

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

11NC7

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

11NC7

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 1 Elementary schools
 (per district designation) 0 Middle/Junior high schools
0 High schools
0 K-12 schools
1 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7345

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 10
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	24	12	36
K	14	22	36		7	10	9	19
1	17	21	38		8	9	10	19
2	18	22	40		9	0	0	0
3	20	20	40		10	0	0	0
4	26	15	41		11	0	0	0
5	19	21	40		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								309

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
37 % Asian
7 % Black or African American
3 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
52 % White
1 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 0%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	0
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	0
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	268
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.00
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	0

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 0%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 0

Number of languages represented, not including English: 0

Specify languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3%
 Total number of students who qualify: 8

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

We do not participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. Our numbers are from the Child Poverty Count information.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 5%
 Total number of students served: 16

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>16</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
Support staff	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>29</u>	<u>10</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 15:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Teacher turnover rate	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	<u>0</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0%</u>
Found employment	<u>0%</u>
Military service	<u>0%</u>
Other	<u>0%</u>
Total	<u>0%</u>

The Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy opened its doors in September of 2000 as a non-discriminatory, public charter school that provides a differentiated, exceptionally challenging education for children of extremely high intellectual ability. The mission is to "meet the distinctive intellectual, social and emotional needs of our students by providing a supportive environment in which they can meet academic challenges and develop relationships with peers of all ages. We strive to prepare our graduates to become independent, productive, responsible, and creative individuals capable of making original contributions to society." The goal of our school is to help highly gifted children from all walks of life reach their potential.

Our school serves students from a five county area in the south central section of North Carolina around the Charlotte area. From a beginning enrollment of 60 students in K - 6, the school has grown to a student population of 310 in grades K – 8. The student body is culturally diverse, and our families represent all social-economic backgrounds. Parents and extended family members are very involved with the education of their children. The school has a nearly 100% volunteer participation rate.

As the school has grown, so has our program. The school opened with a core curriculum in the four major content areas, four enrichment classes, and one major school event – a Saturday Art Carnival. Today our five enrichment classes incorporate sub groups which provide our students with eight different choices for learning and doing. We have hosted educational delegations from a consortium of schools for the gifted affiliated with the National Association of Gifted Children, the North Carolina Teaching Fellows and international delegations from Belarus, China, Saudi Arabia, and Costa Rica.

Our school year highlights the major curricular areas with a Night of the Notables (language arts and social studies), Science Fair (science/math/technology) and Night of the Arts (visual art, music, foreign languages and physical education). These events are coordinated by our staff with support from the Parent-Teacher Organization. The focus of these events is to showcase student accomplishments across the curriculum. Students at the Scholars' Academy participate in a large number of scholastic competitions including MATHCOUNTS, Math League Press, American Mathematics Competition 8, 10, and 12, National Spelling Bee, National Geography Bee, Letters About Literature, NC poetry competitions, Science Olympiad, Math Olympiad, Academic Games League of America, Global Problem Solving, and First Lego league. Our teams and individual students are successful in competitions at the state and national level.

Our core curriculum for 2010-2011 includes five courses that are available for high school credit; Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Biology I, and English 9. We have expanded our curriculum into these areas because we have seen the need to provide courses with these levels of difficulty to meet the needs of our exceptional children.

A major milestone for the school was the renewal of our school charter in 2005. The Scholars' Academy was one of first group of charter schools in North Carolina to receive a renewal for a period of 10 years.

Another major milestone for the school was the development of our own curriculum benchmarks in 2006. As there are very few curricular materials available for highly gifted children, a major focus for the first years of the school was the adaptation and/or creation of curricular materials, based on best practices from the field, that would meet the needs of highly gifted children. Our curriculum is the foundation of our excellence. For the 2010-2011 school year an additional milestone for our school was the purchase and renovation of a building to serve as a permanent home for our program.

Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy is a school that embodies the essential ideal of what a charter school should be. The focus of the school is a specific target population of students, and our curriculum

has been developed to meet the particular learning needs of that group of young people. From the "Marland Report" (1972) to "A Nation Deceived" (2004) researchers and educators have compiled statistics to verify that gifted students are often left behind in traditional educational settings. In Charlotte, NC, there is our unique school that is developing a model for educating gifted children. We appreciate the support of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Board of Education as we pursue excellence.

1. Assessment Results:

Honor School of Excellence is the highest rating for North Carolina schools as defined by the state accountability standards. Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy has been an Honor School of Excellence each year beginning with the 2003-2004 school year. To be named an Honor School of Excellence, 90% of the students in a school must be at or above Achievement Level III, students must achieve high growth, and the school must meet the goals of Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by the No Child Left Behind legislation. In general, meeting the standard of Achievement Level III indicates that students have answered 50% of the test items correctly. For Achievement Level IV, students have responded correctly to 85% or more of the test items.

Testing results from the Scholars' Academy do not indicate any significant gains or losses in achievement over a five year period. Statistically speaking there are no achievement gaps between the test scores of all students and the test scores of subgroups at our school. Eighth grade students at the Scholars' Academy have demonstrated 100% proficiency in computer competency skills for the five years of reporting.

A second rating published by the North Carolina Office of Accountability is a ranking of schools according to the mean developmental score by grade level and subject areas tested. Students at Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy consistently score at the top levels in these rankings. These performance trends indicate that our students are matching and/or exceeding the expectations of the standards established by state testing. The URL for information about state assessment results is at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/reports/archive>

A final piece of information concerning performance levels of students at the Scholars' Academy is the report of the scores of our middle school students who are taking high school level classes. Our curriculum includes classes in Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Biology I for students in grades 6, 7, and 8. In these curricular areas, as measured by North Carolina End of Course Tests, our students also score at the top levels of achievement. In Algebra II, our eighth graders consistently have the highest developmental scale score in the state – as compared with the top high school students taking these courses in North Carolina.

In addition to the state mandated grade level tests, the Scholars' Academy uses a nationally-normed test to assess out-of-grade level achievement of our students. The Terra Nova 3 is administered to all students, K–8, at one grade level above their assigned grade. Kindergarten students are given the grade 1 test, first grade students are given the second grade test, etc. This assessment is administered to coordinate with the curricular expectations of the school – that students are expected to maintain achievement at least one grade level above the North Carolina requirements. Students at all grade levels score at proficient levels or above.

A final note about assessment is a mention of the fact that our curriculum and our teaching strategies are not designed to "teach to the test". Our curricular philosophy supports the ideal that students should have material that is challenging and supports any specific learning needs that exist. Our classroom assessments are varied, including rubrics, checklists, anecdotal information, and essay exams. Maintaining high achievement levels at the Scholars' Academy is an on-going effort that involves collaboration of students, staff, and parents about student needs, curricular goals, and expectations for success. Our excellence is the product of a high level of commitment from all levels of our school family.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Assessment results are reported to schools according to the number of students who meet the state standards in specific goal areas for reading and mathematics and the mean percent of correct responses for

each goal. In general, the reading goals are Literary Reading, Informational Reading, Analyzing information from a variety of sources, Evaluating print and non-print materials, and Interpretive and Evaluative responses to literary genres. Goal areas in mathematics include Computation with whole numbers, Measurement, Probability, Geometry, and Patterns and Mathematical relationships.

In analyzing test results, we examine goal areas where student test results show evidence of significant strengths and relative weaknesses as demonstrated by the percent correct in each goal area. For goal areas where consistent weaknesses are evident, a curriculum evaluation is completed. For example, our data indicate that the goal area of measurement (mathematics test) is one in which students have scored consistently lower than other areas. Our curricular evaluation examines the content presented as it is aligned with the standards of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) as compared with the goals identified in our curricular benchmarks. We also review instructional methods and materials used across grade levels in the investigation and practice of measurement. Using a combination of additional materials, staff development and cohort teaching teams at combined grade levels, modifications are done to integrate additional material into the curriculum. Pre and post-testing strategies are used to identify improvement in achievement. Goal areas in reading and math that indicate particular strengths are identified for differentiated instruction and inclusion of more advanced content. Decision making is based on assessment data, best practices in gifted education, and state and national standards in the selected subject area.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

General assessment results from End of Grade and End of Course tests by school are communicated to our community by the local media. At the Scholars' Academy, we communicate evidence of student achievement with specific school events that highlight curricular areas: Night of the Notables showcases achievement in Language Arts and Social Studies; our science fair focuses on science and math excellence; and our Night of the Arts presents student achievement in the areas of fine arts and foreign languages. Parents are invited to the school to participate directly as students present projects and work samples from the curricular areas. Assessment results from specific tests mandated by the state are communicated to parents through the reporting documents provided by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Due to the timing of the tests in the spring, these results are provided to parents with the final report card at the end of the year.

Assessment information is also provided in a formal report to the board of directors at the annual meeting. Parents are invited to attend a Dialogue with the Director session that focuses on the requirements of state mandated testing which includes a general explanation about how to interpret testing results. Parents may also schedule conferences with the staff and administration to discuss individual student achievement. Assessment results are shared with students through the traditional method of report cards and individual conferences. Documentation of achievement is included in individual student portfolios and cumulative records that follow students through each grade at the Scholars' Academy.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Successful strategies for achievement are shared with parents through individual student conferences that are held annually. At the middle school level, conferences are student led, so that students have the opportunity to explain to parents their particular strengths and areas for improvement. At a broader level, strategies are discussed at regional meetings of coordinators of Academically/Intellectually Gifted Education. Our staff members also present sessions at the annual meeting of the North Carolina Association for Gifted Children and at the annual conference of the National Association of gifted children. Staff members have also presented sessions at state level meetings of the North Carolina Middle School Association and other state level associations. The presentations include information about project-based learning experiences, curriculum content, differentiation, and alternative assessment methods for gifted learners. A most effective method of sharing the school successes is through annual open houses and through informal discussions that our parents have with families who are not part of our school community.

1. Curriculum:

In an educational setting that contains traditional elements of study, the core areas of study at Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy are explored as both integrated and discrete areas of learning. Our curricular vision is an ideal that integrates the concepts, processes, and products of each discipline. Inherent to this philosophy of integrating disciplinary study is the basic assumption that no field of study stands alone, and that the learning experience should be enriched with the support of foreign language, fine arts, physical well-being, and technology. The development of our educational structure is an evolving, on-going process that utilizes the expertise and intuition of our exceptional staff, guided by a variety of disciplinary specialists and experts in the field of gifted education. The curriculum incorporates standards from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, standards from national organizations such as the National Science Teachers Association, and best practices from the field of gifted education.

Language Arts incorporates the strands of literature, writing, language, and oral communication that are combined into a unified discipline for study. Literature involves reading and critical examination of texts in a variety of genres. Writing begins at kindergarten and is a process of conceptualizing and presenting experiences through language. Language incorporates grammar, usage, vocabulary, and spelling. Oral communication involves presentations, debate, discussion, and oral interpretation

Mathematics is a language of relationships. Our program includes fast pacing, acceleration, and an orientation to problem solving and focuses on the application of mathematical principles. Content includes computation, problem solving, mental arithmetic, probability, measurement, geometry, and spatial visualization. Math concepts are applied in the disciplines of science, social studies, and language arts.

Science study at the Scholars' Academy begins in kindergarten and is approached as a way of understanding the natural world with a focus on the methods and ways of discovering and interpreting new ideas and/or systems of ideas. Science study is inquiry based and is structured around themes, such as systems and patterns. Much of our work in science involves small group investigations that emulate the way that scientists work together in real world situations.

Social Studies include the fields of geography, economics, political science, anthropology, philosophy, history, and current events. Beginning in kindergarten, students develop skills in research, inquiry, discussion, writing, and group processes. Social studies is a the core discipline for learning about and understanding the way the world works from a social/human perspective.

Students begin study in **Visual Arts** beginning in kindergarten with investigations in a variety of media and content. Painting – including pastels, watercolor, acrylics and oils, fabric art, architecture and perspective, graphic design and art principles. Field experiences to local art museums and workshops complement study in art history and art appreciation. Student art is on display throughout the school. Our **Performing Arts** curriculum provides experiences for students interested in choral, instrumental, or strings ensembles and drama. This program also begins for all students in kindergarten with foundational study in music theory, music history, music appreciation and informal performance. Formal performance experiences begin in fourth grade. Instructional time is one hour and 30 minutes per week.

Health and nutrition programs are incorporated into our science and social studies curricular materials. **Physical education** is presented as a separate scheduled class for all students that includes instruction in physical fitness, dance, and athletic skill development in areas such as basketball, soccer, volleyball, and running. Instructional time is one hour and 30 minutes per week. All students also have 30 minutes daily of unstructured “recess” time.

From the opening of our school in 2000, **Foreign Languages** have been an integral component of our curricular structure. Students have 1 hour and 30 minutes per week of both Spanish and Chinese (Mandarin). The curriculum is structured around the cultural aspects of language study and fluency in reading, writing, and speaking. At grade 6, after 6 years of generalized study in both languages, students select a focus language. At 6th grade class time increases to 3 ½ hours per week. All students are required to participate in foreign language study with the goal of fluency in reading, writing and conversation with native speakers. Our students who matriculate to high school are able to test into the second or third year of foreign language study.

2. Reading/English:

The reading curriculum at Scholars' academy is formulated around the standards of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study supported with materials/best practices as recommended for gifted students. Our reading program is characterized by a combination of reading level appropriate/challenging reading materials. At each grade level during the first three years of school, the reading year begins with an individual assessment of student reading levels. At kindergarten, first and second grades, running records of reading levels are recorded using DRA assessments. At the kindergarten level, we have a wide variety of reading levels in the classroom from nonreaders to students who are reading chapter books. Because of this range of skills, much of the reading instruction is done in small groups with students clustered according to their demonstrated phonemic awareness, reading levels, or demonstrated level of reading comprehension. Whole group reading begins during the second semester with instruction centered on the Junior Great Books program materials. JGB introduces literary principles such as figurative language and literary genres to our young readers. In grades 1 – 8 our reading curriculum utilizes literature units developed at the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary as the foundation material for reading study. These materials were selected because they utilize reading selections that are appropriately challenging for our students. The Center for Gifted Education materials are quality examples of units that provide the integrated reading/writing/communication format that we regard as important for our students. These grade levels also use Junior Great Books and novel studies to supplement reading instruction. Reading comprehension and critical analysis of reading material are also part of our curricular expectations across the curricular areas of science, social studies and mathematics.

In the case of students who are reading below grade level, we use diagnostic tests to pinpoint reading skills that need support and locate or design supplemental materials to support growth. Our strategies include small group work and individual assistance in targeted areas of need.

3. Mathematics:

The Mathematics curriculum at Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy is designed around the range of math abilities that are the hallmark of gifted students. Some students are ready for radical acceleration, while other students demonstrate higher abilities in the areas of humanities. Based on this range of characteristics of the student body our math program incorporates the expectations from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study spanning kindergarten math through Algebra II or higher.

In grades K–4 our program is formulated around the Everyday Mathematics program developed at the University of Chicago. Everyday Math offers a spiral approach to the introduction and mastery of math skills and concepts. Everyday Math also provides special opportunities for student to talk about math concepts with their peers. In general, our math curriculum is accelerated by one grade level so that kindergarten students complete first grade math, first grade completes second grade math, etc. In fifth grade our students are placed in a pre-algebra class or in a class with seventh grade math goals. In sixth grade students have the option of Algebra 1 or Foundations of Algebra. By the end of eighth grade many of our students will have completed a sequence of math courses that culminates with Algebra II. Students are assigned to these advanced levels of math based on diagnostic testing, End of Grade test scores, and/or teacher recommendation. The sequence of math courses was designed to meet the significant needs for math acceleration that is a characteristic of many of our students. Curricular materials for our middle school math students were chosen to coincide with the materials used by the school system into which

most of our students move after graduation from the eighth grade. Due to the administrative organization of the school, there are ample opportunities for interdisciplinary study among the fields of math, science, and technology.

In our K-4 classrooms assistance for students who struggle with mathematics is provided by small group work, targeted assistance with our teaching support staff. Our school also has a staff member with a math specialist degree who is able to provide special support to classroom teachers in areas of need. Our middle school students also provide during school tutoring time to younger students who request “buddy” assistance with mathematics.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Our Science program utilizes four areas of science study (as defined by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study) as the focus for instruction. In grades K- 4 one quarter of school is spent investigating the topic areas of life science, physical science, earth science, or environmental science. Using the four topics in the early years of science instruction provides the foundation for four yearlong science classes that our staff has developed for Scholars’ Academy students beginning at 5th grade. Expanding science instruction to a full year of earth science, environmental science, physics/chemistry and Biology I provides time for the in depth examination of science principles by our students in grades 5 – 8. Our staff has integrated a variety of published science materials, reading materials, and community experts into a vigorous approach to “doing” science. Our science program also incorporates strong components of nutrition, healthful living, and safety.

Since 2001 the school has made original science investigations a required part of the curriculum for our middle school students. Sophisticated projects in physics, math/computer science, and environmental science have advanced to award levels at state science competitions. As indicated in our math curriculum, the science program has a high degree of integration with other curricular areas using challenging materials. Students in environmental science and Developing World (social studies) classes do an integrated study using the book Collapse by Jared Diamond. A project of designing, building and testing solar cars integrates study in art, mathematics and science.

Our science curriculum promotes the school ideals of learning advanced content, connection to real-world endeavors, problem solving as a fundamental activity of scholars, and small group investigations. Science has provided a springboard for many of our students to achieve their personal goals for selection as students at the North Carolina School of Science and Math as high school juniors.

5. Instructional Methods:

If you walked into any classrooms at the Scholars’ Academy on any given day you would see demonstrations of a variety of instructional methods and strategies. Staff development focuses on strategies and models for a wide range of instructional purposes, and the purpose of multiple strategies is multiple outcomes. Even though the school does not have any identified subgroups according to the NCLB criterion, as a school we acknowledge that differentiation is a true guiding principle of gifted education. The strategies you would see at our school include Socratic seminar, independent study, didactic instruction, pre-assessment perhaps leading to curriculum compacting, mentorships, problem-based instruction, inquiry learning, and strategies investigated in graduate course; the Taba Method, the Parnes Model, and others. In a kindergarten classroom you might see 5 year olds doing a lesson where they group items in categories and label the categories. Environmental science students are identifying the pros and cons or nuclear power in a discovery lesson. American history students are using Socratic discussion to probe the meaning of a Federalist paper. So we use differentiation to provide all of our students with of a variety of ways to access information and gain skills.

In the traditional sense of differentiation, students in our classrooms have a broad range of individual differences. To differentiate for our students, teachers provide varying levels of differentiation in the content, process, and product dimensions of any given assignment. Differentiation may occur by

assignment or by student choice. Students who find math challenging have options for different levels of math instruction, or they are assigned to a small group working at their level, with a similar group doing work that is beyond the level being completed by the majority of the class. The content for these small groups is different. Independent research in a special topic of interest after a student has pre-tested out of a unit of study teaches students skills in self-directed learning that can be used in many circumstances. Teachers suggest alternatives for product differentiation providing a platform for creative expression of student learnings. Differentiation at the Scholars' Academy is used to remediate student weaknesses and expand student strengths.

6. Professional Development:

Professional Development highlights two imperatives for our staff. The first strand for professional development is required study in the area of gifted education. Prior to the opening of school each year a targeted area for staff growth is identified through surveys and/or questionnaires. The topic might be the social and emotional development of gifted children; differentiated instruction for gifted children; developing curricular materials for gifted children; twice-exceptional children; or any other topic identified by staff for in-depth training. Our school has a strong cadre of specialists in the field who are available for this type of training. Employment standards at our school also require that staff members who do not have certification and/or degrees in Academically/Intellectually Gifted Education at the time of hire will complete those requirements within two years of the anniversary of their employment. To support this requirement, the school provides financial support for the completion of the four graduate level classes required for the certification. When staff completes the course work on Instructional Models in Gifted Education, they are required to provide a copy of lessons created in the class as a resource to other teachers in the school and in the wider community of gifted educators.

A second strand of professional development is available to staff through the Professional Development Plans each of them creates at the beginning of the school year. The PDP is a vehicle for teachers to identify topics they wish to investigate to strengthen pedagogical skills or content knowledge that correlate with teacher evaluation and/or classroom topics. Staff has attended National meetings in a particular content area, such as science or social studies. They may have taken on-line classes in reading or writing. In some cases they have selected training about technology, or about sensory integration issues in children. In all cases, information and skills gained in self-selected training sessions are shared with the rest of the staff at designated times during the year so that all staff and therefore all students benefit from the information learned at the training. Science teachers have shared training information about the use of the specialized science equipment in our lab. Primary level teachers served as mentors to other staff members for advice about students in classrooms who struggled with sensory integration issues.

Focused training combined with a delivery system of selected training sessions to our broader teacher corps is an effective way to enhance the professional skills of all the staff members and provide accurate information at minimal expense.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership team at Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy recognizes that society harbors ambivalent feelings about gifted education. Some regard it as elitist; others maintain that "gifted kids will get it on their own." In 1998 and 1999 a group of concerned individuals in Charlotte, NC, collaborated on the development of a charter for a school for highly gifted children. With the approval of the charter in 2000, a unique school was created with the purpose of providing the best possible learning community for highly gifted children. Into the eleventh year of our school, we remain committed to the ideal that gifted children deserve the chance to be educated to the highest limits of their potential. They need content, experiences, and instructional support to maximize the exceptional possibilities of the people they may become. To this end, the leadership philosophy of the school is to operate our community to provide an atmosphere that meets the intellectual, and social and emotional needs of gifted children in a safe environment where they develop relationships with peers of all ages. We strive to prepare our graduates

to become independent, productive, responsible, and creative individuals capable of making contributions to society.

Our school leadership structure grants governance responsibilities to an elected Board of Directors. School operations are the responsibility of the school director and the administrative team. The board of directors is organized in a series of working committees, such as finance, personnel, grievances, development, outreach, admissions, and vision. The committees function as originators and/or a clearinghouse for policies and procedures. For example, the development committee guides the fundraising efforts on behalf of the school. The finance committee oversees funding allocations and expenditures. The vision committee guides on-going efforts that examine future possibilities of what the school may become.

The school director implements the policies of the board of directors and directs school operations. As an example, the director collaborates with the finance committee to determine allocation of funds to various parts of the budget and is expected to adhere as closely as possible to the limits of the budget. Another example is that the board of directors has hearing level responsibilities in cases of serious violations of the discipline policy, but the implementation of the policy rests with the school administration.

Supporting student achievement is more comprehensive than simply raising test scores. True achievement rests in the foundational beliefs and practices of the school leadership.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	99	100	100	100
Level IV	78	55	50	55	72
Number of students tested	40	20	20	18	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: Reading Comprehension

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	98	100	100	100
Level IV	75	45	66	83	98
Number of students tested	40	20	20	18	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	99	100	100	100
Level IV	78	55	50	55	50
Number of students tested	40	20	20	18	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: Reading Comprehension

Edition/Publication Year: spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	99	100	100	100
Level IV	75	45	55	83	98
Number of students tested	40	20	20	18	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	99	100	100
Level IV	59	50	50	85	90
Number of students tested	22	20	21	20	20
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: Reading Comprehension

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	50	50	50	90	95
Number of students tested	22	21	21	20	20
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	99	99	100
Level IV	76	86	99	90	83
Number of students tested	21	21	19	22	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: Reading comprehension

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	99	99	100	100
Level IV	67	81	89	95	100
Number of students tested	21	21	19	22	18
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	95	84	86	95	88
Number of students tested	20	19	22	18	8
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7 Test: Reading Comprehension

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	85	84	84	100	100
Number of students tested	20	19	22	18	8
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8 Test: Mathematics

Edition/Publication Year: Spring of testing year Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	81	86	100	100	100
Number of students tested	16	21	16	8	6
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8 Test: Reading comprehension

Edition/Publication Year: Spring 2010 Publisher: NCDPI

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	56	57	60	100	100
Number of students tested	16	21	16	8	6
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	99	99	100	100
Level IV	75	57	75	82	83
Number of students tested	159	143	118	106	88
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100		
Level IV	55	33	54		
Number of students tested	18	15	13		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV		100			
Level IV		70			
Number of students tested		10			
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6. Asian					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	94	90	93	96	94
Number of students tested	33	39	27	26	18
NOTES:					

11NC7

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III and Level IV	100	97	98	99	100
Level IV	70	54	60	93	95
Number of students tested	159	143	1188	106	88
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100		
Level IV	33	33	69		
Number of students tested	18	15	13		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III and Level IV		100			
Level IV		80			
Number of students tested		10			
4. Special Education Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III and Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Level III and Level IV	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	85	72	89	92	100
Number of students tested	33	39	27	26	18
NOTES:					

11NC7