

Glossary

Ability Grouping: Depending on their skill level and performance, students are grouped and regrouped within a grade level. Grouping is not limited to gifted students and may include other high achievers and is determined by performance needs. Student progress is carefully monitored.

Accelerated Curriculum: Courses that are usually scheduled for a semester or year are compacted into an abbreviated time. Since the content is simply covered at a faster pace, the course scope and sequence do not have to be altered, and no additional materials are needed. This is an appropriate way for highly gifted students to complete their secondary program in less time and enter a post-secondary program earlier than their chronological peers.

Advanced Content: Content covered in specific courses or classes is at an advanced level. Different tests and resources are used other than those of the regular classroom. Course objectives go beyond standard content.

Advanced Placement Courses: The Advanced Placement Program consists of college-level courses and examinations for high school students. AP Course outlines and courses of study are carefully followed and are taught by teachers who have received specific training. Courses and examinations are available in several areas of the curriculum. A passing grade on an AP examination may enable a student to receive college credit.

Algebra/Pre-Algebra: Students entering middle school are evaluated for inclusion in advanced mathematics classes based on multiple criteria. Students who are successful on the Algebra I EOC test may opt out of the course at high school but not receive credit toward GPA. However, it does fulfill the high school graduation requirement for Algebra I leaving room for four additional math courses.

Apprenticeship: High School Apprenticeship is an advanced educational program that provides qualified students the opportunity to begin a technical career using a system that combines on-the-job training and related technical classroom instruction. The NC Department of Labor, a participating employer, and the school cooperatively put together an apprenticeship agreement that requires a minimum of 2000 hours of on-the-job training and an additional amount of classroom instruction. It is intended that upon high school graduation, the high school apprentice will continue as an adult apprentice until all apprenticeship requirements are fulfilled.

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination): AVID is a program designed to help students with academic potential enroll and be successful in rigorous courses. This program of study is intended to help these students be accepted to and successful in completing college.

Balanced Heterogeneous Group: Care is taken to balance classes by race, gender, and learning ability. When this arrangement is used, it is imperative that high ability students are clustered to ensure an appropriate instructional group.

Career Internships: The Career Internship program links students with area businesses, industries, and agencies to obtain a working knowledge of job opportunities in a student's career interest area. Participation is open year-round.

Career Showcase: One of the primary goals of the Career Showcase is making students aware of the variety of business and industry career opportunities throughout the Catawba Valley area. Approximately ninety businesses and industries from the immediate area prepare elaborate exhibits, distribute informational sheets describing the variety of job and educational levels required, and talk with high school sophomores about the career opportunities in the Catawba Valley. The Showcase provides students with an excellent contact opportunity for future employment while increasing the awareness of technological advances.

Cluster Grouping within a Regular Class (Elementary Option Only): Cluster groups of gifted students are assigned to a regular heterogeneous class. (In schools with fewer than 6 cluster students who share similar interests, needs, and abilities, these students should be placed together). The cluster group teacher receives extensive training in gifted education and works closely with a gifted consultant to design appropriate, differentiated curriculum for this group.

Cluster Grouping across Teams: Students are assigned to teams heterogeneously. The academically-able students within each team are reassigned to another team or designated teachers for a specific subject or period of time. Placement with this group is flexible, based on student performance, and teams meet on a regular basis to review student progress.

College Courses: See Dual Enrollment.

College Night: College Night is an event held on an evening in the fall especially for juniors, seniors, and their parents. However, others with an interest in finding out about programs, requirements, application procedures, costs, etc., are welcome to attend as well.

Representatives from most state public/private colleges, community colleges, trade/vocational schools, and the military participate to share information and to answer questions about required high school courses, college curriculum, future job market, tuition/fees, scholarship/financial aid opportunities, etc.

Continuous Progress: Continuous progress allows students to progress through the curriculum at their own rate and eliminates an age-in-grade lockstep-approach. This requires a high level of individualization as students move ahead whenever mastery of content and skills is demonstrated. This must be coordinated across grade levels throughout the school system.

Contracts: Learning contracts are agreements made between teacher and student. This agreement allows students to work independently on either accelerated or enriched materials related to a unit of study. To be effective, it is important that contract goals be realistic and that teacher and student meet on a regular basis to review their progress.

Cross-Grade Subject Acceleration: Students are grouped and regrouped across grade levels and may be placed in higher-grade level classes for instruction in specific subject areas. This grouping is based on student performance and need. Students remain in the same school building, but this can involve multi-grade groups. Based on assessment, typically standardized achievement testing, students are allowed to advance in specific subjects or skill levels. They might receive instruction at a higher level with another group of students; yet remain with their peer group for more of their instruction. This works best in subjects that have a clearly developed sequence of skills (reading, math, foreign language, etc.). Once this option has been implemented, continuous review of achievement should be conducted with continuation of subject advancement made available based on student need.

CTE Leadership Conference: The annual Catawba County Schools CTE Leadership Conference is open to future leaders in our high schools. Students and advisors participate in leadership sessions including parliamentary procedure, stage decorum, public speaking, social graces, and Myers Briggs Type Indicator training. The conference culminates with an awards banquet, at which time students get a chance to practice the skills learned during the conference.

Curriculum Compacting: Curriculum compacting is modifying or streamlining the regular curriculum in order to eliminate repetition of previously mastered material, upgrade the challenge level of the regular curriculum, and provide time for appropriate enrichment and/or acceleration activities while ensuring mastery of basic skills (Reis and Renzulli, 1985). Curriculum compacting can be implemented at any grade level and with minimum additional funding; however, teachers do require training and support during implementation. During compacted time, students may pursue activities in their classroom, media center, or special resource center.

Differentiated Education Plan (DEP): The DEP is a plan that states the program service option(s) appropriate for a student at specific grade levels and is completed for each identified AIG student.

Differentiated Strategies: One of the most effective ways to deliver differentiated curriculum to gifted students is through designing differentiated units that incorporate individual learning abilities and different levels of content and skills. The quadrant design developed by John Samara and Jim Curry (1982) has proven to be an effective planning tool to accomplish this and

is appropriate for gifted students in regular classrooms, part-time classes, resource settings, and full-time classes.

Distance Learning (See also Information Highway): Distance learning courses are available to high school students through the North Carolina Information Highway. Students sign up for specific courses and attend classes at their base school.

Dual Enrollment: This option provides students with the opportunity to dual enroll in college-level courses at postsecondary schools and earn both high school and college credit.

Early Admission to College: Students enter college earlier than their age and peers. (The superintendent must approve early graduation.)

Enrichment: Enrichment includes investigative activities and artistic productions in which the student uses inquiry to pursue topics or problems at advanced levels of involvement.

Enrichment Clusters: Enrichment clusters are non-graded groups of students who share common interests, and who come together during specially designated time blocks to pursue these interests. The emphasis in each cluster is based on the development of higher order thinking skills and the application of these skills in creative and productive situations. Clusters are organized around major disciplines, interdisciplinary themes, or cross-disciplinary topics.

Flexible Skills Grouping: This grouping method includes grouping and regrouping in a variety of ways throughout the school day based on the needs and interests of students.

Four-Year Plan: A four-year projection, developed during the second semester of the ninth grade, for all high students. The plan lists the course of study and all classes, including honors and advanced placement courses, the AIG student plans to take during his/her high school years.

Grade Acceleration: Students move ahead skipping levels in the normal sequence of promotion. This has traditionally been used successfully with highly gifted students as a method of acceleration. Specific guidelines have been developed to guide schools and parents in making this decision. Principal has final approval in this decision.

Groundhog Job Shadowing Day: On the Friday closest to Groundhog Day (February 2) each year, 8th graders from Catawba County Schools participate in Groundhog Job Shadowing Day. Each student spends a half day with one of the 120 volunteer businesses and organizations where they “shadow” someone in a career they are considering. This annual event allows students to experience first-hand the world of work and to ask questions of professionals as they begin making their own career plans.

Honors Courses: Honors courses are advanced courses that cover traditional content, but also focus on issues, problems, and themes related to topics. They are designed to help students develop a knowledge base in a specific discipline and learn to apply that knowledge at an advanced level. By state definition, these courses are taught at a level that is inherently more rigorous.

In-Class Flexible Grouping: Students in each class are assigned to a small group for instruction. These groups may be heterogeneously or homogeneously grouped according to skill level. To be effective, grouping should be flexible and fit the instructional purpose. It is important that each student be provided with tasks that are challenging and appropriate.

Information Highway: The Information Highway is an interactive classroom utilizing networking capabilities. Students may choose dual enrollment college courses or high school courses from other sites across the district or state.

Individual Differentiated Education Plan (IDEP): An IDEP is completed for a student who is identified as an underachieving AIG student or a highly able AIG student, and who is in need of additional differentiation instruction other than that listed on the DEP.

Internship Program: Students gain knowledge and experience by working in a selected career field.

Interdisciplinary Units: Interdisciplinary units are learning activities structured to bridge two or more content areas (disciplines) in order to allow the learner to see meaningful relationships, recognize important patterns, and explore related ideas. These units may be organized around broad-based themes.

Interest Development Center: An excellent strategy for the primary grades, this center provides a hands-on dimension to whatever topic is being studied.

Learning Activity Packet: Units of study are prepared for independent study. Packets consist of Standard Course of Study curriculum, enrichment, and extension activities.

Learning Centers: Learning Centers have been found to be an appropriate way to provide content enrichment. These are usually designed as tabletop workstations for individual or group work. Students may self-select centers or are assigned to centers on a rotating basis. The Learning Center approach adapts well to the development of multiple intelligences. Teachers might develop different centers and trade them during the year. Although the use of learning centers occurs most frequently at the elementary levels, it also is effective with middle and high school students.

Learning Styles Inventory: Learning Styles Inventory is a research-based instrument that guides teachers in lesson design taking into account the students' learning style preferences.

MagnIT: An innovative program that began the fall of 2002 for 80 high school juniors in the Catawba Valley area. The Catawba Valley MagnIT is a collaborative effort among Alexander County Schools, Catawba County Schools, Hickory City Schools, Newton-Conover City Schools, and Catawba Valley Community College. It is designed for students interested in careers dealing with Information Technology (IT), such as Computer and Network Administration, Programming, and Internet Technologies. The program incorporates both the junior and senior years during which students attend classes ½ of each day on the campus of CVCC. Upon completion of the two-year program, students will have earned 15-18 semester hours toward an AAS degree in Information Technology, in addition to earning high school credits.

Math Rotations: Math rotations are designed to provide direct instruction and appropriately leveled math experiences to students in a mixed-ability classroom. The students are divided into flexible skills level ability groups which rotate from station to station. Normally within a 60-minute segment of time, each group is with their teacher for direct instruction for 20 minutes, and then rotates to a station for independent math work for 20 minutes, and then to a third station for hands-on math activities for 20 minutes. The rotation style of classroom management allows a teacher to focus on appropriate concepts and activities for each group.

Mastery Learning Units: Teachers design units of instruction having enrichment activities that students might pursue once they have demonstrated mastery (85% or higher) of the basic material. Reinforcement activities are also designed for students needing additional work or performing below mastery. The units are "learnerbased" but "teacher paced" which allows the teacher to appropriately pace the instruction for the entire class for an extended period of time (a marking period) and yet provide differentiation and an incentive for high performance. By "testing out," students can gain access to enrichment activities. In team situation, one teacher might take the "reinforcement group" and one take the "enrichment group." At the end of each unit, everyone begins again at the same place. In this way, enrichment and reinforcement groups remain flexible.

Mentorship/Apprenticeship/Internship: A student is paired with an employer/instructor over an extended period of time during which the employer helps the student master certain skills and knowledge, models workplace behavior, challenges the student to perform well, and assesses student performance. Mentoring may be combined with other work-based learning activities such as internships or apprenticeships. Students gain knowledge and experience by working in a selected career field.

Menus/Choice Boards: Menus and choice boards are strategies that enable students to choose multiple tasks to practice a skill or demonstrate and extend understanding of a process or concept. From the board, students choose (or teacher assigns) three adjacent or diagonal tasks to complete a tic-tac-toe.

Multimedia Project: Multimedia projects use a variety of technology and media techniques to present information.

NC School of Science and Mathematics: The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics is the country's first public, residential high school. Through a challenging curriculum centered on science and math, NCSSM shapes leaders and thinkers for a greater North Carolina. Enrolling students for their junior and senior years, the school is the model for 16-like schools in the nation and world. It is an affiliate of the University of North Carolina system and is located just outside historic Downtown Durham.

NC School of Performing Arts: Selected students attend this special residential school. The school is appropriate for students who are capable of mastering content much more rapidly than peers or who show outstanding aptitude in specific areas. This school offers advanced courses or a specialized curriculum. Once accepted, students attend tuition free.

Open Enrollment: Students (at the high school level) may choose any class that is available to them.

Programmed Instruction: Students work alone on material that has been sequenced to teach a particular concept. The student receives immediate feedback and progresses at his/her own rate through highly organized content (i.e. STAR Math and Accelerated Math).

PSAT: PSAT/NMSQT stands for Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. It is a standardized test that provides firsthand practice for the SAT I: Reasoning Test and SAT II: Writing Test. It also provides students an opportunity to enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs.

SAT: The SAT is a three-hour standardized test that measures critical reading, writing, and mathematical reasoning skills. Many colleges and universities use the SAT as one indicator among others-class rank, high school GPA, extracurricular activities, personal essay, and teacher recommendations-of a student's readiness to do college-level work. SAT scores are used as part of the admissions criteria, and can be used as a basis for awarding merit-based financial aid.

Seminars: Students with similar interests have an opportunity to come together at a specific time and discuss topics of interest with knowledgeable adults. Seminars can also be used as a

vehicle for bringing together students working on independent studies. Such sessions are held periodically and provide a support system for involved students.

Shadowing: Shadowing is an opportunity for students in grades 9-12 to spend a designated amount of time, usually a half or full day, with a person who serves as a career model in a field of interest to the student. Requested through an application, which requires one teacher/counselor recommendation, shadowing is done during non-instructional time (workdays, holidays, weekends, summer).

Service Internships: Catawba County Schools is committed to the development of students who demonstrate concern for their fellow man and their community through various Service Internships. These programs are available through the entire year.

Student Interest Inventory: This survey is an instrument used to gather information from students during the planning stage about a particular study. Students are asked to share what they know about the topic, what they would like to learn, and resources they might have or use.

Subject Grouping for Advanced Classes: Students are grouped for specific subjects based on their aptitude and/or performance. Grouping may not be limited to identified gifted students, but may include other high achievers. Care must be taken that placement in one special class does not result in “tracking” in all classes due to scheduling restraints. Avoiding “singleton sections” helps to minimize this.

Teaching Internships: Qualified juniors and seniors may apply for this school day program which provides hands-on and in-depth experiences in the teaching profession.

Thematic Units: Thematic units deal with information from various disciplines that are integrated under a broad-based theme such as conflict, power, patterns, etc. Because they provide the opportunity to deal with content at a highly abstract level of sophistication, thematic units are an appropriate way to modify curriculum for gifted students.

Tiered Assignments: The teacher uses different levels of activities within a class to accommodate the needs and prior knowledge level of the student. Students may explore basically the same content but at different levels of complexity.

North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS): NC Virtual Public High School is for students who enjoy learning via technology and want the challenge and flexibility of high quality on-line courses. Courses are taught via Internet. Courses require independent learning and higher-order thinking skills.