

Galax City Public Schools

Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

2012-2018

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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 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 Galax City 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)	K-12
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) - Choose an item.	Insert grades
Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)	Insert grades
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Choose an item.	Insert grades

(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

It shall be the philosophy of the Galax City Public Schools (GCPS) to provide equal opportunity for every student to achieve maximum intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth, to ensure that each individual be equipped to communicate effectively with other people, to be competent both in the work place and in higher education, and to feel confident of the ability to make creative and constructive decisions in his/her life.

Galax City Public Schools recognizes that gifted learners are endowed with cognitive abilities that enable them to advance farther and faster in knowledge acquisition and production of new knowledge than the majority of students. These students demonstrate high levels of accomplishment and/or show the potential for higher levels of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience or environment. Their aptitudes and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require special programs to meet their educational needs. The mission of Galax City Public Schools is to provide gifted learners with a qualitatively differentiated instructional program which facilitates the fullest development of their potential. Services will expand, enrich, and/or accelerate the curriculum to meet the needs of our most capable learners. Gifted students will be identified from a variety of social economic backgrounds, and will be provided with a flexible continuum of service options from grades Kindergarten through Twelve.

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.

Galax City Public Schools is committed to excellence in education, equality of educational opportunity, and the recognition of each student's individuality. Gifted students are those students in kindergarten through twelfth grade who demonstrate higher levels of accomplishment when compared to other students of the same age, experience, or environment. Their aptitudes and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require special programs to meet their educational needs. These students will be identified by professionally qualified persons through the use of multiple criteria as having potential or demonstrated aptitudes in the following area:

General Intellectual Aptitude: GCPS provides gifted services to students in grades K to 12 in the area of General Intellectual Aptitude. Students who are identified as gifted in the area of General Intellectual Aptitude demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate superior reasoning; persistent intellectual curiosity; advanced use of language; exceptional problem solving; rapid acquisition and mastery of facts, concepts, and principles; and creative imaginative expression across a broad range of intellectual disciplines beyond their age-level peers.

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: All Galax City Public schools will uniformly use the division's screening, identification, and placement procedures for the identification of giftedness in the area of General Intellectual Aptitude.

Objective 1: Conduct meetings with school guidance counselors and gifted instructional personnel on issues related to appropriate gifted identification as well as Galax City Public School's identification procedures.

Objective 2: Instruct principals and Gifted Placement Committee on proper identification procedures.

Objective 3: Review the purpose and organization of each school's Identification and Placement Committee with necessary staff members.

Objective 4: Provide relevant identification information to teachers.

Objective 5: Monitor the use of identification procedures at each school.

B. Delivery of Services: Galax City Public Schools will provide appropriate educational services to students that will promote and encourage higher levels of critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving skills to students identified as gifted in General Intellectual Aptitude.

Objective 1: Each Galax City Public School will appoint an in-school Gifted Coordinator to oversee the school's gifted program implementation and professional development.

Objective 2: Galax City Public Schools will provide differentiated instruction to gifted students through various service delivery models at the elementary level. These include differentiated instruction in the general education classroom and cluster grouping for selected grades. Gifted students at the elementary level are also provided opportunities to participate in after school enrichment activities and field

trips with a focus on selected areas of interest. These activities will be designed to target higher levels of critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving skills.

Objective 3: GCPS will continue to provide a pull-out program for 5th, 6th, and 7th grade gifted students.

Objective 4: GCPS will continue to provide advanced classes, advanced placement classes, and/or dual credit classes as well as provide appropriate differentiation within each grade for identified gifted students in grades 8 through 12.

- C. Curriculum and Instruction:** Galax City Public Schools will develop appropriate curriculum and instructional programs designed to meet the needs of students identified as gifted in grades K -12 in the areas of General Intellectual Aptitude.

Objective 1: Each in-school Gifted Coordinator will consult with regular classroom teachers to aid in developing appropriate classroom enrichment and enrichment activities for gifted students.

Objective 2: GCPS will develop and implement differentiation documentation reports for all identified gifted students being sure parents of these students receive copies at the end of each semester.

Objective 3: GCPS' gifted instructional personnel will consult with their school's Gifted Coordinator and students' regular classroom teachers to aid them in developing appropriate classroom enrichment and extension materials.

- D. Professional Development:** GCPS will offer professional development opportunities to teachers of gifted students in grades K-12.

Objective 1: GCPS will continue to be active in the Region VII Gifted Consortium in order to participate in the planning of their annual Speaking for the Gifted event as well as to offer teachers the opportunity to attend.

Objective 2: GCPS will offer all teachers training and learning opportunities on the appropriate identification of gifted students.

Objective 3: GCPS will offer all teachers of gifted students in-service opportunities to better assist them in their planning and development of appropriate differentiated instruction.

- E. Equitable Representation of Students:** Galax City Public Schools make every effort possible to ensure equitable representation of students, particularly those that are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency, or have a disability in the Gifted Program in the areas of General Intellectual Aptitude.

Objective 1: GCPS will utilize a screening tool which has the ability to assess students' positive and negative manifestations of gifted characteristics.

Objective 2: GCPS will utilize a nonverbal ability test for students whose language, education, culture, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds warrant an alternative to traditional ability testing.

Objective 3: GCPS will utilize results from special education evaluations when appropriate in the identification process.

- F. Parent and Community Involvement:** It is the goal of Galax City Public Schools to actively and continually include and increase parental and community awareness and involvement in the Gifted Program in the areas of General Intellectual Aptitude.

Objective 1: Parent and community participation will be increased by inviting parents and various community members to contribute ideas that will further their involvement in the Gifted Program.

Objective 2: Parents and community members will be encouraged to participate in and assist with various activities involving students in the Gifted Program.

Objective 3: The Local Gifted Education Advisory Committee meetings will meet a minimum of two times per year. The meetings will be posted in various public places including the schools, with an invitation for the public to attend.

Objective 4: GCPS will publicize more fully the activities of students identified as gifted.

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

Screening Procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude

The purpose of the screening process is to create a pool of potential candidates from all students. The search for and identification of gifted students is a continuous process in Galax City Public Schools and may occur at any time during students' K-12 educational experience. All students in grades K-12 undergo a continuous general screening process that involves a review of grades, standardized test scores and teacher and parent observation information.

In grades K-12, students are screened to create a pool of possible candidates for the gifted program. The screening process includes, but is not limited to a review of all students' scores and performance on various types of standardized testing instruments, grades, observation data from classroom teachers, parental information, student accomplishments and achievements, and any new testing data that may become available. Each teacher will review this data as well as all sources of information relevant to each student's abilities and performance in grades kindergarten through twelve after the end of the first semester. After a review of all this data and information, those students who demonstrate high levels of accomplishment or who show the potential for higher levels of accomplishment will be referred for an evaluation to determine whether they qualify for the gifted program. Students may be referred by classroom teachers, other instructional staff, parents, and by self-referral for the gifted identification 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

Once the screening process is complete, each referral will be provided to the in-school gifted coordinator. The coordinator will inform parents in writing that their child has been referred as a possible candidate for the gifted program and request written parent permission to proceed with the evaluation of their child to determine whether the child meets the eligibility criteria as a gifted student. It is the responsibility of the gifted coordinator to ensure that all appropriate forms for initiating the evaluation process are returned. Once forms and written parent permission to proceed with an evaluation have been returned to the in-school gifted coordinator, it is the responsibility of the in-school gifted coordinator to notify the principal and teacher(s) of the student.

Students identified as gifted who transfer into Galax City Public Schools from in-state or out-of-state will have a records review by the in-school Eligibility Committee. If the committee is unable to determine whether the student meets the criteria for gifted programming in Galax City Public Schools, the committee will request an evaluation be completed and secure parent's written permission to conduct an evaluation. The identification criteria used with all other gifted referrals will apply to the student who transfers to Galax City Public Schools.

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Once the appropriate forms have been received and parent permission granted, the in-school gifted coordinator will begin the evaluation process, which includes collecting information from the parents and teacher(s) of the student, ability testing, record review information, including data and scores from various types of assessments including standardized achievement data, and any other relevant data that will be used in the determination of the student's eligibility for gifted programming.

The timeline for making eligibility decisions is 90 instructional days from the day the in-school gifted coordinator receives the parent's or legal guardian's written consent for evaluation.

All decisions regarding a student's eligibility for gifted are committee decisions. This team is school-based and comprised of various individuals. The eligibility committee may include but not be limited to the principal or designee, in-school gifted coordinator, guidance counselor, the referring teacher, and any others as requested by the in-school coordinator.

Once screening, referral, and eligibility decisions have been made, it is the responsibility of the in-school gifted coordinator to notify the parents of the committee's decision. The in-school gifted coordinator will notify parents of the committee's decision in writing. If the child is found to be eligible for gifted programming, the in-school gifted coordinator will proceed to get parents' or legal guardian's written permission for the child to be placed in the gifted program. If the child is found to be ineligible, the in-school gifted coordinator will notify the parents of this decision as well as their right to appeal the decision. The in-school gifted coordinator will also provide the parent information relating to the necessary steps they will need to take for them to initiate the appeal process.

The in-school gifted coordinator is responsible for providing a list of identified students to the division level Gifted Coordinator.

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 criteria that are used by the division to develop a profile or composite for each student being considered. This listing of criteria should be repeated for each area of giftedness identified by the division. Please copy and paste the section below to support all identified areas of giftedness. NOTE: No single instrument, score, or criterion may be used to exclude or include a child for eligibility. Selection of either item 5a or 5b or both counts as a single criteria.

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
- 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 [Click here to select area of giftedness.](#)

Insert Identification Procedures

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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

- 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: Referring Teacher/Classroom Teacher and School Gifted Coordinator, Teacher for Gifted as appropriate

- b. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

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

- School-level Division-level

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1. Student referrals in grades K-12 are made to the in-school gifted coordinator. The coordinator then sends a letter to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) informing them of the referral and requesting permission of evaluation. The referral information is then forwarded to the division level Coordinator of Student Services. The in-school gifted coordinator then begins a file for the student and collects the required data. The above listed persons in the chart are responsible for the assessment components.
2. After all data is collected, an eligibility meeting is held within 90 instructional days after receipt of parent/guardian written permission. The eligibility committee meets to review all gathered data pertaining to the student and makes a determination as to whether or not the student is eligible for gifted programming. Note: Galax City Public Schools does not allow any **one single criterion to deny or guarantee access to gifted program services**.
3. A Gifted Selection Profile is then completed for each student being evaluated for gifted programming. In order to qualify for gifted programming, students **must** either score in the Superior range ($\geq 93\%$) in the Intellectual Aptitude area and in the Superior range in at least 2 of the 3 remaining categories; **or** score at the 91st or 92nd percentile in the Intellectual Aptitude area and Superior in all three of the remaining areas.
4. Students who have undergone an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services within a 12-month period prior to the school's gifted eligibility committee determination may have those test scores replace what is listed in the table above for gifted evaluations, as deemed appropriate by the school's gifted committee.
5. The division does not allow any one criterion to deny or guarantee access to gifted program services. Once the eligibility process is complete, parents/legal guardians shall be notified in writing of the committee's decision. No student shall be placed in gifted programming until parental permission is obtained.
6. Any student who is determined not eligible for placement in the gifted program during a given year may be referred at any time during any or all subsequent years.

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

Each student determined eligible for the gifted program will be identified as showing General Intellectual Aptitude. Students in grades Kindergarten through 4th grade will either be placed in a general education classroom to receive differentiated instruction or be clustered in a general education setting. Additionally, elementary age students will receive after school enrichment programming one time per month and will participate in field trips designed to enhance and enrich instruction. Grades 5 through 7 will receive their gifted program services in a pull-out setting. Students in grades 8-12 will receive differentiated instruction from the classroom teacher on an as needed basis. Additionally, students in grades 8 through 12 may elect to be in regular classes, advanced placement classes (grades 11-12), dual credit classes (grades 11-12), and /or The Southwest Virginia Governor's School for Science, Mathematics, and Technology (grades 11-12). Gifted student also have opportunities to apply for acceptance to participate in summer governor school programs as well.

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

Once a student has been referred for a formal assessment through the general screening process as a transfer or directly by a parent or other person, the referral is recorded by the in-school gifted coordinator. A letter that provides information about the division's gifted program is sent to the parent explaining the formal assessment and identification process. Attached to this letter is a Parent Permission Form allowing Galax City Schools to begin the evaluation process of their child. No action is taken until the permission form is received. If there is no response, at least two additional attempts to secure parent permission will be made and documented.

After the evaluation is completed and the eligibility committee has made a determination, the in-school gifted coordinator will notify the parents in writing of their decision as to whether the student is eligible for gifted programming. If the student is eligible, the in-school gifted coordinator secures parent/legal guardian written permission for placement in the gifted program. Included in the identification notification is the indication that the parent/guardian has the right to appeal the identification decision.

Appeals

If a parent or student does not agree with the Eligibility Committee's decision, the following appeals process shall be followed:

- Requests filed by parents or legal guardians to appeal any action of the initial Eligibility Committee shall be filed within 10 instructional days with the school's principal of their intent to appeal the initial Eligibility Committee's action. This process shall also include an opportunity to meet with an administrator to discuss the Eligibility Committee's decision.
- When an appeal is received, an Appeal Committee composed of at least three professional staff members **who did not serve on the initial placement committee** will be convened by the school. These members can include but not be limited to the principal or principal designee, the gifted program in-school coordinator, and a gifted teacher.
- During an appeal, the reasons for the appeal and denial of services will be discussed. Records, as well as the Eligibility Committee's data will be reviewed by the Appeals

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Committee. Additionally, the Appeals Committee will evaluate the need to seek additional data if deem it is necessary to make a final decision. If outside data is submitted by the appellant, this may be considered in conjunction with the school's evaluation data, **but not in place of the school's data.**

- The Appeal Committee will use criteria consistent with the initial Eligibility's Committee criteria to maintain continuity of placement standards.
- Written documentation of the Eligibility and Appeals Committee meeting will be documented. The Appeals Committee decision will be provided to the parent within **thirty instructional days** of receiving the initial notice of appeal.
- If the appellant disagrees with the school's evaluation data and requests outside or private evaluations, the appellant is responsible for the expense of testing and/or evaluations conducted outside the school division.
- If an appeal cannot be settled at the school level, the case will be forwarded to the division level Gifted Coordinator. The division level Gifted Coordinator will have the right to execute judgment as to whether additional data should be gathered or whether enough existing data is present to make a final determination. All decisions made by the division level division level Gifted Coordinator will be final.

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

All identified gifted students will be continuously monitored on an informal basis throughout each school year by their gifted classroom teacher and the in-school gifted coordinator.

Students initially identified as gifted in grades kindergarten, first or second will be required to undergo a formal comprehensive reevaluation during their fourth grade year. The Eligibility Committee will obtain parent/legal guardian permission to conduct a comprehensive formal re-evaluation. The re-evaluation will include current parent and teacher checklists, a reassessment of the student's classroom and academic performance, and the administration of additional standardized ability and achievement tests.

Students initially identified in grades three through twelve will not be required to undergo a formal and comprehensive reevaluation as long as the enrichment program is meeting the educational needs of the student and their performance continues at expectancy levels as determined by an informal evaluation process that includes an annual review of each student's performance and academic progress. If at any time the appropriateness of these students' gifted placement is questionable due to a decline in academic performance or progress, a formal reevaluation will be initiated by the gifted eligibility committee. Parent permission will be obtained to conduct the reevaluation. The student will undergo a comprehensive reevaluation process and continued eligibility will be determined by applying the initial identification procedures to the student's evaluation results.

At anytime if the appropriateness of a student's placement is in question, a more formal evaluation will be conducted by the gifted Eligibility Committee. The committee will follow initial evaluation and identification procedures.

A student may be released from their current placement under the following conditions:

1. The student is determined to need an alternative placement;
2. The student is determined to be no longer eligible according to the identification criteria; or
3. The student's parent/guardian requests a change in placement (in writing) from the gifted program.

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

Galax City Public Schools offers gifted programming services to all identified students in grades K – 12. When a student is identified as eligible for services under the General Intellectual Aptitude, they receive classroom instruction that is differentiated and designed to accelerate, enrich and extend the required tasks. The activities and processes in which they are engaged extend beyond grade-level or course expectations as indicated by the Standards of Learning. These learning activities emphasize academic rigor, complexity, abstract and multifaceted concepts through integrated content experiences as appropriate for each student's ability and areas of strengths.

Students in K-12 receive their services through a variety of delivery options, which are dependent upon their grade placement. These service delivery options include but are not limited to cluster grouping (elementary), differentiation within the general education classroom (K-12), pull-out programming (middle) and after school programming (elementary). In the high school, students receive differentiated instruction, have access to advanced and dual-credit classes, have the opportunity to attend the Southwest Virginia Governor's School, and to attend summer regional governor's school programs.

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

Students are grouped into grade levels according to their ages; therefore many opportunities exist for students to receive appropriate instructional time with same age peers on a daily basis. The gifted programming service delivery options offered by Galax City Public Schools (differentiated instruction within general education classroom; cluster grouping, and pull-out) allow for students to receive their gifted programming with age level peers. On rare occasion when students might be working in a classroom with older students, such as advanced or honor courses at the high school level, students continue to receive the majority of their instruction throughout the day in other elective and specialty classes and core subject areas.

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

Galax City Public Schools provides gifted programming through various service delivery options. These options include clustering students in classrooms (selected grades at the elementary level), differentiation of instruction in all grades K – 12, and pull-out services with peers identified as gifted in grades 5-7.

In addition to differentiation within the general education classroom, gifted students in grades 8-12 are offered advanced placement classes and coursework, and/or dual enrollment classes where they are able to work with intellectual peers. Additionally, students in grades 11 and 12 have the opportunity to attend the Southwest Virginia Governor's School for Science, Mathematics and Technology. In these classes, students are exposed to critical thinking, creative thinking, and independent research designed to accelerate and enrich the content for gifted learners beyond the grade-level or basic course expectations for all learners.

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

Students identified as Gifted will have regular opportunities in the classroom to work on independent study and independent research projects geared to the students' individual instructional needs. This independent study will emphasize research skills in order to synthesize new information and then make connections between the new information and previously learned information. Independent study may enrich the students' current curriculum or be geared to their individual areas of interest. It is important that any independent study will involve student choice in both topics and products.

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

Through the use of Bloom's Taxonomy of Higher Order Thinking Skills, gifted students' curriculum will be differentiated in content by encouraging the student to use higher levels of thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Bloom's Taxonomy provides the framework for planning differentiation of the instructional activities for identified students.

Activities that involve the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) are stressed. In grades K-4, students receive differentiated instruction that encourages student choice, inquiry learning, experimentation, competitions, self-directed learning and advanced content. Grades 5 through 7 have the opportunity to participate in a pullout program giving them time to work with other intellectual peers. The instruction in this program allows gifted students the opportunities to work on projects that foster the higher levels of critical thinking as defined by Bloom's Taxonomy. In grades 8 through 12, identified students are offered advanced classes, advanced placement classes, dual credit classes, individual research projects, independent studies, and participation in the Governor's School programs. Use of technology as an instructional tool is stressed.

Galax City Public Schools believes the above stated instructional practices for identified gifted students will foster the intellectual and academic growth of identified gifted students.

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

Galax City Public School will verify the various forms of differentiation occurring for the identified gifted students in their classrooms using a differentiation checklist. This checklist will be sent home to parents by the classroom teacher at the end of each semester. This documentation will provide information on the areas where differentiation has occurred and will substantiate the academic growth of Galax City Public School students.

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

Galax City Public Schools is committed to providing appropriate differentiated curriculum and instruction to students identified as gifted. Blooms Taxonomy of Higher Order Thinking Skills provides the framework for planning differentiation of the instructional activities for identified students. Activities involving the higher levels of thinking of Bloom's Taxonomy (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) are stressed in all grade levels. The learning activities emphasize rigor, complexity, abstract and multifaceted concepts through integrated content experiences as appropriate for each student's mental age and areas of strength.

Instructional practices based on Bloom's Taxonomy stress the development of skills in creative and critical thinking, problem solving and finding, logic, independent research, project development, higher level thinking skills and divergent thinking in both group and individual work. Inquiry based processes emphasize higher order thinking skills, problem solving and finding, scientific inquiry, decision making, and research leading to original products. The use of technology as an instructional tool is stressed. Emphasis is placed on student ownership of learning. Teachers use instructional strategies that accelerate, enrich and extend the required tasks, activities, and processes beyond the grade-level or course expectations as indicated by the Virginia Standards of Learning.

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

Galax City Public Schools will allow students opportunities for advanced class and program selections based on previous scholastic achievement, scores, performance, prerequisites and recommendations. In addition to consultation with faculty and guidance staff, discussions with the student and their parents/guardian can be included. Galax City Public School staff will have the final determination for student placement in courses. Students who desire to enroll in advanced programs must be prepared to accept rigorous requirements.

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.

Galax City Public Schools will offer annual training and professional development opportunities designed to address the above listed criteria by:

- Participation in the Region VII Gifted Consortium Meeting
- The provision of division wide professional development activities.
- Providing access to regional professional development opportunities in the area of gifted education instruction, most notably the *Speaking for the Gifted* event sponsored by the Region VII Gifted Consortium.
- Providing access and necessary support for participation in state conferences.
- The provision of in-school professional development activities.

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.

Galax City Public Schools will ensure the effectiveness of the gifted program in the following ways:

1. The Gifted Plan will be annually reviewed by Galax City Public School administrative staff. Revisions will occur as needed.
2. All Local Gifted Plan revisions will be submitted to the Local Gifted Advisory Committee for their review.
3. All revised Local Gifted Plans will be submitted to the local school board for approval.
4. The local gifted advisory committee's annual report shall serve as a means of evaluation of the gifted program.
5. At the end of each school year, the in-school gifted coordinators will submit an annual report to the division level Gifted Coordinator that provides an update of the gifted program in their respective buildings. This report will be submitted to the division superintendent, who will then report the information to the local school board.
6. The local Gifted Advisory Committee will provide an annual summary report to the superintendent, who will then report to the school board.
7. The Gifted Plan will be approved by the school board for the school years 2012-2018.

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

Each school division shall 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.

Members of the Galax City Public Schools Local Gifted Advisory Committee are appointed by the local school board with the advice and recommendation of the Division Superintendent. Membership shall reflect the ethnic and geographic composition of Galax City Public Schools. This committee may include, but not be limited to at least one parent from each school, various school personnel and other community members as appropriate. Gifted Advisory Committee members may resign upon submitting their intent to resign in writing to the division level Gifted Coordinator. When a vacancy occurs, the Superintendent may fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.

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