

Am. Sub. House Bill 153 – Gifted Funding for FY2012-2013 FAQ

Am. Sub. HB 153 changed how funding for gifted students is handled for school districts effective July 1, 2011. The Evidence-Based Model (EBM) used for FY10-11 has been repealed and a temporary formula is now in place known as the Bridge funding formula. The following represents a number of questions the Department has received regarding gifted funding for school districts and educational service centers for FY12-13.

Q1. When will my district know how much we will receive for gifted education funding?

A1. ODE began making payments using the BRIDGE report in July. BRIDGE reports for individual districts can be found on the ODE web site, <http://education.ohio.gov> by searching the phrase **District Payment Reports**. The amounts allocated for gifted education out of the total Bridge funding provided (Line O) are listed under the section labeled Disclosure Items. Line AA1 represents the dollar amount of state funding received in FY 2009 for gifted units and Line AA2 represents the dollar amount of state funding received in FY 2009 for gifted supplemental identification funds. Please note: Although the amount is not listed on the BRIDGE report, a district's gifted allocations also include state gifted funding provided to an ESC in FY09 for which the district received services. If your district has not maintained gifted services with your ESC then you must spend out of BRIDGE funding an additional amount equivalent to the funding received by the ESC for staff providing those services (see BRIDGE FY09 Contracted Staff Report for these amounts if gifted services with your ESC have not been maintained).

Q2. Does my district have to spend the funds on gifted education?

A2. Yes. In FY 2012 and 2013, districts must spend no less than the amount provided on Line AA1 on services to students identified as gifted and must spend no less than the amount provided on Line AA2 on gifted identification. Please note: Although the amount is not listed on the BRIDGE report, a district's gifted allocations also include state gifted funding provided to an ESC in FY09 for which the district received services. If your district has not maintained gifted services with your ESC then you must spend out of BRIDGE funding an additional amount equivalent to the funding received by the ESC for staff providing those services (see BRIDGE FY09 Contracted Staff Report for these amounts if gifted services with your ESC have not been maintained).

Q3. Do the gifted operating standards still apply in FY 2012-2013?

A3. Yes. Spending must be in accordance with the gifted operating standards (O.A.C. 3301-51-15). See division (C) for requirements related to gifted identification. See divisions (D) and (E) for requirements related to gifted services and personnel. Division (D) includes requirements for services provided by general education teachers and division (E) includes requirements for services provided by qualified gifted staff. Also, if you have not maintained gifted services with your ESC then the increased allocation that you must spend out of BRIDGE funding must be in accordance with divisions (D) and (E) of the gifted operating standards.

Q4. What level of staff FTE are districts required to employ?

A4. For FY 2012-2013 there is not a specified FTE that must be employed by a district.

Q5. What consequences are there for my district if we do not meet the spending requirements?

A5. All districts are subject to financial audits by the Auditor of State in which they are expected to be compliant with the spending requirements outlined in the Ohio Revised Code. The Auditor's Office may decide that the funds are not being used for their designated purposes and may take action against the district. This spending requirement will also be enforced through gifted education reviews.

In addition, ODE will review FY 2012 EMIS financial data to ensure that districts are meeting the gifted education expenditure requirements. Districts that do not meet the spending requirements in FY 2012 will be required to submit a corrective action plan detailing the district's gifted education spending plan for FY 2013 to ODE. If districts found to be out of compliance with spending requirements do not take corrective actions, progressive sanctions may be imposed.

Q6. How much will my ESC receive this year for gifted education?

- A6. Funding for ESCs has reverted back to gifted units. ODE will accept gifted unit requests and allocate gifted units under the methodology in place for FY 2009. The allocation of funds for gifted units will depend on the number of units allocated to ESCs and on the ability of ESCs to have staff in place no later than October Count Week so they can be reported in Period K EMIS staff data. For example, a 1.0 gifted coordinator unit will be funded per the calculation in place for FY 2009 pending appropriate assignment of staff adding to at least 1.0 FTE.
- Q7. How do ESCs have to use the gifted unit funding received in FY 2012-2013?**
- A7. The funding must be tied to qualified intervention specialist staff or qualified coordinator staff assigned per the gifted operating standards (O.A.C. 3301-51-15). See divisions (E) and (F) of O.A.C. 3301-51-15 that outline requirements for personnel and units.
- Q8. Is my ESC required to employ, at a minimum, the same number of gifted staff FTE that we employed in FY09 through gifted unit funding?**
- A8. Per the unit funding methodology in place for FY 2009, ESCs can elect to request more units than they had in FY 2009, the same number of units they had in FY 2009, or fewer units than they had in FY 2009. ODE will determine the gifted unit allocations based on availability and the number of requests.

THE BOTTOM LINE: All spending must comply with the gifted operating standards (O.A.C. 3301-51-15). Districts must spend in FY 2012 and FY 2013 the same amount on services for students identified as gifted as what they received from the state in FY 2009 through gifted unit funding. Districts must spend in FY 2012 and FY 2013 the same amount on gifted identification as what they received from the state in FY 2009 through supplemental identification funds. Please note: Although the amount is not listed on the BRIDGE report, a district's gifted allocations also include state gifted funding provided to an ESC in FY09 for which the district received services. If your district has not maintained gifted services with your ESC then you must spend out of BRIDGE funding an additional amount equivalent to the funding received by the ESC for staff providing those services (see BRIDGE FY09 Contracted Staff Report for these amounts if gifted services with your ESC have not been maintained). **For FY 2012 and FY 2013 ESCs are funded through gifted education units.**