the thirty instructional day time period. The committee may request any additional information needed to resolve the identification or placement decision. The committee will respond to parents within 10 working days of the decision of the committee. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final. (10.09.20)

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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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

It is not within the framework of Loudoun County's philosophy to re-evaluate the giftedness of its students. Students and parents must sign a withdrawal form to leave any gifted services or program and may return the following school year or in a future school year. LCPS does not remove students from programs without a meeting of the classroom teacher, gifted resource teacher, school administrator, parents, student, and counselor. Students and parents sign a statement of agreement for any change of gifted services that stem from such a meeting.

Parents may initiate a change in placement by completing a withdrawal or reentry form and submitting it to the local school. The form is forwarded to the gifted resource teacher and to the Supervisor of Gifted Education. This request remains in force unless parents inform the school, again in writing, of a desire to reverse the placement change. A change in placement can only occur once per school year. Additional requests within the school year must be directed to the Supervisor of Gifted Education for review. The request of a parent/guardian to have a student removed from participation in gifted services or programs is always honored. Loudoun County students do not lose their placement in gifted programs. Prior to requesting to have a student removed from participation in gifted services, it is recommended that the parent/guardian meet or speak with the gifted resource teacher at the local school.

When a classroom or program teacher requests a change in placement, the parents will be notified. Building level staff and the Supervisor of Gifted Education will hold a conference with the parent. No change in placement will be made without the consent of the parent; an exception will be made in cases where, after a counseling session and a meeting with parents, the student continues to disrupt the learning process. In such cases, parents will be notified in writing within 10 days of the decision that the child will be removed from the program for just cause. This will be done only after the student and parents have received a previous written warning outlining the possible removal from the program. (8.2.20)

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Loudoun County Public Schools offers a continuum of gifted education services that meets the unique academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners. Through various program options, students are challenged with rigorous and advanced learning experiences that require them to think critically and creatively. Gifted learners at all levels, elementary through high school, are encouraged to take academic risks to explore new ideas, develop a growth mindset, learn from their mistakes, and grow intellectually.

SEARCH - Grades K-3

SEARCH teachers provide model lessons in thinking skills to students in grades K-3. Classroom teachers work with the SEARCH teacher to screen students for referral and identification for gifted services. The bi-weekly SEARCH lessons are designed to foster an environment that encourages students to think, take intellectual risks, and develop an excitement for learning and discovery across a variety of thinking skills. The SEARCH curriculum is problem-solving based and founded upon gifted education research. The curriculum spirals developmentally through five components: reasoning, perceiving, connecting, evaluating, and creating. Each grade level learns about each component at increasingly more complex and abstract levels.

Differentiated Classroom Instruction (DCI) - Grades K-3

DCI is provided for early identified students in grades K-3. SEARCH teachers collaborate and plan with classroom teachers to differentiate instruction for the identified students to meet their advanced academic needs. Instruction includes adding complexity, rigor, and depth to the content; adding advanced resources; and providing instructional grouping within the classroom.

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Empowering Diversity in Gifted Education (EDGE) - Grades K-5

The LCPS EDGE program is designed to nurture and challenge students with advanced academic potential from populations historically underrepresented in LCPS gifted programs. The program provides additional academic challenges for students that are designed to develop their individual potential.

Classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers work together to nurture academic potential in young learners and help prepare them for more challenging and rigorous academic pathways.

FUTURA - Grades 4-5

The FUTURA program seeks to enhance and to develop the intellect of 4th and 5th grade students who have been formally identified in need of gifted services. FUTURA is a pull-out program where identified students receive enrichment and challenges one day a week in a center at another school. Some students receive services in their own school through the in-house model. Students are immersed in lessons that correlate the themes Structures and Systems to the Virginia Standards of Learning Objectives for the core content areas.

School-Based, Collaborative Gifted Program - Grades 4-5

The School-Based, Collaborative Gifted Program is a new model for delivering gifted services for 4th and 5th grade gifted learners. It was established to provide gifted services for students at their home schools. A gifted resource teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to challenge gifted learners in their regular classrooms by enriching and extending the general curriculum and by integrating curricula developed for gifted learners (e.g., William & Mary Literature Units, Jacob's Ladder, and Mentoring Mathematical Minds). In addition, gifted learners meet during the week with other gifted learners to collaborate on a variety of challenging, interdisciplinary projects.

Spectrum - Grades 6-8

The Spectrum program is designed to meet the needs of middle school students (grades 6-8) who have been identified in need of gifted services. Students attend Spectrum for a half block (approximately 45 minutes) every other day.

The Spectrum curriculum framework focuses on four themes that are explored each year: Business & Economics, Communication & Culture, Technology & Engineering, and Ethics & Perspectives. Students engage in project-based learning, research and inquiry, and problem solving. They are challenged to collaborate, communicate, and apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Learning experiences are designed to develop initiative, creativity, and leadership skills. Spectrum provides students with opportunities for self-assessment and reflection on the demands and responsibilities of the gifted learner.

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Signet - Grades 9-12

Historically, this program provided identified high school students with opportunities to continue developing their higher-level thinking skills through seminars, independent study/research, and problem-solving challenges. The program is currently being redesigned to better meet the scheduling demands of high school gifted learners and to address their unique social-emotional needs.

Honors-Level Instruction - Grades 6-12

Honors-level instruction is available to all students who seek academic challenge and rigor. Offered in the core academic subjects, honors-level instruction extends the regular curriculum with depth and complexity. This level of instruction helps students develop critical and creative thinking skills in preparation for future advanced academic work.

Advanced Placement (AP) Classes – High School

AP classes are open to all students and serve those students who demonstrate high achievement, interest, or potential to achieve in the advanced college-level coursework. Students may qualify for college credit through AP examinations. Most Advanced Placement courses are not available to students before they are in the 11th grade.

The Academies of Loudoun – High School

The Academies of Loudoun combines three programs: the Academy of Science, the Academy of Engineering and Technology, and the Monroe Advanced Technological Academy. These are high-caliber STEM programs for Loudoun County students.

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) – High School

TJHSST is a regional academic year governor's school that provides an innovative, specialized learning environment for highly motivated students who have an interest and high potential in the biological, physical, mathematical, and computer sciences. It offers students a comprehensive college preparatory program in science, mathematics, and technology. Attendance at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is subject to approval of the School Board.

Dual Enrollment Courses – High School

Offered in conjunction with local community colleges, colleges, and universities, these courses provide opportunities for the advanced student to seek additional challenges and earn college credit while still in high school.

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

All gifted programs are part time and students spend time in the regular classroom where opportunities to learn with age-level peers are provided through such collaborative activities as PBL initiatives.

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

DCI, EDGE, and other program-level services provide identified students with extension, enrichment, and accelerated learning opportunities with other gifted learners. Gifted learners can also work together on academic challenges, competitions, and extracurricular activities. During this instructional time with their intellectual peers, gifted learners can also explore activities that nurture their social-emotional growth.

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Independent research is an integral part of all program-level gifted services. Students have numerous opportunities to work independently to explore topics of interest and solve real world problems. Examples of independent research opportunities include Genius Hour Projects and PBL initiatives. Students may also work independently on center activities to develop skills in research and self-assessment.

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

During the school day and week, LCPS instructional staff utilize a variety of instructional strategies to foster intellectual and academic growth for identified gifted students. These strategies may include problem-based learning, inquiry-based learning, independent research projects, curriculum compacting, learning centers, tiered lessons, mentors, cluster grouping, seminars, and push-in model lessons. To foster growth, students' program placement and program rigor are monitored by gifted resource teachers, classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators. Gifted students are identified based on their academic strengths, and service options are differentiated to foster growth in those academic areas.

Students identified for program-level services are provided with a sequential and differentiated curriculum meeting the goals of the Gifted Education Program. High school students can self-select advanced level course work including honors level courses, Advanced Placement courses, Dual Enrollment courses, independent studies, and Virtual Loudoun courses. Signet may be implemented for gifted-identified and other interested high school students and may include seminars, independent studies, and/or service projects.

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Students eligible for gifted services will be assessed for academic growth in accordance with Loudoun County Public Schools division policy and procedures. Students in the FUTURA, the school-based, collaborative gifted program, and Spectrum are assessed using a program-specific assessment tool, which requires students to assess their own progress throughout the year. This assessment tool has been enhanced to include the 5C's (creative thinking, critical thinking and problem-solving, collaborating, communicating, and making connections), which are essential 21st century skills. (10.09.20)

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

The LCPS Gifted Education Program uses research-based strategies, best practices in gifted education, differentiated instructional materials, and dedicated staffing (gifted education resource teachers who are gifted-endorsed) to provide gifted learners with an appropriately differentiated curriculum.

Differentiation in the regular classroom is the foundation upon which the LCPS gifted program is built. This gifted program framework is based upon the works of Carol Tomlinson, Robyn Jackson, and Sandra Kaplan. Gifted resource teachers in LCPS support classroom teachers by providing curriculum resources and guidance on instructional strategies to meet the needs of gifted and high ability learners. The core curriculum is based on the Virginia Standards of Learning, but modified with extensions, acceleration, and enrichment to provide the complexity, depth, and rigor needed to support the continued academic and social-emotional growth of gifted learners. Teachers differentiate by content, process, product, and learning environment according to students' readiness, interest, and/or learning profile. Gifted learners, as well as typical learners, are further challenged in the regular classroom through PBL initiatives and personalized learning strategies (e.g., targeted instruction, differentiated playlists and flexible content, and student reflection and ownership).

Through program services such as FUTURA, the school-based, collaborative gifted model, and Spectrum, gifted learners engage in rigorous, challenging curriculum units that are designed by gifted resource teachers to meet the unique cognitive and social-emotional needs of identified gifted students. Students also engage in curricula developed for gifted learners such as *Jacob's Ladder* and *Mentoring Mathematical Minds*. Drawing from the work of Marzano and Costa, the continuum of services for identified gifted learners strives for three gifted program goals for K-12 gifted learners:

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- To become divergent creative thinkers who recognize problems and solve them.
- To construct personal meaning and understanding of others and of the world around them.
- To develop the capacity for self-assessment (ownership of the learning).

With a focus on issues, themes, and ideas within and across areas of study such as systems, structures, leadership, innovation, culture and communication, etc., the FUTURA, school-based, collaborative gifted program, and Spectrum provide sequential curricula and assessments that support and measure growth in accomplishing these program goals.

LCPS gifted services also incorporate programming standards (1.3, 3.1, and 3.4) from the National Association for Gifted Children Pre-K –Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards (2010).

2010 Pre-K -Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards			
	Student Outcomes		Evidence-Based Practices
1.3	Self-Understanding. Students with gifts and talents demonstrate understanding of and respect for similarities and differences between themselves and their peer group and others in the general population.	1.3.1.	Educators provide a variety of research-based grouping practices for students with gifts and talents that allow them to interact with individuals of various gifts, talents, abilities, and strengths.
		1.3.2.	Educators model respect for individuals with diverse abilities, strengths, and goals.
3.1	Curriculum Planning. Students with gifts and talents demonstrate growth commensurate with aptitude during the school year.	3.1.4.	Educators design differentiated curricula that incorporate advanced, conceptually challenging, in-depth, distinctive, and complex content for students with gifts and talents.
3.4	Instructional Strategies. Students with gifts and talents become independent investigators.	3.4.1.	Educators use critical-thinking strategies to meet the needs of students with gifts and talents.
		3.4.2.	Educators use creative-thinking strategies to meet the needs of students with gifts and talents.
		3.4.3.	Educators use problem-solving model strategies to meet the needs of students with gifts and talents.

In differentiating curriculum for gifted learners, the following instructional strategies may be used to provide content beyond grade level and course expectations for all learners.

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Acceleration	Students may be single-subject or whole grade accelerated to ensure that their academic needs are met through the core curriculum. Curriculum materials may also be accelerated (e.g., the reading levels of the William and Mary Literature Units are approximately two grade levels above the established grade level). Gifted learners may be given reading materials and texts or access to above-level books more suited to their higher reading skills and vocabulary.
Curriculum Compacting	Curriculum compacting is a tool that takes the learning goals of the curriculum, identifies what a student has mastered, and designs activities to provide extension and enrichment opportunities where needed. Curriculum compacting is a strategy that is widely accepted in the field of gifted education.
Competitions	Students participate in competitions, such as Continental Math, that promote higher level thinking, creativity, or problem-solving skills.
Concept-Based Lessons	Units of study based on themes or concepts are used to increase student understanding of content areas connected through interdisciplinary concepts such as the structures curriculum in FUTURA or the leadership curriculum in the school-based, collaborative gifted program.
Independent Research	Students explore areas of interest or questions with guidance from a mentor teacher.
Inquiry-Based Instruction	Using a variety of resources, students generate and explore questions and/or problems.
Problem Finding (analysis) and Problem Solving	Students engage in a critical thinking process in which they articulate an idea that should be addressed, a question that needs to be answered, a hypothesis that should be analyzed, or an issue that must be resolved. Through task analysis, the learner brainstorms plausible solutions.
PBL	Project Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects. Projects are focused on students' acquiring key knowledge, understanding, and success skills. There are seven design elements of PBL including a challenging question, sustained inquiry, authenticity, student voice and choice,

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	reflection, critique and revision, and a public product.
Personalized Learning (PL)	<p>Personalized Learning is dynamically tailoring learning experiences to students' strengths, needs and/or interests. A PL approach supports gifted learners by providing challenges for students who have shown basic mastery of grade-level content and provides relevance for all students as their interests help shape the direction of their learning.</p> <p>The outcome of learning in LCPS is students who are knowledgeable critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators and contributors. These traits allow students to make meaningful contributions to the world.</p>
Service and Outreach Projects	Service-learning activities are available to middle school and high school students through opportunities provided by the individual schools.
Simulations	Through role playing scenarios, students discuss real world issues and gain experiences in solving authentic problems.
Socratic Seminars	Students explore ideas and apply complex thinking skills in dialogues that encourage reflection, acceptance, and deeper understanding.

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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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

Students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to plan courses of study that will meet students' academic and career goals. Opportunities for high-ability and gifted students to access advanced coursework at the pace and sequence commensurate with their learning needs are available at the elementary and secondary levels. At all levels, teachers are encouraged to differentiate instruction to meet students' advanced academic needs. Teachers may provide extension activities and enrichment opportunities to provide additional challenges for students. Teachers may also compact the curriculum to allow students to progress at an appropriate pace and explore topics of interest. A parent/guardian may refer a child to be evaluated for acceleration if the child is performing at a level significantly above grade level. In middle school, students may take honors-level courses and advanced academic pathways. In high school, honors classes are available and Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses are designed for students who wish to accelerate their course of study to include courses that may be taken for college credit. Honors and Advanced Placement courses are available to all high school students. Most Advanced Placement courses are not available to students before they are in the 11th grade. Gifted and high-ability high school students may also apply for specialized programs such as the Academies of Loudoun, Summer Residential Governor's Schools, and/or Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (pending School Board approval).

LCPS is committed to increasing access to gifted services for students from populations historically underrepresented in gifted programs. In Loudoun County, the following student groups have been historically underrepresented in the LCPS gifted program: African American students, Hispanic students, English language learners, students with disabilities (twice exceptional), and students from economically vulnerable households.

A variety of measures are in place to increase access to program opportunities for all students. Current practices include universal ability testing; teacher, administrator, parent, and student referral options; the use of multiple indicators in the gifted identification process; and the implementation of the Empowering Diversity in Gifted Education (EDGE) program. The EDGE program is designed to nurture and challenge students with advanced academic potential from populations historically underrepresented in LCPS gifted programs. The program provides additional academic challenges for students that are designed to develop students' individual potential. Classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers work together to nurture academic potential in young learners and help prepare them for more challenging and rigorous academic pathways.

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To further enhance access to gifted programs for all students, the Advisory Committee for Gifted Education strives to collaborate and forge partnerships with parent and community organizations such as the LCPS Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee and the LCPS Special Education Advisory Committee. There is a sub-committee of the Gifted Education Advisory Committee which focuses on equitable representation in gifted education. (10.09.20)

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.

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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.

Loudoun County Public Schools employs licensed instructional personnel qualified in their assigned subject areas. Gifted resource teachers are required to meet Virginia Gifted Endorsement standards within 3 years of employment. A new LCPS gifted certification program is in the early phase of development. Local courses will be developed to provide classroom teachers with opportunities to expand their professional knowledge in the area of gifted education.

Gifted resource teachers, classroom teachers and other appropriate faculty members, and administrators receive local in-service training/professional learning opportunities in gifted education. Professional learning opportunities address a variety of topics in the field including best practices in gifted education, characteristics of gifted learners, assessment, curriculum planning and instruction, the social and emotional needs of gifted learners, and how to identify and support gifted learners from underrepresented populations. In response to the LCPS community's call to action to increase accessibility to gifted services for all students, an emphasis will be placed on providing professional learning opportunities that focus on the following*:

- Learning characteristics and behaviors of underrepresented gifted populations
- Awareness of cultural differences
- Children with multiple exceptionalities (twice exceptional or 2e)
- Developing positive peer culture in the classroom and school

These professional learning opportunities may be made available through building level in-service, division-wide in-service, study groups, and/or online or electronic communities. Individuals may also attend conferences, workshops, and seminars conducted by experts in the field of gifted education. Administrators provide resources needed for professional learning in gifted education such as release time, substitute support, webinars, or mentors.

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Gifted resource teachers may provide in-service training to classroom teachers by consultation, collaboration, co-planning, shadowing, and/or team teaching. Gifted resource teachers also provide assistance to classroom teachers by promoting the awareness of professional organizations and publications relevant to gifted education. Graduate-level coursework toward the gifted endorsement is also encouraged. Gifted resource teachers meet regularly throughout the school year to collaborate and interact with experts in the field.

To assist parents/guardians and other family members in understanding the characteristics of gifted learners, the gifted programs and services available in LCPS, and how to initiate a gifted evaluation, family informational meetings are held annually in September/October and January/February. These meetings are facilitated by LCPS gifted resource teachers from each area of the division. Additional family meetings are held at Title 1 schools to increase access to gifted programs for students from underrepresented populations. These meetings are announced through LCPS and school websites, press releases, and flyers. (10.09.20)

* Reference: NAGC, *Classroom Instruction and Teacher Training for Gifted Students from Diverse Populations*

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.

On an annual basis, the Executive Committee of the Gifted Education Advisory Committee may work in collaboration with the Supervisor of Gifted Education to develop a presentation that outlines recommendations that the committee has for the enhancement of gifted education programs and services. The recommendations will stem from the work of the sub-committees, which focus on the following areas: curriculum and delivery of services, equitable representation, parent and community involvement, and professional development. Recommendations must align with the Virginia Department of Education Regulations Governing the Educational Services for Gifted Students (8VAC20-40) as well as research and best practices in the field of gifted education. The co-chairs of the committee and the Supervisor of Gifted Education may share the presentation with the Director of Instructional Programs. (10.09.20)

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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.

I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Advisory Committee for Gifted Education (hereinafter referred to as the Committee).

II. COMPOSITION AND PURPOSE

- A. In accordance with the Virginia Board of Education Regulations Governing the Educational Program for Gifted Students, the school division shall establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members. This committee shall reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division.
- B. The purpose of the committee shall be to advise the school board through the division superintendent (or designee) of the educational needs of all gifted students in the division, in accordance with the Virginia Board of Education regulations.
- C. The committee shall review annually the local plan for the education of gifted students, including revisions, and determine the extent to which the plan for the previous year was implemented.
- D. The recommendations of the advisory committee shall be submitted in writing through the division superintendent (or designee) to the school board.

III. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Committee members shall be appointed to represent each of the 12 high school clusters of the Loudoun County Public Schools. Each educational level (elementary school, middle school, and high school) is represented. The Committee is balanced to reflect the demographic composition of the school division.
 - a) Categories of Membership
 - a. Parents or guardians of students identified as gifted and who are enrolled in Loudoun County Public Schools and/or in an Academic-Year Governor's School.

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- b. Gifted Education resource teachers and classroom teachers who have identified gifted students in their classes.
 - c. School Administrators.
 - d. Guidance Counselors.
 - e. Individuals serving on other current instructional advisory councils and committees that represent instruction, special education, and vocational education.
 - f. Individuals representing Loudoun County civic and community organizations.
- b) Number of Members.
- a. The Advisory Committee shall consist of no more than 15 voting members.
 - b. Members may represent concurrently more than one category of membership.
- c) Alternate Members. Alternate members are not appointed to the Committee.

B. Selection Criteria and Procedure for Members.

All members are appointed for a two-year term by the School Board with the advice and recommendation of the Division Superintendent (or designee), via the Supervisor of Gifted Education and the Director of Instructional Programs/Assistant Superintendent of Instruction.

Prospective members, who have attended a minimum of three (3) bi-monthly Committee meetings and who represent one of the membership categories, shall submit to the Supervisor of Gifted Education an application outlining their desire and qualifications to serve on the Committee. The Executive Committee will provide the School Board, via the Supervisor of Gifted Education and the Director of Instructional Programs/Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, a nominated slate of candidates.

The Executive Committee shall strive to maintain diversity by appointing members who represent each of the LCPS high school clusters and members who represent each of the membership categories. Priority will be given to applicants that best fit the diversity needs of the Committee.

Prior to nomination, interested persons will be advised by the Executive Committee of membership responsibilities. Following the appointment of some/all of the nominees, all nominees will be notified of the results. Applications from nominees not appointed shall remain on file for a period of two years. Nominees who remain qualified but were not appointed will be reconsidered by the School Board for the next term.

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C. Tenure/Terms of Members. Membership is not limited to one term.

- a) Terms begin on December 1 or as openings occur.
- b) Resignations. Members may resign upon submission of written notification to the Executive Committee. When a vacancy occurs, the Director of Instructional Programs/Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, via the Supervisor of Gifted Education, may fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term under the procedure described for the selection of members.

D. Responsibilities of Members.

- a) Become knowledgeable about gifted education requirements in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- b) Become knowledgeable about the Gifted Education Program in Loudoun County Public Schools.
- c) Attend meetings regularly.
- d) Participate actively as a member of a subcommittee, task force, or study group when asked by the Executive Committee or when determined by the Superintendent (or designee), via the Supervisor of Gifted Education and the Director of Instructional Programs/Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, that it is necessary for the efficient operation of the Committee.
- e) Work to improve effective community support for the Gifted Education Program.
- f) Conflict of Interest. Committee members shall be free from actual or potential conflicts of interest between their individual job responsibilities and their role as a member on the Committee. The Superintendent (or designee), via the Supervisor of Gifted Education and the Director of Instructional Programs/Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, shall determine if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists and may make the appropriate recommendations to the School Board for membership changes.

IV. **OFFICERS**

A. Officers/Executive Committee.

- a) The officers/Executive Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Secretary. The Supervisor of Gifted Education will serve as the Secretary.

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- b) Any Committee member may serve as an officer. No member shall hold more than one office at a time.
- c) The officers are elected by the membership of the Committee at the December meeting of each school year to provide continuity during the summer. The Supervisor of Gifted Education conducts the election of the Chairperson, who then conducts the subsequent election of the Co-Chairperson and Secretary. The term of office is for one year, which begins on January 1.
- d) Officers may serve consecutive terms in the same or different positions. Members may relinquish their roles as officers without giving up their membership. Vacancies require a new election by the membership of the component to fill the unexpired term.

B. Duties of Officers.

a) Chairperson and Co-Chairperson

1. Presides at all meetings of the Committee. Chairperson and Co-Chairperson shall rotate this responsibility at alternating meetings. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Co-Chairperson and/or Secretary shall preside over the scheduled meeting and perform other necessary duties for said meeting.
2. Coordinates with the Gifted Education Supervisor in preparing the meeting agenda in advance of each meeting. Chairperson and Co-Chairperson shall rotate this responsibility at alternating meetings.
3. Ensures a copy of the agenda is sent to each member at least one week prior to each regularly scheduled meeting.
4. Appoints subcommittee, task force, and study group chairpersons and members.

b) Secretary

1. Prepares meeting agendas.
2. Maintains attendance records of the Committee.
3. Takes notes and prepares minutes of all meetings.
4. Distributes meeting agendas, minutes of meetings, and copies of other needed documents to Committee members.
5. Maintains a file, including meeting minutes, plans, reports, and a current
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copy of the By-Laws.

V. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Become knowledgeable about gifted education requirements in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- B. Become knowledgeable about the Gifted Education Program in Loudoun County Public Schools.
- C. Attend meetings regularly.
- D. Participate actively in the work of the Committee and serve on subcommittee, task force, or study group when asked by the chairperson and/or co-chairperson.
- E. Work to keep the focus of the Committee on division-wide issues and the local plan for the education of the gifted.
- F. Committee members should encourage participation by all members of the group, respecting diversity of opinion.
- G. Work to improve effective community support for the Gifted Education Program.
- H. The responsibilities of the Supervisor of Gifted education shall include:
 - 1. Serve as secretary to the Committee.
 - 2. Consult with the chairperson and co-chairperson in preparation of meeting agendas and carrying out meeting agendas.
 - 3. Make arrangements for all meetings.
 - 4. Notify Committee members of meeting times and locations.
 - 5. Obtain data or information as necessary for the work of the Committee.
 - 6. Work with the chairperson and co-chairperson to prepare the annual report to the School Board, via the Director of Instructional Programs/Assistant Superintendent of Instruction.

VI. MEETINGS

- A. Quorum. A quorum consisting of a majority of all members must be present to hold meetings, conduct business, hold elections, or make any decisions. In the event of a lack of a quorum, the meeting will be postponed until the following month or a special meeting is called.

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- B. Location. The Committee meets in the School Administration Building, 21000 Education Court, Ashburn, VA 20148 or other agreed upon LCPS site.
- C. Frequency. A calendar of meetings is established no later than the second meeting of each year. A copy of the calendar is posted on the LCPS website.
- D. Time. Meetings begin and end promptly. (7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.)
- E. Special Meetings. Special meetings are called at the discretion of the Supervisor of Gifted Education in consultation with the chairperson/co-chairperson.
- F. Meeting Notification. The Supervisor of Gifted Education will send notifications of meetings.
- G. Meeting Attendance. All meetings are open to the public.
- H. Inclement Weather. If Loudoun County Public Schools are closed or students are dismissed early due to inclement weather on a scheduled meeting date, then the meeting is cancelled automatically.
- I. Rules of Order. The rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order are used as a parliamentary guide and shall govern the Committee in all instances to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the By-Laws of the Committee and any other special rules the Committee shall adopt.
- J. Eligibility to Vote and Seek Consensus. All members are eligible to vote and participate in seeking a consensus. A majority of members present and voting is necessary to approve a motion. The only exception is an amendment to the By-Laws, which requires a two-thirds majority vote of those members present and voting.

VII. AMENDMENTS

- A. Annual Review, Revision, and Adoption of Changes. The Committee annually shall review the By-Laws and shall revise and adopt changes to the By-Laws as appropriate and necessary. The annual review shall be conducted not later than December of each year.
- B. Procedures to Amend the By-Laws. The By-Laws may not be suspended, but can be amended. Any Committee member may make an oral or written proposal to amend the By-Laws at any time. Robert's Rules of Order serves as the parliamentary guide. Any change requires a two-thirds majority vote of those members present and voting at a meeting of the Committee. The Superintendent (or designee), via the Supervisor of Gifted Education and Director of Instructional Programs/Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, must approve the recommended By-Laws before the document becomes official.

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- C. Amendments. Amendments must be submitted and read one meeting in advance of when action is taken.

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.

Division Superintendent’s Signature

Printed Name

Date