ALL STUDENTS
Content-based differentiated lessons (Pre-K – 8th): Classroom teachers should provide all students with access to content-based differentiated instruction every day. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson, “differentiation is not more work. Differentiation is different work varied through content, process, & product – according to students’ readiness, interests” & learning preferences. Teachers must be able to “distinguish between the notions of ‘different’ and ‘differentiated’”. It is recommended that teachers determine differentiation needs through on-going pre-assessment & formative assessment. The AART can serve as a resource in planning for this differentiation & selecting resources, in addition to the push-in & co-teaching described below.

Within-class groupings (Pre-K – 8th): Classroom teachers often use within-class groupings as a method to deliver differentiated content. It is recommended that teachers determine these flexible, within-class groupings through on-going pre-assessment & formative assessment. Guided reading groups or assigned math station rotations are examples of within-class groupings.

AART push-in & co-teaching (K – 8th): AARTs can push in to any general education classroom to support all students & the general education teacher with advanced academics strategies & content. This could be through modeling, co-teaching, or small groups related to demonstrating advanced academic strategies. An AART could push into a classroom with a high population of Encore students in order to increase general classroom rigor of a particular lesson, or an AART could push into a classroom with no identified Encore students in order to nurture advanced academic potential.

AART-taught advanced thinking lessons (K – 8th): AARTs can push in to any general education classroom to model advanced thinking lessons. The goal of these lessons is two-fold: to encourage critical & creative thinking strategies in addition to creating opportunities for all students to demonstrate their advanced thinking potential. AARTs will be provided with turnkey lesson plans for continuity of exposure to these critical & creative thinking strategies for all MNPS students. As part of the AART roll out, additional advanced thinking lessons will be provided in Spring 2018 & beyond.

MANY STUDENTS
Personalized Learning Time enrichment classes (K – 8th): Personalized Learning Time (PLT) enrichment classes are available at every elementary & middle school. Students are placed in PLT math and/or literacy enrichment classes based on academic performance. Enrichment content should be taught with a higher level of depth & complexity. Several examples of enrichment projects include Genius Hour or grade-level accelerated Project Based Learning (PBL) projects. Personalized Learning Time (PLT) enrichment was formally referred to as Response to Intervention, RTI, RTIi, or RTI2 enrichment. The AART can serve as a resource in planning for PLT enrichment & selecting resources, however the AART typically is not responsible for directly teaching it (due to their focus on teaching Encore classes & typical 0.5 presence in a school).

AART-taught Talent Development weekly pull-out classes (Pre-K – 8th): The goal of Talent Development classes is to identify & nurture advanced academic potential – typically with students from underrepresented backgrounds such as black, Hispanic, poverty, & EL. Based on student need, schools can choose to create Talent Development classes. These small classes of approximately 10 – 15 students are taught by the AART in a weekly, pull-out format typically for 30 – 60 minutes. The AART collaborates with the teaching staff to identify students for Talent Development classes. Talent Development classes typically focus on cultivating critical & creative thinking skills. The Young Scholars of Nashville (YSN) is a current Talent Development pilot program in some schools. Pre-K Talent Development classes are only available at the four Early Learning Centers (ELCs).

Curriculum compacting & replacement curriculum (K – 8th): Curriculum compacting & replacement curriculum are two different strategies. According to the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), curriculum compacting is “an instructional technique that allows teachers to adjust curriculum for students by determining which students already have mastered most or all of the learning outcomes and providing replacement instruction or activities that enable a more challenging and productive use of the student’s time”. Replacement curriculum is used when a student demonstrates full mastery of a grade level unit. This replacement curriculum essentially replaces the classroom curriculum for that student within that unit. Replacement curriculum can be flexible based on student need, offered for either one unit or throughout the entire year. It is the responsibility of the general education teacher to evaluate, monitor, & grade all replacement curriculum student work. AARTs can serve as a resource in supporting general education teachers with curriculum compacting & replacement curriculum strategies & resources. Additional guidance on curriculum compacting & replacement curriculum will be shared in 2018 – 2019.
Cluster grouping (K – 8th): According to the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), cluster grouping is “a grouping assignment for gifted students in the regular heterogeneous classroom. Typically, five or six gifted students with similar needs, abilities, or interests are ‘clustered’ in the same classroom, which allows the teacher to more efficiently differentiate assignments for a group of advanced learners rather than just one or two students”¹. AARTs can serve as a resource in supporting general education teachers with cluster grouping strategies & resources. Additional guidance on cluster grouping will be shared in 2018 – 2019.

Contests, clubs, & competitions (K – 8th): There are a variety of local & national advanced academic contents, clubs, & competitions open to all MNPS students. Availability varies based on school. Examples include chess club & Destination Imagination. AARTs can serve as a resource in researching or launching these clubs, but it is AART choice on whether he or she will lead the club(s). These contests, clubs, & competitions should not take the place of in-school services, such as Encore.

SOME STUDENTS
Encore weekly pull-out classes (Pre-K – 8th): Encore is the gifted & talented program for MNPS. Only those students officially identified as gifted & talented by the Encore Office can attend Encore classes. Encore meets weekly with the AART, typically as a pull-out class, for 60 – 180 minutes per week (depending on grade level).

Individual subject-level acceleration (K – 5th): Some schools choose to accelerate a student into a different grade level for a specific subject. For example, a second grader might go to a fourth grade classroom during his or her daily math block – while spending the rest of his or her day in second grade. Scheduling & social emotional skills need to be considered, as well as an on-going plan for continued acceleration beyond the current school year so that a student does not have to repeat content as s/he progresses.

Honors classes (6th – 8th): Honors level classes are available in all middle schools, including through MNPS Virtual School. Beginning in 2017 – 2018, all middle schools will offer Honors English/Language Arts. Honors mathematics, science, & social studies will be added in the 2018 – 2019 school year. AARTs can serve as a resource in advanced academic strategies, but a certified general education teacher must teach the content.

High school credit classes (6th – 8th): High school (HS) credit classes are available in all middle schools, including through MNPS Virtual School. HS credit courses include a combination of some or all of the following courses: integrated math, world language, & physical science. Students’ grades in these courses will appear on their HS transcript, & HS course requirements are still enforced (i.e., if a student takes integrated math in middle school, s/he will still be required to take 4 years of math in HS. AARTs can serve as a resource in advanced academic strategies, but a certified general education teacher must teach the content.

FEW STUDENTS
Grade acceleration (K – 8th): In necessary cases, schools can choose to accelerate a student into a higher grade level. This decision is typically made at the end of a school year for the next school year, less frequently during the middle of the year. For example, it might be determined at the end of a school year that a first grader will progress into third grade – instead of second grade. Early entrance to Kindergarten is also a form of grade acceleration. This practice is also known as grade skipping.

Local & national talent search opportunities (K – 8th): According to the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), a talent search is “a special program that uses out-of-level testing (commonly the SAT or ACT [or PSAT]) to identify high-potential students & allow them to participate in a variety of out-of-school activities. These may occur in the form on Saturday or summer courses or distance learning programs”¹. School counselors & AARTs can connect families to these opportunities.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) FOR INTELLECTUAL GIFTEDNESS
According to the Tennessee Dept. of Education, “Intellectually Gifted means a child whose intellectual abilities, creativity, and potential for achievement are so outstanding that the child’s needs exceed differentiated general education programming, adversely affects educational performance, and requires specifically designed instruction or support services. Children from all populations (e.g., all cultural, racial, and ethnic groups, English Learners, all economic strata, twice exceptional, etc.) can be found to possess these abilities.”². An IEP typically includes a variety of the levels of service options based on student need. AARTs should be a part of the collaborative team during IEP meetings to consult on writing the student IEP. AARTs are not solely responsible for providing those services to the student.

Notes: Although some of these services are listed as K – 8th grade, that does not necessarily indicate that this service ends in 8th grade & is unavailable to high school students. Content-based differentiated lessons & grade acceleration are two of several levels of service that continue to occur in high school.

The AART is the Advanced Academics Resource Teacher.