# Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

2012-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEA#</th>
<th>126</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
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<td>Mrs. Angela Whitesell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date Approved by School Board</td>
<td>June 4, 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 Staunton City Schools

In section 8VAC20-40-40A of the Regulations, divisions are required to screen, refer, identify, and serve gifted students in at least general intellectual aptitude or specific academic aptitude. School divisions may identify and serve gifted students in career and technical aptitude or visual or performing arts aptitude, or both, at their discretion. On the chart below, please indicate all areas of giftedness that are identified and served within the division. Please copy and paste any additional rows as might be needed to address all areas in Specific Academic Aptitude and/or Visual and/or Performing Arts that are identified by the school division.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Giftedness Identified by the Division</th>
<th>Grades Served</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA)</td>
<td>K-12</td>
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</table>

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

Staunton City Schools is committed to identifying and serving those students in kindergarten through grade twelve who demonstrate high levels of accomplishment or who show the potential for higher levels of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment. The gifted education program in Staunton City Schools is based on the school division’s philosophy of a rigorous, dynamic, and reflective instructional program for all students.

Identified gifted students 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 and imaginative expression beyond their age-level peers. These students may require school experiences that are differentiated from the experiences provided for other students in Staunton City Schools. Gifted students need encouragement, support, and opportunities to interact with other gifted students who naturally challenge one another. They require opportunities to pursue their particular interests, to share with real audiences, and to have products of their learning critiqued. For gifted students, this philosophy of empowerment through skills and knowledge demands curricular experiences designed to enhance the students’ thinking abilities, academic proficiencies, and special talents. Dynamic curriculum that deals with complex issues and higher order thinking and requires probing for depth of learning provides the framework for gifted students to reach their academic potential.
B. Division Operational Definition of Giftedness

General Intellectual Aptitude

Students identified as gifted in General Intellectual Aptitude in Staunton City Schools must exhibit evidence of the need for gifted educational services by demonstrating a high level of accomplishment or the potential for higher levels of accomplishment as compared to others of the same age, experience or environment.

Students identified as gifted in general intellectual ability exhibit unusual performance capability in intellectual endeavors as assessed through multiple sources of information to include nationally norm-referenced tests, a Gifted Behaviors Rating Scale, student work samples, and other evidence that supports a need for advanced academic services. In order to meet their needs and develop their abilities, these advanced learners require differentiation opportunities that enrich and extend the Staunton City School academic program of studies.

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

A. Identification

1. Provide a systematic identification process that aligns with the delivery of services.
2. Seek to identify all gifted students who show the potential for higher levels of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment.
3. Increase the identification of students from historically underrepresented groups to include students of low socioeconomic status, twice exceptional learners, and students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds.

B. Delivery of Services

1. Provide a continuum of services in grades K-12 that assures appropriately differentiated instructional programs for gifted students and enhances the quality of instruction for all students.
2. Provide a comprehensive continuum of services which addresses the academic and socio-emotional needs of identified gifted students.

C. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Provide gifted students with opportunities to fully utilize their creative abilities to think critically and solve problems.
2. Develop students who have an understanding for the problems, themes, issues, and organization of knowledge which frame the world in which we live.
3. Develop independent, self-directed learners who fully utilize their metacognitive skills.

D. Professional Development

1. Provide continuous professional development for all school staff on identification, differentiation, and education of gifted students.
2. Provide continuous professional development for differentiation specialists.

E. Equitable Representation of Students

1. Increase the access to gifted programs for students from historically underrepresented groups (low socioeconomic status, twice exceptional learners, and students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds).

F. Parent and Community Involvement

1. Promote the awareness of the unique needs of gifted students among parents/guardians, school staff, and the community.
2. Increase communication to parents of gifted students through semester reporting of student progress, e-mail contact, and regular updating of websites at the school and division-level.
Part III: Screening, Referral, Identification, and Service Procedures

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

Screening Procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude

All students in grades K-12 are considered each year for referral for gifted services using multiple criteria. Referrals may be made by parents/guardians, students, teachers, other persons who may have knowledge or expertise to make such a referral including community members, or by any other appropriate school personnel, e.g., student support teams. Annually, the differentiation specialist observes students in the classroom setting, reviews files of all students new to the division, and monitors students who excel and/or have been recognized as potential candidates.

The differentiation specialists provide staff development on characteristics and identification of gifted students to instructional staff to create awareness and to familiarize staff with the procedures for identifying students for gifted services. In addition, they provide information to parents regarding gifted characteristics and the referral process. School psychologists and other members of the student support team are trained to look for potential candidates for the gifted program as they consider special education or 504 Plan services and teachers are trained to look for potential students from historically underrepresented populations.

The Staunton City School Gifted Program: EMERGE, EXCEL, EXTEND & ENRICH

Elementary Grades K-5

In grades K-2, the EMERGE program identifies a pool of potential candidates for gifted identification through a focus on regular classroom high-level thinking lessons. These lessons are planned and implemented by the differentiation specialist and/or classroom teacher. The differentiation specialist compiles and reviews the anecdotal observations for each student and develops a pool of potential referrals and/or students to watch. Students may be referred for gifted services beginning in kindergarten and there is no limit to the number of times a student may be referred.

During mid-second grade, all reading, mathematics, and observational assessments will be reviewed for all second grade students. Depending on score results, students may be immediately referred for gifted identification, recommended for individual testing, or continued in the screening pool.

Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted
Differentiation is embedded in the EXCEL K-12 philosophy of Staunton City Schools. Regardless of formal identification, a student may be included in a gifted/differentiation activity in any subject if deemed appropriate for the learner. All students may be considered for accelerated language arts or mathematics groups/classes in the EXTEND Program based on reading or mathematics performance and testing and/or gifted identification.

Identified gifted students in elementary grades in Staunton City Schools begin work on a continuum of K-12 goals and objectives: ENRICH *Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners.* These goals focus on higher-level thinking skills embedded in all disciplines.

**Middle School Grades 6-8**

At the middle school level, the differentiation specialist and teachers review ability and/or achievement test scores and grade and progress reports to encourage students from underrepresented populations to enroll in Honors classes in areas of strength/interest. All students at middle school who meet the minimal entry requirement may self-select for Honors or high school credit classes in the EXTEND program. Differentiation is embedded in the philosophy of Staunton City Schools EXCEL K-12. Regardless of formal identification, a student may be included in a gifted/differentiation activity in any subject if deemed appropriate for the learner.

Identified gifted students in middle school in Staunton City Schools continue work on a continuum of K-12 goals and objectives: ENRICH *Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners.* These goals focus on higher-level thinking skills embedded in all disciplines.

**High School Grades 9-12**

Continuing the Staunton City Schools EXCEL K-12 program at the high school level, the differentiation specialist and Freshman Academy teachers review middle school schedules, ability and/or achievement test scores, and grade and progress reports to encourage students from underrepresented populations to enroll in Honors classes in areas of strength/interest.

All students at the high school who meet the minimal entry requirement may self-select for Honors, Advanced Placement, and dual-enrollment classes in the EXTEND Program. Parents or legal guardians,
teachers, professionals, students, peers, self or others may make recommendations for gifted referral or advanced classes.

The Shenandoah Valley Governor’s School STEM Program is a regional half-day highly competitive Governor’s School for 11th and 12th graders that focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and conducts a separate screening and selection process using standardized and achievement testing and multiple criteria. For more information about the school, visit http://www.svgs.k12.va.us/web/

Eligible high school juniors and seniors may apply for the Virginia Governor’s Summer Residential Foreign Language Academies (full-immersion academies in various languages) or the Virginia Summer Residential Governor’s School Programs (intensive educational experiences in visual and performing arts; humanities; mathematics, science, and technology; life science and medicine; or through mentorships in marine science or engineering). Acceptance into these state programs is highly competitive and based on application and recommendation. Information about the application process for these opportunities is available through the high school differentiation specialist.

Identified gifted students in high school in Staunton City Schools continue work on a continuum of K-12 goals and objectives: ENRICH Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners. These goals focus on higher-level thinking skills embedded in all disciplines.

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

Referral procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude

The process of identifying gifted students in Staunton City Schools begins with the screening and/or referral. The referral process is designed to consider the entire school population in the area General Intellectual Aptitude. Students may be considered for the gifted program through a referral by parents/guardians, students, teachers, themselves, other persons who may have knowledge or expertise to make such a referral including community members, or by any other appropriate school personnel, e.g. student support teams, and building administrators. Students who have been identified for gifted services in another locality must complete a referral form to begin the process in Staunton City Schools. Referral forms for students in grades K-12 are available in all schools and online at www.staunton.k12.va.us and
may be submitted at any time during the year to the classroom teacher or the differentiation specialist. Within 90 instructional days, beginning with the receipt of a referral, the identification and placement committee will determine eligibility status for gifted services.

Once the referral is received and the 90 instructional day timeline begins, the differentiation specialist will acknowledge the receipt of the referral and (along with the classroom teacher) begin the process of obtaining parental permission for testing, parent and teacher checklists and all applicable student information including standardized and SOL testing results, current and historical grades, and student work samples. The school psychologist and/or differentiation specialist will complete the appropriate testing battery and set the date for the Gifted Placement/Eligibility Committee meeting. The recommendation by the committee will be sent to parents/students within ten working days after the established meeting date of the committee. Based on the examination of the documentation provided, the Gifted Placement/Eligibility Committee will make one of the following recommendations:

- The student is eligible for placement in the gifted program;
- Further evaluation must take place, which may include additional examples of student work and/or additional standardized testing;
- Acknowledgement that the student is ineligible for participation in the gifted program at this time.
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)

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

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

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

General Intellectual Aptitude

- [ ] 1+ Classroom Teacher(s)
- [ ] Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s)
- [ ] Counselor(s)
- [ ] School Psychologist(s)
- [ ] Assessment Specialist(s)
- [ ] Principal(s) or Designee(s)
- [ ] Gifted Education Coordinator
- [ ] 1 Other(s) Specify: Differentiation Specialist

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)

General Intellectual Aptitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Administered/Completed by</th>
<th>Scored by</th>
<th>Provided to the committee by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Behavior Scale: TEACHER (SBS)</td>
<td>Current classroom teacher and/or other professionals who work with the student</td>
<td>Differentiation Specialist</td>
<td>Differentiation Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Behavior Scale: PARENT</td>
<td>Parent/Guardian of child</td>
<td>Differentiation Specialist</td>
<td>Differentiation Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension, Fluency, Quantile &amp; Observational Assessments</td>
<td>Second grade teacher or differentiation specialist</td>
<td>Electronic and Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>Differentiation Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationally norm-referenced aptitude test (CogAT Form 7, WISC or other applicable tests)</td>
<td>Classroom teacher, Differentiation Specialist or School Psychologist</td>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td>School Psychologist or Differentiation Specialist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Student Work and Grade/State Testing/Progress Portfolio               | Current classroom teacher and/or other professionals who work with the student  
  May include developmental reading and mathematics assessment (elementary)  
  Standards of Learning Tests, WIDA, classroom grades, etc.)               | N/A                                                | Classroom Teacher       |

Criteria from the list above are used to determine eligibility for Staunton City School gifted services. Multiple criteria are reviewed and no one piece of information can determine eligibility or ineligibility. If a student is found ineligible for gifted services, he/she may be referred again the following school year.
3. **Determination of Services** (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

**General Intellectual Aptitude**

Parents/legal guardians and school staff work together to ensure that each child receives appropriate gifted services. Staunton City Schools offers a range of programs that provide students with opportunities to engage in complex subject matter and prepare them for more challenging and rigorous classes as they advance in grade level. Staunton City Schools is committed to enriching the overall academic program for all students.

The youngest learners in Staunton City Schools (all students in grades K–2) are involved in high-level thinking lessons in reading and mathematics through the EMERGE program, and all identified students K-12 will progress through a continuum of ENRICH *Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners.* The ENRICH program is designed to focus on particular advanced higher-level thinking skills for gifted students and to ENRICH the curriculum in all areas. In addition, in grades K-12, all students are encouraged to EXCEL and may be offered differentiated curriculum in particular areas of strength or interest in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and/or social studies. Students requiring a faster-paced curriculum may accelerate their learning through the EXTEND program which offers advanced classes in language arts and mathematics in grades 3-5, honors and high school credit courses in middle school, and honors, advanced placement, and dual-enrollment courses in high school. For students in grades 11 and 12, the Shenandoah Valley Governor’s School (SVGS) conducts a competitive application process to select students who would benefit from a strong focus on mathematics, science, and technology. SVGS admissions information is available on their web site at [http://www.svgs.k12.va.us/web/](http://www.svgs.k12.va.us/web/)
Part IV: Notification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.4)

General Intellectual Aptitude

a. School and central office communications inform parents and guardians of Staunton City Schools Gifted Services and the procedures and timelines for identification and placement. These communications include articles, news releases, parent information meetings and the Staunton City School web site www.staunton.k12.va.us

b. When a student is referred for gifted identification, the differentiation specialist sends a letter to parents/guardians requesting permission for appropriate testing and information gathering regarding the student.

c. Parents receive written notification of all placement decisions and permission for placement is required for all programs. The parent/guardian, classroom teacher, differentiation specialist and/or school counselor meet regarding the child’s progress and determine appropriate placement and goals for the individual student. Once a student is identified for Gifted Services in Staunton City Schools, the student continues to receive services through grade 12. The course registration at the middle school and high school levels, which requires parent or guardian signature, constitutes permission for placement. The Shenandoah Valley Governor’s School mails notification of placement decisions.

d. Staunton City Schools does not have a formal exit policy. At the elementary school, the differentiation specialist and classroom teacher meet with parents to determine appropriate placement and goals for the student. Parents and guardians who wish to initiate a change in gifted services notify the differentiation specialist to set up a conference. At the middle and high school level, students work with their school counselors and/or other school professionals if a change in courses is needed.
Part V: Change in Instructional Services (8VAC20-40-60A.5)

General Intellectual Aptitude

a. Permission forms are sent to parents or guardians of eligible students following all eligibility meetings. Parent/guardians have the option to decline services.

b. Information regarding the process for identifying students for gifted services is disseminated through local school communications, news releases, the Staunton City School website, and parent meetings.

c. All students in second grade take a gifted screening ability test. From these scores, a screening pool is created comprised of students scoring above a benchmark score. Parents/guardians of students who score at or above the benchmark score are notified in writing and all pool candidates are screened for placement in gifted services, unless parents request in writing that their child not be screened.

d. There is also a referral process. Students in Staunton City Schools may be screened for eligibility for gifted services through a referral. Parents who submit a referral receive written notification that the referral has been received. Students who are new to the school division but do not have all the necessary testing or records required in the division, may also be screened.

e. After the eligibility committee meets, the Staunton City School central office mails all eligibility decisions. If students are eligible for gifted services, the letter includes a Permission Form. If a student is found ineligible, parents may submit an appeal. Directions for submitting an appeal are contained in the ineligibility letter and appeal form. Appeals must contain new information not contained in the original screening file. Parents or guardians of a SCS student may obtain a copy of the screening file from the school psychologist.
Staunton City Schools

f. Staunton City Schools does not have a formal exit policy. At the elementary school, the differentiation specialist and classroom teacher meet with parents to determine appropriate placement and goals for the student. Parents and guardians who wish to initiate a change in gifted services notify the differentiation specialist and/or school principal to set up a conference. At the middle and high school level, students work with their school counselors and/or other school professionals if a change in courses is needed.

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

A. Service Options are Continuous and Sequential

General Intellectual Aptitude

The Staunton City Schools (SCS) Gifted Program provides challenging learning experiences that are designed to meet the unique learning profile of a broad range of advanced learning in grades K-12. Through a continuum of services, students engage in complex subject matter, preparing them for more challenging and rigorous classes as they advance in grade level. Children identified for the SCS Gifted Program exhibit exceptional performance capability in academic and intellectual endeavors. In order to meet their needs and develop to their potential, these learners require a differentiated curriculum.
Students who are twice exceptional are provided with accommodations or modifications through a special education Individual Education Plan (IEP), or 504, or accommodations and support provided by the classroom teachers in response to their individual needs.

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

General Intellectual Aptitude

**EMERGE Grade K-2**

The EMERGE program is designed to enrich the primary grade experience with focused high-level thinking lessons for all students in language arts and mathematics. The differentiation specialist works with the classroom teacher to provide the lessons and observe and record student thinking. Reviewing the student thinking observation checklists allows each school to create a pool of potential candidates for gifted referral and to document thinking for the gifted referral process.

**EXCEL Grades K-12**

Differentiation is embedded in the EXCEL K-12 philosophy of Staunton City Schools. Classroom teachers provide differentiated lessons for students who exhibit a need for additional challenge in areas of academic strength. Teachers work with the differentiation specialist to create more challenging content, assignments, resources, and/or instructional grouping within the classroom for identified students.

**ENRICH Grades K-12**

In addition to the EXCEL differentiated classroom experience, gifted students in Staunton City School progress through the ENRICH *Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners*. These goals may be applied to specific projects and activities within the regular or advanced classroom and tailored to meet the needs of the individual student. The differentiation specialist and classroom teacher work with the student and parent to determine an appropriate progression of goals to help the student grow.
C. Service Options Provide Instructional Time with Intellectual and Academic Peers

**General Intellectual Aptitude**

**EXTEND/ENRICH Grades K-12**

**Accelerated Learning, Elementary**

Identified students in grades K-5 may participate in accelerated math and/or reading instruction in grades K-5. This may be accomplished through flexible grouping within and across classes as well as through compacted class work in the upper grades. The ENRICH Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners goals may also be applied to this course work.

**Honors and Accelerated Classes, Secondary Level**

Honors and/or accelerated courses are open to all students who seek academic rigor. Students who demonstrate high achievement, interest, and/or potential to achieve in one or more areas of academic strength may participate in honors courses in language arts and accelerated mathematics courses at the middle school, and honors courses in the four core content areas at the high school level. The ENRICH Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners goals are applied to these courses to provide opportunities to build on individual student strengths, develop critical and creative thinking skills, and prepare students for advanced academic coursework.

**Advanced Placement, Grades 10-12**

Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school are open to all student who seek academic rigor. The AP program provides rigorous academic coursework in the major subject fields, with course content designed at a college level. The AP program is offered in English, social studies, science, world languages, mathematics, and fine arts. High school students who complete AP courses demonstrate mastery of subject material by earning qualifying grades on AP examinations.

**Dual Enrollment, Grades 11-12**

Dual enrollment courses are offered in conjunction with local universities in several subject areas. Students seeking this level of challenge and enrolling in these courses must meet the entry requirement for dual enrollment specified by the local university or community college.
Staunton City Schools

Shenandoah Valley Governor’s School
The Shenandoah Valley Governor’s School STEM Program is a regional half-day highly competitive Governor’s School for highly motivated 11th and 12th graders. The STEM program focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and offers a half-day program for students which links to a half-day at the home high school. The Shenandoah Valley Governor’s School AH Program is a regional highly competitive Governor’s School for highly motivated 11th and 12th graders. The AH program focuses on Visual Arts, Theater Arts, and Humanities and offers a half-day program for students which links to a half-day at the home high school.

D. Service Options Provide Instructional Time to Work Independently

General Intellectual Aptitude
A major focus of Staunton City School’s appropriate education for identified gifted students is achieving independence in thinking and learning. Gifted students have multiple opportunities to work independently to further their individual growth.

E. Service Options Foster Intellectual and Academic Growth

General Intellectual Aptitude
Staunton City Schools uses a wide variety of strategies to foster intellectual and academic growth:

- Acceleration and/or compacting
- Concept Attainment through themes and interdisciplinary connections
- Historical Analysis and Interpretation
- Independent Research and Inquiry-Based Instruction
- Problem-based Learning
- Simulations
- Socratic Seminar
- Student Debates
- Technology Integration
F. Procedures for Assessing Academic Growth in Gifted Students

General Intellectual Aptitude

Staunton City Schools utilizes multiple measures to assess the academic growth of advanced learners. Universal screening in reading and/or mathematics is used to document student growth each year. In grades K-3, annual PALS scores reflect development in critical areas of early literacy. When available, Virginia Standards of Learning test results and accompanying student growth percentiles are used as a growth measure for students. Pre- and post- formative and summative assessments within courses are used to show short term and annual growth. Staunton City School teachers create a variety of assessments aligned with the ENRICH Critical and Creative Thinking Skills for Advanced Learners. Gifted student work samples demonstrating these goals and objectives are evaluated using carefully designed rubrics and are used as measurement tools. PSAT and SAT scores may also be used to document student progress and growth.

Students are encouraged to set goals and reflect on their own work. Documentation of reflection and meta-cognition is used to assess growth in student thinking. In addition to quarterly reporting and distribution of testing summaries, twice yearly conferences are held at all levels to share and discuss student progress and growth with parents.

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

General Intellectual Aptitude

Staunton City Schools believes there is no one size fits all approach to teaching advanced learners. It is necessary to allow curriculum and instruction to be flexible enough to address the needs of a diverse population of gifted learners. As curriculum decision makers, teachers play a critical role in the development of gifted learners and in determining the match of appropriately differentiated curriculum to student.

The Virginia Standards of Learning offers a core curriculum for all students. These standards provide the basis for all curricula, including the curriculum for gifted students within the school division. The Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted
Staunton City Schools curriculum for gifted learners is framed around Carol Tomlinson’s differentiation model. Guided by general principles of differentiation including flexible grouping, active student-centered orientation, and continual assessment and adaptation, curricula for gifted learners modifies content, process, and product to meet the needs of intellectually gifted students. Content modifications include a focus on concept-based, relevant, authentic, and transferable curriculum. Process is differentiated according to students’ readiness, interest, and learning profiles. Products are concept centered and require application of key skills and understandings. A continuum of services for gifted students is provided within the classroom and through a variety of enrichment and extension activities. The essential components of this model revolve around student differences, assessment, and instruction.

Lessons are designed based on the idea of ascending levels of intellectual demand. Through the use of the The K-12 ENRICH Sequence of Critical and Creative Thinking Skills teachers differentiate curriculum to provide the four facets of quality differentiated curriculum (Parallel Curriculum Model – Tomlinson et.al, 2002). Students have opportunities to learn the core curriculum, opportunities to learn about the numerous relationships and connections that exist across topics, disciplines, events, time, and cultures, opportunities to transfer and apply knowledge using the tools and methods of the scholar, researcher, and practitioner, and opportunities to develop intrapersonal qualities and develop their affinities within and across disciplines.

**ENRICH: GRADES K-12**

The overall mission of the Staunton City School Gifted Program is to **ENRICH** the academic experience for all gifted learners. Through participation in the K-12 ENRICH Sequence of Critical and Creative Thinking Skills identified gifted students:

- Fully utilize their creative abilities to think critically and solve problems.
- Develop an understanding for the problems, themes issues and organization of knowledge which frame the world in which we live.
- Become more independent, self-directed learners who fully utilize their metacognitive skills.
EMERGE: Grades K-2
In the EMERGE program, curricular interventions and support are provided through the collaboration of the classroom teacher and the Differentiation Specialist, using the *K-12 ENRICH Sequence of Critical and Creative Thinking Skills* for grades K-2. Through opportunities to respond to higher level questioning and encouragement to share their thinking, students develop and expand their skills.

EXCEL: Grades K-12
In the EXCEL program, teachers provide differentiated lessons for all students who exhibit a need for additional challenge in one or more areas of academic strength. Classroom teachers work with the Differentiation Specialist and their grade level collaborative learning teams to differentiate instruction for children who require more challenging content, assignments, resources, and/or instructional grouping within the classroom. The *K-12 ENRICH Sequence of Critical and Creative Thinking Skills* serves as a guide for planning for process and product differentiation of identified gifted students. The model is designed to strengthen direct services for advanced learners and to enhance the quality of instruction offered to all students.

EXTEND: Grades 3-5
The Differentiation Specialist collaborates with classroom teachers to provide curriculum and instruction that challenges students participating in the EXTEND program in grades 3-5 to learn at a faster rate, think on a higher level, and/or study sophisticated and complex content through extensions of the *K-12 ENRICH Sequence of Critical and Creative Thinking Skills*. This level of differentiation may include advanced language arts and/or compacted math courses.

EXTEND: Grades 6-12
In the secondary EXTEND program, advanced and accelerated curriculum is offered through course selection. The model is designed to strengthen services for advanced learners and to enhance the quality of instruction offered to all students. The curriculum challenges students to learn at a faster rate, think on a higher level, and/or study sophisticated and complex content through extensions of the Staunton City School Program of Studies using the *K-12 ENRICH Sequence of Creative and Critical Thinking Skills*. The courses are designed to meet the needs of advanced learners with a strong emphasis on higher level thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making. Students have ongoing opportunities for reflection and self-assessment that develop an understanding of the characteristics, demands, and responsibilities of advanced learners.
advanced intellectual development. The courses offered are designed to help students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world.

**Honors Courses, Grades 6-12**

Honors courses are open to all students who seek academic rigor. Students who demonstrate high achievement, interest, and/or potential to achieve in one or more areas of academic strength may participate in honors courses in the four core academic subject areas. Honors classes use a curriculum that extends the traditional course of study in both depth and complexity. Honors classes seek to provide opportunities to build on individual student strengths, develop critical and creative thinking skills, and prepare students for advanced academic coursework. The enriched K-12 sequence of critical and creative thinking skills serves as a guide for planning for identified gifted students.

**Accelerated Course Placement, Grades 7-8**

Accelerated course placement options are available to qualified students who seek academic rigor and who demonstrate high achievement, interest, and/or the potential to excel in math or foreign languages. Accelerated classes use a curriculum that extends the course of study and provide opportunities for students to build on their individual strengths, develop critical and creative thinking skills, and prepare students for advanced academic coursework. High school credit is given to students who successfully complete the course.

**Advanced Placement (AP) Courses, Grades 9-12**

Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school are open to all students who seek academic rigor and who meet the specific course entrance requirements. The AP program provides academic coursework in the major subject fields, with course content designed at a college level. The AP program is offered in English, social studies, science, foreign languages, and mathematics. High school students who complete AP courses demonstrate mastery of subject material by earning qualifying grades on AP examinations. The K-12 ENRICH Sequence of Critical and Creative Thinking Skills serves as a guide for planning for process and product differentiation for identified gifted students.

**Dual Enrollment and Concurrent Enrollment, Grades 9-12**

Dual enrollment and concurrent enrollment courses are offered in conjunction with local institutions of higher learning. Both high school and college credit may be earned for those students who are found
eligible by meeting the college or university’s criteria. The high school Program of Study is updated each year to reflect the most current course offerings. Students may also submit additional requests for courses to meet their individual needs to their school counselor for approval.

**Shenandoah Valley Regional Governor’s School (SVGS), Grades 11-12**

The Governor’s School programs provide an innovative, specialized learning environment for highly motivated students who have a genuine interest in math, science, engineering, and technology and in the arts and humanities. The coursework is rigorous with a philosophical and theoretical base. There is an emphasis on integration of disciplines and hands-on stage and studio experiences. SVGS conducts a separate screening and selection process using standardized and achievement testing and multiple criteria. For more information, go to [http://www.svgs.k12.va.us/web/](http://www.svgs.k12.va.us/web/)

The following are instructional strategies used in Staunton city Schools to accelerate and enrich the content for advanced learners beyond the grade-level or course expectation for all learners:

- **Acceleration**
  
  *Acceleration is used in mathematics to provide ongoing opportunities for continuous academic growth. Eligible students may participate in a compacted mathematics class in upper elementary (grades 4 or 5) and to complete middle school mathematics in grade six, Algebra I in grade 7, and Geometry in grade 8. Acceleration may also be used in other subject areas as deemed appropriate for the individual learner.*

- **Concept Attainment**
  
  *Broad-based themes or concept are used to facilitate interdisciplinary connections to deepen student understanding of knowledge and skills in each content area.*

- **Historical Analysis and Interpretation**
  
  *Students assume the role of historian as they investigate historical issues, people, and events through historical analysis and interpretation of primary source documents.*

- **Independent Research and Inquiry-Based Instruction**
  
  *Students and teachers generate questions and explore problems, issues, and events through research and independent study using a variety of resources.*

- **Problem-based Learning**
  
  *Students work on the solution to complex problems through collaboration and/or research.*

- **Simulations**
  
  *Students role play and engage in first hand experiences with complex issues, problems, and ideas in scenarios that provide an important connection to real-world situations.*
✓ Socratic Seminar
   Students participate in a discussion forum that improves comprehension and challenges
   students to think and apply knowledge on increasingly higher levels. Carefully
   constructed questions serve as a catalyst to promote dialogue that fosters reflection and
   critical thinking and leads to a deeper understanding of issues, themes, and ideas.

✓ Student Debates
   Students learn to research and debate complex issues from both sides of an argument.
   Participation in the debate process strengthens critical thinking, speaking and persuasive
   writing skills.

✓ Technology Integration
   Students utilize a wide variety of current technology to strengthen skills, conduct
   research, and demonstrate learning.

Part VIII: Policies and Procedures for Access to Programs and Advanced Courses (8VAC20-40-
60A.12)

General Intellectual Aptitude

Staunton City Schools disseminates information regarding the process and timeline for identifying
students for gifted services through local school communications, news releases, and the Staunton City
School website (www.staunton.k12.va.us). State regulations require that parents or guardians of students
who are undergoing screening for gifted identification and placement be notified prior to collecting
additional data for screening.

In grades K-12, all decisions regarding gifted identification are made at the local school. Parents or
guardians who would like their child considered for school-based services should submit a Staunton City
Schools Gifted Referral Form to their child’s teacher or principal. Students must be attending Staunton
City Schools in order to be considered for gifted school-based services.

Advanced courses at the middle school level include honors and accelerated/advanced mathematics.
Middle school students who demonstrate high achievement in English and or/mathematics may enroll in
honors English and/or advanced mathematics. Decisions regarding placement are based on prior student
performance in the subject area and on SOL test scores.
Advanced courses at the high school level include honors, AP, and dual enrollment. High school students who demonstrate high achievement and meet the prerequisites may participate in honors, AP or dual enrollment courses in any of the four core academic subject areas.

The Shenandoah Valley Regional Governor’s School (SVGS) offers advanced, AP, and dual enrollment opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Visual Arts (VA), or Theater/Performing Arts (TA). SVGS conducts a separate screening and selection process using standardized and achievement testing and multiple criteria. For more information, go to http://www.svgs.k12.va.us/web/
Part IX: Personal and Professional Development (8VAC20-40-60A.13)

Staunton City Schools will provide opportunities for teachers to learn:

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 in the area of identifying and serving gifted students is ongoing. All teachers in Staunton City Schools participate in small group book studies on the topic of differentiation of instruction. District-wide training is provided in the areas of differentiation, goal setting, student growth, and assessment.

   Differentiation specialists, principals, and other instructional leaders utilize faculty meetings, departmental/instructional team meetings, and grade level meetings to provide necessary training in characteristics of gifted learners, screening and evaluation of potential gifted learners, differentiated curriculum (lessons and/or units), teaching strategies, and methods for encouraging growth in critical and/or creative thinking.

   Teachers, differentiation specialists, and instructional supervisors will be encouraged to participate in state and national conferences on gifted education or appropriate workshops related to gifted education and/or differentiation. Staunton City Schools offers a tuition reimbursement program for teachers who wish to pursue additional coursework and/or to pursue the gifted education K-12 endorsement.
Part X: Procedures for Annual Review of Effectiveness (8VAC20-40-60A.14)

The Staunton City Schools Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC) will conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the gifted education program. The review will include the following:

1. Evaluation of screening, referral, identification and program procedures working toward the achievement of equitable representation of students in the Staunton City School gifted program.

2. Review of applicable goals and objectives as found in Part II of the Staunton City School Plan for Education of the Gifted.

3. Review of student outcomes and the academic growth of gifted students.

4. As determined by the GAC each year, the review may include
   - surveys of parents, teachers, students or administrators
   - review of assessment and/or goal setting data from teachers and differentiation specialists
   - other information as deemed appropriate by the GAC or requested by the superintendent or the school board.

5. The GAC will present a report of its finding to the Staunton City School Board at its June meeting (or other meeting as designated by the superintendent or the school board).
Part XI: Procedures for the Establishment of the Local Advisory Committee

(8VAC20-40-60B)

Composition of the Staunton City School Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>5-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ representatives of business, industry, arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ persons who are not parents of identified students</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (optional)</td>
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</table>

Purpose of the Local Advisory Committee

1. In accordance with the Virginia Board of Education Regulations Governing the Educational Program for Gifted Students, the school division shall establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members. This committee shall reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division.

2. In accordance with the Virginia Board of Education regulations, the purpose of the committee shall be to advise the school Board through the division superintendent of the educational needs of all gifted students in the division.

3. The committee shall review annually the local plan for the education of gifted student, including revisions, and determine the extent to which the plan for the previous year was implemented. The findings of the annual review of program effectiveness and the recommendations of the advisory committee shall be submitted annually in writing to the local school board and the superintendent of the school division.
Selection and Representation of the Gifted Advisory Committee

The Staunton City School Gifted Advisory Committee includes designated representatives from each school attendance area, 4 ex-officio members (Executive Director of Instruction, School Psychologist, School Board Representative, and Instructional Supervisor). Parents will be nominated or recruited by the differentiation specialists and principals with specific attention to representation that is ethnically and geographically balanced to reflect Staunton’s population. Other committee members will be nominated or recruited by the central office supervisor of gifted services.

Appointment of Members for the Gifted Advisory Committee

All members of the committee are officially appointed by the School Board to serve one term and may be reappointed.

Meeting Schedule of the Local Advisory Committee

The Gifted Advisory Committee will meet a minimum of three (3) times annually. Additional meetings may be called, when necessary.
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

Edward Clymore
June 4, 2012