

# Botetourt County Public Schools

## Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

2015-2017

<b>LEA#</b>	<b>Botetourt County Public Schools</b>		
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<b>Date Approved by School Board</b>	<b>September 10, 2015</b>		

## **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](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.

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

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.

<b>Area of Giftedness Identified by the Division</b>	<b>Grades Served</b>
General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA)	K-12
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) - Choose an item.	N/A
Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)	N/A
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Choose an item.	N/A

**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**

Botetourt County Public Schools recognizes gifted learners possess a definable set of learning characteristics, and students with these characteristics have specific instructional and social-emotional needs. These characteristics are the basis for designing appropriate instruction to meet the needs of the gifted learner.

**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.

Botetourt County Public Schools uses a variety of data to determine general intellectual aptitude. In grades K-2 the gifted resource teachers conduct lessons in all classrooms using activities from the Recognizing Gifted Potential: Planned Experiences with the KOI by Dr. Bertie Kingore. These activities provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate behaviors characteristic of gifted learners. Teachers use these results, as well as other performance data, to make appropriate referrals for gifted evaluation. In grades 3-12, referrals may be based on observation or academic performance.

Students who are referred for the Gifted Program are given ability and achievement tests. Additionally, teachers and parents each complete nationally norm-referenced rating scales. In some instances, a portfolio of student work is also collected for consideration. To be identified, as a gifted learner the student must have at least three scores at or above the 95%ile within the following parameters:

- at least one ability score at or above the 95%ile
- only the teacher or the parent rating scale can be used to meet the three score eligibility criteria

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

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

**A. Identification:**

Goal: Botetourt County Public Schools will assess students referred for services in a fair and non-biased manner.

- During the 2015-2016 school year, the gifted resource teachers and the gifted education coordinator will review assessment tools used in the evaluation process to determine if the tools are fair and unbiased for all students in grades K-12 (i.e. twice exceptional, culturally diverse, and racially diverse). Recommendations for new evaluation instruments will be made as needed to assure the division is using fair and non-biased instruments.
- During the 2015-2016 school year, the program coordinator will review, with all administrators, the use of the student portfolio component as an option for assessment in the identification process.

**B. Delivery of Services:**

Goal: BCPS will provide a continuum of services for learners served through the gifted program.

- Annually review the continuum of services options for elementary students in the gifted program with all elementary faculties.
- By the 2016-2017 school year, implement at least one annual workshop, for secondary students, that is appropriate to student age and interest.
- Develop a job description for gifted resource teachers that includes expectations for direct service to students and support to classroom teachers.
- Submit specific revision recommendations, to the Director of Human Resources, regarding the currently used evaluation form that reflects the responsibilities of gifted resource teachers.

**C. Curriculum and Instruction:**

Goal: BCPS will ensure K-8 curriculum meets the needs of gifted learners and is aligned to the revised Standards of Learning.

- Annually review the division's K-8 core content curriculum documents to include differentiation recommendations for extension and enrichment activities that are appropriate and challenging for the gifted learner.

- Annually review, and revise as needed, the K-8 program curriculum to ensure there is an emphasis on enrichment that supports and extends the Standards of Learning for each grade level and is focused on cross-curricular integrated units of study.

#### **D. Professional Development:**

Goal: BCPS will provide ongoing professional development related to best practices in the instruction of gifted learners.

- Provide ongoing professional development to classroom teachers on differentiated lesson design.
- Develop an annual plan of professional development directly related to gifted education that responds to the needs of gifted learners and classroom teachers. Needs should be determined through an annual needs assessment (reference Part X of Local Plan).
- Require building administrators to annually provide professional development to staff on the topics of identifying gifted learners and meeting the educational needs of gifted learners.

#### **E. Equitable Representation of Students:**

Goal: BCPS will conduct an annual analysis of the current population of identified gifted students and the general population of students to determine equitable representation for all subgroups of students.

- Provide annual professional development to all teachers and administrators related to the appropriate referral of students from all subgroups (i.e. students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, or students that are economically disadvantaged)

#### **F. Parent and Community Involvement:**

Goal: BCPS will strengthen partnerships with parents and community.

- Maintain parent and community involvement through multiple means of communication including, but not limited to, parent workshops, a gifted program website, and newsletters.
- Provide at least two workshops per year for parents of gifted learners.
- Maintain an email list serve of parents of identified gifted learners and use email as a means to distribution program information.

### **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.

#### **BCPS Screening Procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude:**

BCPS gifted staff annually provides professional development to faculties regarding gifted characteristics, and the screening, referral, and identification procedures for all students including special populations. The Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI), a research-based screening tool, is used by classroom teachers to observe certain traits, advanced language, analytical thinking, meaning motivation, perspective, sense of humor, sensitivity, and accelerated learning. Direct observation of student behavior is potentially the richest source of information for discovery of advanced learners from special populations.

Beginning the second nine weeks of school, in grades 3-8, the classroom teacher will note student questions, responses, examples of unusual thinking or exceptional creativity, and consistently strong academic performance using the Kingore Observation Inventory. Classroom teachers who recognize gifted characteristics in students will contact a designated gifted resource teacher who will assist with a referral.

BCPS gifted staff will review screening procedures annually to ensure consistent use within the division of a non-biased and equitable approach for screening all students.

**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.

**BCPS Referral Procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude**

The Gifted Program website lists information as to the process and procedures regarding the referral of students for evaluation. Gifted resource teachers and/or principals also provide this information to the school community and various stakeholders through newsletters and Parent-Teacher Association meetings.

Any school personnel, parent, guardian, student peer, community member, or self may refer a student for an evaluation for gifted identification. The person initiating the request for referral should take part in a conference with the gifted resource teacher to discuss the basis for the referral and the unique characteristics of the student being referred. The gifted resource teacher will explain the identification process as well as the division's operational definition of gifted. If the referring source determines it is appropriate to refer the student for an evaluation, the gifted resource teacher will have the referring source complete the Referral for Evaluation form.

All Referral for Evaluation forms are submitted to the Gifted Education Coordinator. Forms can be submitted in person, electronically, or by fax or mail. These are to be submitted according to submission dates defined for the school year. Each year, quarterly submission dates will be established based on the school year calendar. The submission dates will be posted on the gifted education program website and included in school newsletters.

**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.

**Identification information for BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

- X 1. Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio
- 2. Record of observation of in-class behavior
- X 3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires
- 4. Individual interview
- X 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s) (must be included for GIA)  
and/or
- X 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
- 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.)
- X 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures

Specify:

- (a) Student Portfolio- Collection of student work that exemplifies ability and 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.

General Intellectual Aptitude

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Classroom Teacher(s)                 |
| 1 | Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s) |
| 1 | Counselor(s)                         |
|   | School Psychologist(s)               |
|   | Assessment Specialist(s)             |
| 1 | Principal(s) or Designee(s)          |
|   | Gifted Education Coordinator         |
| 1 | Other(s) Specify: Parent             |

- b. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

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

- School-level                       Division-level

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

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

**BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Administered/ Completed by</b>	<b>Scored by</b>	<b>Provided to the committee by</b>
Ex. Behaviors checklist	Current classroom teacher	School gifted education teacher	School division gifted education coordinator
CogAT	Assessment Specialist	Scoring program	Gifted Resource Teacher
Woodcock Johnson III	Assessment Specialist	Scoring program	Gifted Resource Teacher
SIGS School Rating Scale	Teacher(s)	Gifted Resource Teacher	Gifted Resource Teacher
SIGS Home Rating Scale	Parent(s) or Guardian(s)	Gifted Resource Teacher	Gifted Resource Teacher
KBIT	Assessment Specialist or Gifted Resource Teacher	Test administrator	Gifted Resource Teacher
Portfolio	Classroom Teacher and Gifted Resource Teacher	Portfolio Scoring Committee	Gifted Resource Teacher

**Collection of Data:** Multiple sources of data are collected for review. This data will include:

- A general aptitude test that measures the student's cognitive abilities;
- An achievement test to assess a student's current level of functioning;
- Rating scales completed by the teacher and parent to assess the student's behaviors  
in relation to observable characteristics of gifted learners;
- Other assessments as deemed appropriate by the gifted resource teacher, the referring source, and/or other school personnel familiar with the student.

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**Eligibility Determination:** A committee of individuals will review all data collected. The committee is to include a gifted resource teacher, a guidance counselor, an administrator or designee, and a teacher knowledgeable of the student's academic functioning. The committee will determine if the student is eligible for the division's gifted program based on the division criteria. The committee can also table the decision and recommend additional data be collected. Additional data must be collected and the committee reconvened within 20 instructional days.

All eligibility decisions are made within 90 instructional days of obtaining the initial written parental consent for the evaluation.

If a student is found "not eligible" for the gifted program based on the division criteria, the student can be referred the following academic year. However, initial test results are valid for a two-year period.

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

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

**BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

Once the eligibility committee determines the student qualifies for the gifted program, the members review all pertinent data to determine most appropriate service options. Data that is considered includes evaluation data, day-to-day classroom functioning, grades, and affective needs of the student. The committee may choose from the following service options:

Service Options	Target Students	Intent
Small group instruction within classroom	K-8	Enrichment and extension
Small group instruction with gifted resource teacher	3-5	Enrichment and extension
In class differentiation	K-12	Enrichment and extension
Workshops and Camps	K-12	Enrichment
Acceleration	K-12	Whole grade or content specific depending on needs of student
Support for classroom teachers from gifted resource teacher	K-8	Enrichment and extension
Advanced level of certain courses	6-12	Depth and breadth of study within the content
Mentorships	6-12	Enrichment and extension; depth of study
Regional programs	9-12	Depth and breadth of study within the content

Each spring, gifted resource teachers will contact the parents of all identified gifted students to request their input regarding service for the following school year. The parent will receive notification of the recommended service option for the next year. The recommendation will be noted in the final progress report for the ending school year. If parent(s) wishes to appeal the service recommendation, the parent(s) should request a meeting with the gifted resource teacher and the principal.

## **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.

### **BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

#### **Parental Notification of Initiation of Identification Process and Requesting**

**Permission for Evaluation:** The Gifted Education Coordinator will mail the parent/guardian a letter explaining the identification and evaluation process and a permission to evaluate form that must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the Gifted Education Coordinator.

**Permission to Deliver Recommended Service Options:** During the eligibility committee meeting the members will discuss the various service options. Based on the data collected and the individual needs of the student, the team will make a recommendation for the most appropriate service delivery model. Written parental consent to deliver recommended services will be obtained.

At the end of the school year, the Gifted Resource Teacher makes a recommendation for a student's appropriate service option for the upcoming school year. This is communicated to the parent(s) through the student's final progress report. If parent(s) wishes to appeal the service recommendation, the parent(s) should request a meeting with the gifted resource teacher and the principal.

**Notification of Appeal Process:** Parents/guardians are presented information concerning the appeal process in the initial letter explaining the identification process. Should the eligibility committee find the student does not qualify as a gifted learner based on the division's criteria, a written notification of the appeal process will be presented to the parent/guardian. Appeals are to be sent to the Gifted Program Coordinator.

## **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.

### **BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

The gifted resource teacher makes an annual recommendation for a student's appropriate service option(s). This will be communicated to the parent through the student's final progress report and will be for the upcoming school year. If a parent wishes to appeal the service option, the parent(s) should request a meeting with the gifted resource teacher and the principal.

Botetourt County Public Schools does not believe that a child identified as gifted can be summarily "unidentified." Exit from the program in no way implies that the student has been determined to "NOT" be gifted, only that our services will no longer be offered to the individual.

Once identified for services, students are not reevaluated yearly for the gifted program. However, the student, a parent, teachers, guidance counselor, or the gifted coordinator may initiate a recommendation for a change in service option(s) by making a request to the placement committee. A placement committee that consists of the principal, the gifted resource teacher, the classroom teacher, and the school counselor review this request. If a change in the service option is being considered, a meeting of the placement committee is convened to determine the most appropriate option for the student. A conference is held with the parent to discuss the service delivery option(s) recommendation, set up a probationary time frame for the new service option(s), and/or identify requirements the student is to meet during this probationary time period.

Exit from the division's gifted program typically occurs when a student withdraws to be home-schooled or transfers out of the school division. A parent may also request that the child be exited from the program. If an exit from the program is being considered, information of the appeals process is provided to the parent. Notification, by letter, is sent to the parent if an exit from the program is the final decision of the placement committee after all other options have been exhausted at the end of the probationary period. The placement committee, parent, and student when appropriate, determine the probationary period and the requirements to be met by the student.

If the child is exited from the program the student, parent, or teacher may request that the student be returned to the program within one year from exiting. In order for the child to return to the program, he/she must go through the referral/evaluation process again, to determine eligibility. If eligible for the program, service options would be made available.

**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**

A variety of service options are offered to gifted learners in grades K-12. The options are designed to allow for an array of experiences that enrich and extend the Standards of Learning.

Service Options	Target Students	Intent
Small group instruction within classroom	K-8	Enrichment and extension
Small group instruction with GRT	3-5	Enrichment and extension
In class differentiation	K-12	Enrichment and extension
Workshops and Camps	K-12	Enrichment
Acceleration	K-12	Whole grade or content specific depending on needs of student
Support for classroom teachers from Gifted Resource Teacher	K-8	Enrichment and extension
Advanced level of certain courses	6-12	Depth and breadth of study within the content
Mentorships	6-12	Enrichment and extension; depth of study
Regional programs and local STEM-H Academy	9-12	Depth and breadth of study within the content; competitive process

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At the elementary level, BCPS supports clustering gifted students for determining classroom rosters and flexible grouping within the classroom. The division encourages all teachers to use differentiation in all content areas. This includes the use of pre-assessment to determine student readiness for acceleration, providing alternative options for content, process, or product, and post-assessment to determine student growth.

Gifted resource teachers serve as collaborators and consultants to classroom teachers in designing and implementing appropriately challenging instruction for gifted and high ability students. They assist the classroom teacher in altering the standard curriculum to appropriately match student need. For example, the use of curriculum compacting or modified pacing allows for independent studies and enrichment activities.

Additionally, gifted resource teachers work with small groups of identified gifted students using specially designed curriculum and effective instructional strategies for use with gifted students. These strategies include but are not limited to integrated thematic units of study, higher level questioning, and authentic assessment. Critical and creative thinking skills are promoted through the use of problem-based learning, creative problem solving, and complex questioning strategies. Students are encouraged to pursue independent learning opportunities and to share this knowledge in either a formal or informal way with peers. The curriculum provides enrichment opportunities that correlate with Virginia Standards of Learning. The gifted curriculum values student choice in topic, research options, and product design. Technology as a tool for learning is a major component of lesson design.

Botetourt County Public Schools uses a variety of strategies to meet the needs of gifted learners in middle school. All identified middle school students are offered the opportunity to qualify for an advanced level course in English where the required English curriculum is compacted and enrichment and extension opportunities are woven into each unit of study. The curriculum of this class is designed to incorporate integrative units, including real life problem solving relevant to current issues. Frequently, assignments are open-ended, offering student choice in content, process, and/or product. This provides students opportunities to demonstrate mastery through multiple modes (i.e. auditory, visual, kinesthetic, etc...). Lessons are designed without a ceiling to challenge student thinking beyond basic SOL requirements. Socratic thinking is taught and application is encouraged through units of study. An advanced mathematics track is offered to all identified middle school gifted learners that meet the division qualifications. Data used in the qualification process for advanced coursework in English and mathematics includes a performance assessment rubric score, SOL scores, past and present course grades, and other division wide assessments.

For all subject areas, gifted resource teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to design and implement challenging units of study that allow for differentiated instruction

opportunities. In addition, gifted resource teachers recommend resources to support these units and offer to co-teaching units to support the unique needs of all learners.

**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.

**BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

Program delivery options that provide gifted learners with the opportunity to learn and interact with age level peers include:

- Cluster grouping (of gifted learners), within the student's grade level, for classroom assignments,
- Pull-out grade level instructional groups,
- Push-in grade level instructional groups,
- Accelerated math paths,
- Advanced level coursework (Advance Studies, Advanced Placement, and Dual Enrollment),
- STEM-H Academy,
- Regional Governor's School Programs,
- Virginia Western Community College STEM Academy, and
- Enrichment and extension activities during and beyond the school day and the regular academic year.

**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.

**BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

Program delivery options that provide gifted learners with the opportunity to learn and interact with intellectual and academic peers include:

- Cluster grouping (of gifted learners), within the student's grade level, for classroom assignments,
- Pull-out grade level instructional groups,
- Push-in grade level instructional groups,
- Accelerated math paths,

- Advanced level coursework (i.e. Advanced Studies, Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, Virtual Virginia and other online course providers),
- Regional Governor’s School Programs,
- STEM-H Academy,
- Virginia Western Community College STEM Academy, and
- Enrichment and extension activities during and beyond the school day and the regular academic year.

**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.

**BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

Program options and instructional strategies that provide K-12 gifted learners with the opportunity to learn independently include:

- Learner contracts
- Choice menus
- Online coursework
- Mentorships
- Projects

**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.

**BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

Instructional strategies that foster the intellectual and academic growth of gifted learners include:

- Cooperative learning
- Problem based learning
- Socratic questioning
- Tiered lessons and assignments
- Creative problem solving
- Curriculum compacting
- Formative assessment

Additionally, at the secondary level, students have the opportunity to select courses that fit individual strengths and interests.

**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.

**BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

A mid-year and end-of-year report will be provided to the parents of gifted learners in grades K-8 that documents student growth. At the high school level, academic growth is reported through report cards every nine weeks. In addition, all parents can monitor ongoing student progress and achievement through Parent Portal. As the division's program for assessing student growth develops, other processes and procedures will be added.

## **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.

### **BCPS General Intellectual Aptitude**

Botetourt County Public Schools encourages instructional staff to utilize a variety of instructional strategies to accelerate and enrich content, process and product for identified K-12 gifted and high ability children in the regular education classroom. Teachers are encouraged to continuously pre-assess students to determine interest, readiness and/or learning style for units of study. Based on the results of the pre-assessment, teachers utilize flexible grouping in order to implement a variety of instructional strategies including, but not limited to the use of:

- tiered assignments
- study choices
- curriculum compacting and learning contracts
- interest centers
- independent study

Higher order critical and creative thinking skills are promoted through the use of problem-based learning, creative problem solving, technology and complex questioning strategies. All classroom teachers are supported by the school administrator, the Gifted Education Coordinator, and/or a gifted resource teacher in offering differentiated instruction in their classroom. The Gifted Program Coordinator and/or a gifted resource teacher are available to help plan pre-assessment activities, organize larger units of studies, provide useful resources, and assist in classroom instruction.

### **Elementary**

At the elementary level, the division supports clustering gifted students for classroom placement and flexible grouping within the classroom. Gifted resource teachers serve as collaborators and consultants to classroom teachers in designing and implementing appropriately challenging instruction for gifted and high ability students. They assist the classroom teacher in altering the standard curriculum to appropriately match student need. For example, the use of curriculum compacting or modified pacing allows for independent study and enrichment activities.

Additionally, gifted resource teachers work with small groups of identified gifted students using specially designed curriculum that focuses on effective strategies for use with gifted students. This can occur in a pull-out or push-in setting. These strategies include, but are not limited to, integrative thematic units of study, higher level questioning, and authentic assessment. Critical and creative thinking skills are promoted through the use of problem-based learning, creative problem solving, and complex questioning strategies. Students are encouraged to pursue independent learning opportunities and to share this knowledge formally or informally. The curriculum provides enrichment opportunities that correlate with Virginia Standards of Learning. The gifted curriculum values student choice in topic, research options, and product design. Technology as a tool for learning is a major component of lesson design.

### **Middle School**

At the middle school level, gifted learners have the opportunity to participate in an advanced level English or mathematics class where the curriculum is compacted with enrichment and extension opportunities woven into each unit of study. In addition, an elective course is offered to eighth graders. Enrollment in this elective course is limited to students identified as gifted. The curriculum of this class is designed to incorporate integrative units, critical thinking, and real life problem solving relevant to current issues. Assignments are frequently open-ended, offering student choice in content, process, and/or product. This provides students opportunities to demonstrate mastery through multiple modes (i.e. auditory, visual, kinesthetic, etc.). Lessons are designed, without a ceiling, to challenge student thinking beyond basic SOL requirements. Socratic thinking is taught and application is encouraged through units of study.

Gifted resource teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to design and implement opportunities for differentiated instruction. These opportunities include pre-assessment activities, which lead to integrative, challenging units of study. Gifted resource teachers provide research-based units of study, resources to support these units, co-teaching, and collaboration to support the unique needs of all learners.

### **High School**

When gifted students enter high school, a differentiated curriculum is offered through course selection and enrollment. Most courses at the high school offer various levels of a class. These levels include Advanced Studies, Advanced Placement, or Dual

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Enrollment. High school students also can apply for enrollment in the Roanoke Valley Governor's School, the Jackson River Governor's school, the STEM-H Academy, or the Regional STEM Academy at Virginia Western Community College. These programs offer a rigorous curriculum in mathematics, science, and/or technology. There are also a variety of competitive summer Governor's School opportunities for which students can apply.

## **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**

**Advanced Studies Classes:** Enrollment in advanced courses offered in grades 9-12 is based on academic grades in completed prerequisite courses. Enrollment in middle school advanced courses is based on a student's score on the division's qualifying rubric.

**Advanced Placement Classes and Virtual Virginia Classes:** Enrollment in courses is based on academic grades in completed prerequisite courses.

**Dual Enrollment Classes:** Enrollment in courses is based on teacher recommendations, academic grades in completed prerequisite courses, and performance on the community college systems placement tests.

**Early College Scholars Program:** In order to be eligible for this program, students must have a "B" average or better, be pursuing an Advanced Studies Diploma, and be completing or have completed college level course work (i.e. Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge, or dual enrollment) that will earn at least 15 transferable college credits.

**Independent Study:** The Independent Study program provides seniors and second semester juniors an opportunity to pursue a program of their own design in an area of special interest. Students receive 1 credit for study equivalent to 140 hours. Students must submit a written explanation of the proposed plan of study and secure a faculty advisor to oversee the independent study.

**Jackson River Governor's School for Science and Technology:** This is a competitive academic program. Students in grades ten and eleven wishing to be considered for attendance at the Jackson River Governor's School must submit an application. Completion of Biology, Algebra I and Geometry with a final grade of "B" or better is a prerequisite. Students are selected based on their score on a division rubric. The elements of the rubric are achievement test performance, grade point average, teacher evaluations, and writing samples.

**Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology:** This is a competitive academic program. Students in grades nine through twelve wishing to be considered for attendance at the Roanoke Valley Governor's School must submit an application. Completion of Algebra I and Geometry are prerequisites. Students are selected based on

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their score on a division rubric. The elements of the rubric are achievement test performance, grade point average, teacher evaluations, and writing samples.

**Senior Humanities Seminar:** This is a competitive academic program. Enrollment in courses is based on teacher recommendations, academic grades in completed prerequisite courses, and performance on the community college system's placement test. Four college level courses are taught through this program: English 111, English 112, Political Science 211, and Political Science 212.

**STEM-H Academy:** This is a division program. Students must submit an application and meet the requirements set forth for the various areas of study. Most courses offered in the program are dual enrolled through Virginia Western Community College. Therefore, students must meet the entrance requirements or prerequisites set by the college.

**Virginia Western Community College STEM Academy:** Students must submit an application and meet the requirements set forth for the various areas of study. Virginia Western Community College sets the requirements and all courses taken through the program allow the student to earn college credit as well as high school credit.

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

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

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

5. Understanding and application of theories and principles of differentiating curriculum designed to match the distinct characteristics of gifted learners to the programs and curriculum offered to gifted students, including:
  - a. The integration of multiple disciplines into an area of study;
  - b. Emphasis on in-depth learning, independent and self-directed study skills and metacognitive skills;
  - c. The development of analytical, organizational, critical, and creative thinking skills;
  - d. The development of sophisticated products using varied modes of expression;
  - e. The evaluation of student learning through appropriate and specific criteria; and
  - f. The development of advanced technological skills to enhance student performance.
6. Understanding of contemporary issues and research in gifted education, including:
  - a. The systematic gathering, analyzing, and reporting of formative and summative data; and
  - b. Current local, state, and national issues and concerns.

Professional development related to gifted learners and gifted education is provided to administrative and instructional staff in a variety of formats. These include college course work, conferences, workshops, book studies, coaching, mentoring, videos, webinars, and online activities. These events are offered at the school, division, regional, state, and national level. Topics include:

- Gifted characteristics, including those of special populations
- Referral and identification process, and identification of twice exceptional students
- Instructional strategies that facilitate differentiation
- Instructional strategies that raise achievement of gifted learners
- Instructional strategies that integrate technology
- Grading and assessment
- Practices that show evidence of student growth
- Data driven decision making
- Local Gifted Plan

Parent education activities include events held through bi-annual workshops and tri-annual Gifted Advisory Committee meetings.

**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.

Botetourt County Public Schools' Gifted Program undergoes an annual review to determine its effectiveness. The annual review addresses identification procedures, equitable representation of population, and student academic growth. Data sources for the analysis may include:

- Student, staff, and parent surveys
- Academic grades
- Student growth measures
- Division assessment results
- SOL results
- Classroom observations
- Referral results
- Parent feedback from Gifted Advisory Committee

**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.

The establishment of the division's local gifted advisory committee is outlined in by-laws approved by the Botetourt County School Board. The by laws include the following explanation of membership selection and tenure.

- A. The Committee is to include representation from parents, the community, and the division's professional staff. The component should be balanced to reflect the demographic composition of the school division.

1. Categories of Membership

- a. Parents or guardians of students identified as gifted and who are enrolled in Botetourt County Public Schools and/or in an Academic-Year Governor's School
- b. Individuals representing Botetourt County businesses and civic and community organizations.
- c. Classroom teachers who have identified gifted students in their classes.
- d. Gifted Education resource teachers.
- e. School Administrators
- f. School Counselors

2. Number of Members.

- a. The Advisory Committee shall consist of no more than 20 members.
- b. The Advisory Committee shall include no more than four parent representatives from the elementary level and four representatives from the secondary level.
- c. The Advisory Committee shall include at least one elementary Gifted Resource Teacher and at least one secondary Gifted Resource Teacher.
- d. Members may represent concurrently more than one category of membership.
- e. The Advisory Committee will elect a chairman and a vice- chair to head the committee.

3. Alternate Members. Alternate members are not appointed to the Committee.

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### B. Selection Criteria and Procedure for Members.

The School Board, with the advice and recommendation of the Division Superintendent, appoints all members for a two-year term.

### C. Tenure of Members.

1. Terms of Members. Membership is limited to three consecutive terms.
2. Appointments. Appointments are made through a letter of invitation from the Superintendent following the recommendation of the School Board.
3. Resignations. Members may resign upon submission of written notification to the Chairman. When a vacancy occurs, the Superintendent may fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term under the procedure described for the selection of members.

