

# Salem City Schools

## Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

2019-2024

<b>LEA#</b>	<b>139</b>		
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<b>Date Approved by School Board</b>	<i>Pending</i>		

## **Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted**

Each school board must review and approve a comprehensive plan for the education of the gifted. That plan must provide specific explanations of the school division's implementation of the *Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students*. School divisions, working in conjunction with their school boards, should determine the appropriate timeframe of applicability for their division's gifted plan. Historically, division plans span five years. For the technical review, the DOE will request a division to send their most current, approved plan at the time of the review. The applicable timeframe for the division's plan does not need to correspond to the collection year of their technical review. Information on the DOE technical review schedule can be found at the gifted education homepage at the Virginia Department of Education's Web site [Gifted Ed Homepage - http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted\\_ed/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/index.shtml)

Section 8VAC20-40-60A of the *Regulations* states that, "Each school board shall submit a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students to the Department of Education (DOE) for technical review on a schedule determined by the Department. Each school board shall approve a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students that includes the components identified in these regulations." To assist school divisions and school boards in complying with section 8VAC20-40-60A, the Virginia Department of Education has created this template for developing Local Plans for the Education of the Gifted (revised January 2011). This public document addresses all aspects of local services for gifted students, including, but not limited to, the area(s) of giftedness the school division will serve, an operational definition of giftedness in the division and its supporting identification procedures, program services, professional development, curriculum development, and parent and community involvement.

Each section of the plan should address specific procedures and information for each area of giftedness identified by the school division. If a school division identifies students in general intellectual aptitude (GIA) and specific academic aptitude-mathematics (SAA-M), then the section for referral procedures, for example, should reflect the specific referral procedures for GIA and SAA-M. Throughout the local plan template, school divisions may need to copy and paste the drop down boxes, the insert text form fields, and any pertinent information for each area of giftedness identified by the division. In order to be able to 'choose an item' from a drop down box, simply right click on the highlighted 'choose an item' wording and the drop down arrow should appear on the right. Right clicking on the arrow will then allow the drop down box choices to appear. If certain procedures or policies apply to more than one area of giftedness, simply copy and paste the drop down selection box to reflect all areas of giftedness that are applicable to the procedures or policy.

Once the completed comprehensive local plan for the education of gifted students has been approved by the local school board, the plan shall be accessible to the public through the division's Web site. The division shall ensure that printed copies of the plan are available to citizens who do not have online access.

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

**General Information regarding the Gifted Program in Salem City Schools K-12**

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) - History and Social Science	
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) – English	
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) – Mathematics	
Specific Academic Aptitude (SAA) – Science	
Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)	
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Theatre	
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Visual Arts	

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

**Part I: Statement of Philosophy and Local Operational Definition of Giftedness for the School Division (8VAC20-40-60A.1)**

**A. Division Statement of Philosophy for the Education of Gifted Students**

The Salem City School Division is dedicated to excellence in education for all students, and it is committed to aid each pupil to the full extent of his/her abilities. Our mission is to provide a nurturing environment that enables and encourages all students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to become successful, responsible contributors to our society.

The foundation of the Salem City Schools Gifted Program is the belief that gifted students require a challenging educational experience to ensure that they maintain enthusiasm for learning and are productive and creative in the mainstream of their school community. We recognize that there is no one determiner of giftedness; rather, multiple criteria may signal special abilities. When those criteria are viewed together, giftedness in students is indicated. Once a student is identified in general intellectual aptitude, he/she may require special curriculum modifications. The Salem City School Division actively promotes and directly assists teachers in developing an appropriately differentiated educational program for these students.

**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.

The Salem City Schools Gifted Program is designed to identify and target the needs of those students who demonstrate outstanding general intellectual aptitude in grade K-12. The main focus of the Salem City Schools Gifted Program is to provide support for in-class differentiation to extend and expand learning opportunities beyond those in the regular curriculum. In addition to this focus, the gifted education staff provides direct instruction to gifted and advanced learners.

At the elementary and secondary level, students are identified under the general intellectually gifted category. Regular classroom teachers, with assistance available from the gifted education specialists, plan for in-class differentiation for the gifted students in the students' areas of strength and interest. Students may accelerate in grade level and course placement if appropriate.

At the middle school level, grade level and course acceleration continue as options. In the sixth through eighth grades, for general studies, students are grouped heterogeneously and in-class

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differentiation models are emphasized. In eighth grade, students begin to select their own courses, including advanced math classes and foreign language classes.

Salem High School offers a variety of choices for the gifted students. Students may enroll in advanced courses and AP (Advanced Placement) courses in English, mathematics, science, social studies, art, drama, music, business, computer science, and foreign language. Dual enrollment for college credit is also available in a number of the advanced courses. Gifted students in grades 9-12 may also apply for enrollment in the Roanoke Valley Governor's School and Summer Residential Governor's School.

**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:** Salem City Schools regularly evaluates the instruments and procedures used in the screening process to ensure that all children will be evaluated in a fair and non-biased manner for inclusion in the General Intellectual and Subject Specific programs. Additionally, pre-screening and screening tools are regularly evaluated to ensure that equitable representation of students from various backgrounds, including economically disadvantaged, culturally diverse, identified with a disability, and limited English proficiency, are included in the gifted programming.
- B. Delivery of Services:** Salem City Schools reviews and supports the efforts of the classroom teacher to use appropriate differentiation strategies in the delivery of services for the General Intellectual Aptitude program (K-12). Gifted education specialists work directly with gifted students and their teachers on a rotational basis, in "pull out" groups, through "push in" co-teaching, or through collaborative planning with classroom teachers.
- C. Curriculum and Instruction:** Salem City Schools embraces classroom differentiation as its main mode of serving gifted students. Additionally, the gifted specialists work directly with identified gifted students and teachers to augment and extend curricular objectives.
- D. Professional Development:** Salem City Schools encourages teachers to work toward a gifted endorsement certificate to ensure appropriate differentiation and a continuum of K-12 advanced curriculum, instruction and support services to students for the General Intellectual Aptitude program (K-12). Furthermore, the gifted department supports K-12 teacher training in differentiation strategies and in developing tools to measure student outcomes and growth. The staff, in coordination with other Region Six gifted school divisions, also plans and actively supports biannual local/regional opportunities for professional development in differentiation strategies and other topics related to the education of the gifted.
- E. Equitable Representation of Students:** Salem City Schools reviews the current population of identified gifted students and compares it to the general population of students in order to determine whether there is a proportionally equitable representation in the gifted program for all subgroups of students. To this end, the gifted department regularly reviews and implements a variety of non-biased alternative assessment tools, as well as a universal screener at the early elementary level, to increase equitable representation from various backgrounds including those economically disadvantaged, culturally diverse, identified with a disability, and limited English proficiency.

**F. Parent and Community Involvement:** Per State Superintendent memo #227-23 from August 31, 2012 Salem City Schools is no longer required to form a gifted advisory committee. Instead, the gifted staff will conduct a series of parent meetings throughout the school year to address instructional, social-emotional, and student-oriented academic planning topics.

**Part III: Screening, Referral, Identification, and Service Procedures**

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

This section should provide screening procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures should include the annual review of student data used to create a pool of potential candidates for further assessment. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

**Screening Procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude and Specific Aptitude programs.**

**General Intellectual Aptitude Screening.** For currently enrolled students in grades K-12, screening requests are accepted any time a teacher, parent or other individual feels a student should be considered for the program. In broad strokes, the screening procedures look like this:

The gifted specialist, school principal, or guidance counselor reviews all available student's ability and/or achievement test scores. This analysis may lead to a formal request to the parents for screening or inclusion in a talent pool, explained further below.

The school's registrar and/or school counseling office notifies the gifted department staff to inform them of a student's previous inclusion in another district's gifted program. This analysis may lead to a formal request to the parents for screening or inclusion in a pool of potential candidates.

Furthermore, specifically on an annual basis, the gifted education specialists create a pool of applicants for the gifted program. To create this pool of students who have potential need for services in academic areas, Salem City Schools Gifted Department does the following: 1) Administers non-verbal testing for all second grade students within the first three months of the school year. 2) Communicates and meets regularly with classroom teachers who see advanced potential in their particular students. 3) Gifted education specialists serve these students to further monitor and informally assess their skills and potential. 4) Additional students are added to this candidate pool when the gifted specialists examine the records of transfer students, review lists of competition winners and award ceremony honorees. 5) For twice exceptional students (e.g., ADD, LD, EL, home environments with restricted literacy development, low socio-economic backgrounds, etc.), the gifted department staff communicates with special education professionals, including school psychologists, and participates in child study meetings. A school-based Identification/Placement Committee gives these students special consideration.

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

This section provides referral procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures shall permit referrals from parents or legal



guardians, teachers, professionals, students, peers, self, or others. These procedures should include to whom referrals are submitted and the timeline for the division to provide parents/guardians with the results of the eligibility process. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

**Referral procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude and Specific Aptitude programs.**

Referrals for gifted program services are always welcomed from administrators, teachers, parents, and the students themselves. These referrals may be offered at any point during the academic school year. The size of Salem City Schools division allows for this open referral policy, so there are no restricted windows for the process to be implemented. This applies to any K-12 student. Referrals for screening in the gifted program are submitted to gifted program specialists. Referrals are submitted electronically or in written form. When a student is referred, the parents are sent a permission form, a pamphlet explaining the gifted program and the screening process, and a checklist/observation form (i.e. the SIGS Parent Observation Form). Additionally, parents can access the referral form directly by asking school staff or the gifted coordinators.

**C. Identification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section provides identification procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. Identification in GIA programs shall be K-12 and must include a nationally norm-referenced aptitude test. Identification in SAA programs shall be K-12 or as assessment instruments exist to support identification, and must include either a nationally norm-referenced aptitude or achievement test. Identification in CTA and VPA programs shall be at the discretion of the school division. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

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

This section includes the three or more categories that divisions shall include to develop a profile or composite for each student being considered. This listing of categories should be repeated for each area of giftedness identified by the division. Please copy and paste the section below to support all identified areas of giftedness. NOTE: Selection of either item 5a or 5b or both counts as a single category.

**General Intellectual Aptitude**

- 1. Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio
- 2. Record of observation of in-class behavior
- 3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires

- 4. Individual interview
- 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s) (must be included for GIA) and/or
- 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
- 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.)
- 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures

Specify: OLSAT 8<sup>th</sup> edition; K-BIT2 Revised; NNAT 3; WRIT, MAP scores

## **2. Additional identification information for Specific Academic Aptitude - English and Math (6-12)**

- 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) and/or
  - 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
  - 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.)
  - 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures

Specify: OLSAT 8<sup>th</sup> edition; K-BIT2; NNAT 3; SAGES 3; CAT/Terra Nova; TOMAG; WRIT, MAP scores

## **3. Identification Procedures for Visual-Performing Arts Program (6-12)**

- 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/audition adjudicated by an appropriately knowledgeable expert in the field (e.g. college professor; art/music/drama teachers for advanced level programs)
- ☐ 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s)  
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)**

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.

**Identification procedures for Specific Aptitude program, Visual and Performing Arts Aptitude program and General Intellectual Aptitude**

2-4 Classroom Teacher(s)

1 Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s)

1 Counselor(s)

School Psychologist(s)

Assessment Specialist(s)

1 Principal(s) or Designee(s)

1 Gifted Education Coordinator

Other(s) Specify: Appropriate fine arts teacher for VPA

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

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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.

**Eligibility for the Specific Aptitude program (6 -12) and General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12)**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Administered/ Completed by</b>	<b>Scored by</b>	<b>Provided to the committee by</b>
<i>Ex. Behaviors checklist</i>	<i>Current classroom teacher</i>	<i>School gifted education teacher</i>	<i>School division gifted education coordinator</i>
Ability and Achievement Test: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● OLSAT 8<sup>th</sup> edition</li> <li>● KBIT 2</li> <li>● SAGES 3</li> <li>● NNAT 3</li> <li>● WRIT</li> </ul>	Gifted Education Specialist	Gifted Education Specialist	Gifted Education Specialist
SIGS Rating Scales	Current Classroom Teacher(s) and Parents	Gifted Education Specialist	Gifted Education Specialist
Product Samples	Current Classroom Teacher(s) and Parents	Gifted Education Specialist	Gifted Education Specialist
Portfolio for VPA			

The Identification/Placement Committee makes a decision regarding a child's eligibility and program placement status within 90 instructional days of the gifted specialist's receipt of the parental permission form. This Committee reaches its decision by reviewing all available data.

While there is predetermined cut-off test score requirement, Salem City Schools generally seeks to identify those students whose scores fall in the superior range using: general ability and reasoning tests; achievement tests; and subject specific math and language assessments. Furthermore, parent checklists and teacher checklists of gifted characteristics are administered and considered, as are any examples of the student's best work. The Committee decision is a consensus vote based on a thorough consideration of each child's data. "Inclusion of a test score in a division identification plan does not indicate that an individual student must score at a prescribed level on the test(s) to be admitted. No single criterion shall be used in determining students who qualify for, or are denied access to, programs for the gifted."

After the Committee decision has been made, the gifted education specialists notify the parents in writing, and offer to meet with them to discuss and display all data considered by the Identification/Placement Committee. Parents are informed of their child's eligibility or

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placement status and of the appeals process. If the child is identified gifted, then written permission is requested so that gifted services can be implemented. Principals and the student's teachers are made aware of the Committee's decision either by being participants in the Committee or from communication with the gifted specialists. Once all appropriate signatures are secured, the files are placed in the student's record.

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

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

**Determination of Services for the General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 -12).**

The committee decides, by consensus, the appropriate placement and delivery of services based on material gathered. Parents are notified of the child's recommended placement in the Salem City Gifted Program and are given the opportunity to meet with the gifted specialists to discuss the instructional program options. These options are found in Part II, Section C under delivery of services.

For identified General Intellectual (K-12) appropriate educational opportunities are provided in the regular classroom through curriculum differentiation and additional workshops that are provided during the academic school year. Content and grade level accelerations are considered on an individual basis.

All teachers assigned identified gifted students are given a list at the beginning of the year notifying them of the students' presence in the classroom and the availability of services by the gifted department. The gifted specialists are available to assist in class scheduling choices for middle and high school students, and in the development of differentiated curriculum for all students K-12. High and middle school students are encouraged to enroll in appropriate advanced placement classes, dual enrollment classes, Honors classes, the International Baccalaureate diploma program, and the Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology.

**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.

**Notification Procedures for the Specific Aptitude program (6 -12) and General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12).**

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Upon referral, a letter sent to the parents informs them of the child's potential for the need of services by the gifted program and requests their permission for individual testing and/or collection of additional information. After the Identification/Placement Committee has met, a letter informing the parents of the Committee's findings is mailed. If the Committee has determined that the child is eligible for gifted program services, permission for provision of those services is requested with the letter. If the Committee has determined that the child is ineligible (i.e. current placement is appropriate/services not needed *or* a deferral for reevaluation at a specified future time), a letter is sent to the parents to inform them of this decision. Appeals procedures are also outlined in this letter.

In the event the parents disagree with the Identification/Placement Committee's decision, the parents are afforded the opportunity to appeal. The letter notifying the parents of the placement committee's decision includes information advising them of their right to appeal and of the Salem City Schools' Appeals Procedure. The parents should then state in writing the basis of their disagreement in a letter to the Director of Instruction within ten (10) school days of receiving this letter of denial/monitor status. The Director of Instruction appoints a Central Appeals Committee to review all such concerns. This Committee convenes to reconsider the decision of the Identification/Placement Committee no later than ten (10) administrative working days from the receipt of an appeal from parents. The following governs the function of this committee:

- a) The Central Appeals Committee shall be comprised of no more than five members and shall not include members of the building level or division level Identification/Placement Committee.
- b) The Committee's function is to review disagreements that pertain to the child's identification and eligibility status. Disputes that are **not** within the purview of the appeals procedure shall be those areas that would constitute a public agency prerogative such as instructional materials, assignment of instructional personnel, and methods of instruction. The Committee's responsibility is to determine whether or not the procedural requirements of the identification process were satisfied and/or whether or not the building level or division level Identification/Placement Committee's decision was appropriate as it pertains to the child's eligibility status.
- c) The parents shall be afforded an opportunity to present to the Committee the basis of their disagreement. Outside data will be accepted from the parents as part of their appeal. The data must be current and applicable to the decision process. The Committee shall review all appeal requests and inform the parents of its decision. In all cases, the decision of the Committee is final. No other appeals may be made after this decision.
- d) Other Requirements:



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1] The Director of Instruction shall notify, in writing, all parties involved of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

2] The decision of the Committee shall be made in writing to the parents no more than five (5) administrative working days from the date of the hearing.

**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.

**Change in Instructional Services for the General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 -12).**

Once identified for services, students are not reevaluated yearly for the gifted program. However, parents, teachers, counselors, or students may request reevaluation at any time. The gifted education specialists begin the evaluation by investigating current data available: student work, standardized test scores, and grades. If it is determined that no change in services is indicated, the parent will be notified. If there is indication that a change in services may be necessary, the parents will receive a letter requesting permission to collect relevant data and the process will proceed in the same manner as the identification process on an original referral. Exit from the gifted program is not encouraged. Salem does not believe that a child identified as gifted can be summarily “unidentified”. Services that may include addressing underachievement behaviors, one on one counseling and optional resources such as modifying the individual program are explored before an exit letter is considered. Exit from the program in no way implies that the student has been determined **not** to be gifted, only that gifted department services will no longer be offered to the individual.

**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.

**The General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 - 12).**

Within the framework of the SOL curriculum, classroom teachers in grades K – 12 differentiate instruction to provide appropriately challenging learning experiences for gifted students. Through the use of flexible grouping models and other differentiation strategies such as tiered assignments, classroom teachers differentiate content, process and product based on readiness, interest, and learning style. Additionally, Salem City Schools’ personalized learning model allows for even more differentiation options as students may be allowed to move at their own pace using lessons created by teachers and posted in a Canvas course. Furthermore, because the gifted specialists are assigned to specific schools and work with the identified gifted in grades K-8, they are uniquely positioned to support students’ sequential learning from one grade to the next; the gifted staff is able to build on each previous year’s work with the student as well as advise the subsequent grade level classroom teacher of each child’s unique talents and strengths.

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

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies or program model that allows gifted students to interact with their age-level peers during the school day and week.

**General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude programs (6 -12).**

Identified gifted students (K-12) are serviced within their “home” school. At the elementary level, during the school day they are in heterogeneous groups for all academic subjects as well as the special areas of art, music and physical

education. Workshops are regularly scheduled each semester allowing gifted students to interact and collaborate on topics that interest them. At the middle school level, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade identified students are scheduled in heterogeneous classes, but their enrollment in advanced study classes allows for interaction time daily. At the high school level, gifted students have many options: AP classes, Dual Enrollment, Distance Learning, Online Learning, and the Regional Governor's School for Math and Science. Each of these options allows gifted students to interact with their age-level peers during the school day and week.

**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.

**The General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 - 12).**

Workshops for elementary, middle and high school students are scheduled each semester allowing the students to interact and collaborate on various topics that interest them.

**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.

**The General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 - 12).**

Classroom teachers are encouraged to use a variety of differentiation strategies to allow gifted learners to work independently during the school day and week. These strategies may include the use of independent learning contracts, choice menus and independent 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.

**The General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 - 12).**

Gifted specialists work closely with teachers to ensure differentiated opportunities meet the needs of the student. These students can often work at a higher level of knowledge than many of their age peers and possess the ability to process information in the higher realms of Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). Teachers are encouraged to use flexible, small group instruction or tiered lessons with appropriately challenging material and to allow creativity and individuality in the choice of assignments and products that students create. Cooperative learning, creative problem solving, critical and creative thinking, and higher order questioning are other strategies that foster intellectual and academic growth. At the high school level, students self-select the classes that will offer them the appropriate level of challenge to foster intellectual and academic growth. Teachers are encouraged to use teaching models such as problem-based learning, simulations, Socratic questioning, personalized learning modules, and critical and creative thinking tied to the curriculum.

**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.

**The General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 - 12).**

In Salem City Schools, teacher evaluations are tied into measuring student growth in a selected set of objectives. At the end of the school year all teachers, including the gifted department staff, must document the students' growth on the previously specified designated objective(s). District-wide growth tools such as running records, writing portfolios, formative assessments, and leveled reading inventories are a means of evaluating a gifted student's academic progress and growth. At all grade levels, real time reporting of academic achievement is offered through the electronic grade book.

**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.

**The General Intellectual Aptitude (K-12) and Specific Aptitude program (6 -12).**

**In order to meet the needs of the gifted population, as well as all children, Salem City Schools promotes differentiation of instruction as the cornerstone of its programming in order promote opportunities for advanced content and pacing of instruction.** Through differentiation, teachers react responsively and prescriptively to meet their students' needs. To ensure effective teaching and learning, teachers examine and modify three key elements of curriculum: content, process and product. Teachers ensure that these three elements are incorporated into experiences that lead students to engage with and genuinely understand the subject. Using curriculum based on the Virginia Standards of Learning, students who indicate particular readiness are challenged using a variety of strategies, such as personalized learning. Always, an emphasis is placed on giving students choice in the high interest, high relevance curriculum. While the core of what the students learn is based on the state standards, *how* the students learn, including degree of difficulty, working arrangements, pacing, modes of expression, and types of scaffolding may vary considerably. Salem City Schools supports its teachers in addressing the many modes of learning as outlined in current brain research (e.g. Eric Jensen) and theories of intelligence (e.g. Howard Gardner).

**Flexible grouping enables teachers to vary content, product, and/or process according to the students' interests, learning styles or readiness levels.** Opportunities for acceleration can be provided to allow all learners to move through materials at an appropriate pace both within and outside their age-relative grades via compacting or through grade advancement. Such grouping strategies encourage original research and production through student-centered problem finding and solving.

**Salem City Schools supports a variety of instructional strategies to be used to accelerate and enrich content, process and product for identified gifted and high**

**ability children in the regular education classroom.** Teachers are first 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
- think-tac-toe (study choices)
- curriculum compacting and learning contracts
- interest centers
- independent study
- WebQuests
- Personalized learning

Higher order critical and creative thinking skills are promoted through the use of problem-based learning, STEM activities, creative problem solving, technology and complex questioning strategies. These options allow instructors and students to focus on issues, themes, and ideas within and across areas of study.

All classroom teachers are supported by the gifted coordinators in offering differentiated instruction in their classroom. The gifted specialist is available to help plan pre-assessment activities, organize larger units of studies, provide useful resources, and assist in classroom instruction. This coordination fosters increasing levels of complexity that differ significantly from those of age-level peers.

When working with gifted students directly, the gifted education specialists access a variety of curricula written specifically for gifted students. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of The College of William and Mary's Center for Gifted Education language arts curriculum for grades 1-8. This is a series of 10 units that encourage appreciation of literature through broad themes and textual analysis of high –quality selections. This scaffolded learning is designed to enhance writing, reasoning, and critical thinking skills.

The math curriculum employed by the gifted staff is guided by this statement offered directly by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics: "...while all students need curricula that develop the students' problem solving, reasoning, and communication abilities, the mathematically talented and gifted need in-depth and expanded curricula that emphasize higher order thinking skills, nontraditional topics, and the application of skills and concepts in a variety of contexts." To this end, the gifted education specialists utilize advanced resource materials dealing with such topics as: mathematics through history (including ancient number systems, bases other than ten); alternative computational algorithms; probability; permutations and combinations; graphing; visual-spatial relations and associated concepts; sets and Venn diagrams; logical reasoning (including deductive and inductive). Explorations of these topics require students to: understand the symbolism of mathematics; provide opportunities for critical thinking; form theories and test those theories; sharpen intuitions and awareness

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of spatial concepts; analyze attributes; persist and persevere in the face of challenging activities; generate products based on higher level thinking and original research.

Science and social studies units are also created and offered based upon input from classroom teachers, since many issues, themes, and ideas are best covered within and across multiple areas of study.



**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 (K-12)**

A wide variety of programs of study and advanced courses are available to identified gifted students in Salem City Schools. The chart below details those options that are most appropriately offered and encouraged as gifted students participate in gifted services. A few specific elements of this chart are explained in more detail below.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Language Arts</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>Science</b>
6 <sup>th</sup>	Lang Arts 6	Adv. Math 6 (Math 7)	SS 6	Science 6
7 <sup>th</sup>	Lang Arts 7	Pre-Algebra (Math 8) <b>or</b> Algebra 1	SS 7	Life Science 7
8 <sup>th</sup>	Advanced English (English 8)	Algebra 1 Pt. 2 <b>or</b> Geometry	World Geography	Physical Science
9 <sup>th</sup>	English 9: Honors	Geometry <b>or</b> Alg. 2 w/Trig: Honors	AP World History: Modern	Biology <b>or</b> Earth Science
10 <sup>th</sup>	English 10: Honors	Trigonometry <b>or</b> Alg. 2 w/Trig: Honors <b>or</b> Pre-calculus w/ Trig: Honors <b>or</b> Alg Functions and Data Analysis	AP Human Geography	Biology <b>or</b> Chemistry (if Bio was taken in 9 <sup>th</sup> grade)
11 <sup>th</sup>	Eng 11 CP <b>or</b> AP Language and Composition	Trigonometry <b>or</b> Pre-calc w/ Trig: Honors <b>or</b> AP Calculus: AB <b>or</b> AP Stats	AP US/VA History	AP Chemistry <b>or</b> AP Biology <b>or</b> AP Physics <b>or</b> AP Envir Science
12 <sup>th</sup>	Eng 12 CP: Cont. Lit and Pop Cult. <b>or</b> Eng 12 CP: Lit and Fict: Films and Plays <b>or</b> AP Lit	AP Calculus BC <b>or</b> AP Stats	AP Government	AP Chemistry <b>or</b> AP Biology <b>or</b> AP Physics <b>or</b> AP Envir Science.

**Dual Enrollment:** Salem City Schools offers a rigorous course of study that includes the offering of dual enrollment classes for college credit. Virginia Western Community College has agreed to give credit for some courses being offered the high school. Any course that does receive such credit is taught by a college-accredited high school staff member on campus.

**Advanced Placement:** In AP courses, students have the opportunity to dig deeper into subjects that interest them, develop advanced research skills, and learn to tap their creative, problem-solving, and analytical potential. These courses give students access to rigorous college-level work, and they build students' confidence as they learn time management and study skills needed for college and career success. At the close of the class, students have the opportunity to take an AP exam which could earn them college credit for the material. AP classes carry the highest weight on a grade point average (an A = 5.0).

**Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology:** This regional specialty school offers a rigorous half-day program to challenge Salem students in grades ten through twelve who have creative, capable minds, and a strong interest in science and technology. Positions are awarded based on the strength of the student's application.

**Virtual or Long Distance Learning:** The Spartan Online Academy is an option for students that want to take classes not offered at the high school or that cannot fit into their schedule due to conflicts. Advanced and AP options are available. A list of virtual learning providers can be found in the high school's in Registration Guide.

**Pathway Project:** Available to seniors who have earned at least 17 credits before the start of the school year, the Pathway Project offers these students an opportunity to independently study a specific topic or series of topics. This includes a component of internship or externships as well as a capstone project wherein the student demonstrates a broad understanding of the skills and content that make up the discipline or interest pathway. The capstone project may result in a tangible and/or visual product that can be shared with an audience.

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

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

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

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

The personnel who work exclusively with the Salem City Gifted Program are two gifted education specialists. They must have knowledge of differentiated teaching strategies, curriculum development, and dealing with the characteristics of the gifted learner. They must hold an endorsement in gifted education and be able to work cooperatively with parents, teachers, administrators and students to ensure the challenging environment needed by students. In addition, they must be able to administer each component of a dynamic program, be current in latest technologies, and be open to new ideas. Gifted education specialists, like all teaching personnel, are selected by the Superintendent and approved by the City of Salem School Board. They are supervised by the Director of Instruction.

All teachers in the division are charged with providing an appropriate educational program for all learners in their classroom. Staff development opportunities in curriculum differentiation strategies and the social-emotional needs of the gifted learner are provided for all teaching personnel. On a rotational basis, Salem City gifted personnel provide inservice with concentrations in different teacher competencies to encourage professional development. These concentrations include: integration of general and gifted education; characteristics of gifted students; identifying gifted students; understanding and applying effective resources and methods for gifted students; differentiation of curriculum for gifted learners; understanding contemporary issues and research in gifted education. These inservices may be provided directly by the Salem gifted department staff or in coordination with the Region 6 Gifted Consortium.

Each principal selects the teachers who will be responsible for the instruction of the identified gifted students in their school. Gifted department staff members are available for consultation related to specific student needs, strengths, etc.

**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.

The Director of Instruction evaluates the gifted education specialists regularly, based on the effective implementation of their assigned duties. The gifted staff regularly meets with this individual for program review and goal setting.

Principals evaluate classroom teachers based on their ability to meet the needs of gifted students through differentiation and the use of appropriate curriculum adjustments.

The Salem City School Board annually reviews the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted. The gifted department welcomes feedback from all stakeholders, including parents, students, and teachers of the gifted. Furthermore, Salem City Schools annually requires that at least one of these subgroups is surveyed to elicit further feedback.

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

Each school division may establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members who are appointed by the school board. This committee shall reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division. This section should include the school division's procedures for the establishment of the local advisory committee for the gifted program if the division has elected to establish a committee.

**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.

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Division Superintendent's Signature

Printed Name

Date