Dear Superintendents and Gifted Education Contacts,

In accordance with the *Operating Standards for Identifying and Serving Students Who are Gifted* (Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-15), the Ohio Department of Education, in collaboration with the Gifted Advisory Council, has established a process and criteria for the submission and review of applications for the design and delivery of **innovative services** for students who are gifted.

What is an innovative service? An innovative service is a service *not already described in the Gifted Operating Standards* that offers a sustained and challenging experience, based in evidence or research suggesting the service is effective or is a promising practice, to meet the unique needs and interests of the district's students who are gifted. Innovative services must be in one of the following priority areas:

- o Services specifically designed for populations of students who are traditionally underrepresented in gifted education, including, but not limited to, students who are economically disadvantaged, minority students, English learners and students with disabilities.
- o Services in any combination of kindergarten, first grade and/or second grade.
- o Services specifically designed to enhance a student's career readiness in a particular field. This may include, but is not limited to, careers in the visual and performing arts.
- o Social and emotional services and supports. This may include, but is not limited to, services and supports for students who are twice exceptional, peer mentorships and counseling from educators or other qualified professionals.
- o A district-determined priority area, as set forth in the district's strategic planning process or continuous improvement process.

Should I apply? This is a district decision. Innovative services may help districts provide services to students who are currently not receiving services. If approved, an innovative service may be reported to parents and to the Department consistent with the Gifted Operating Standards. The Department has established a program code in EMIS for district use for the reporting of approved innovative service proposals. Only districts with approved innovative service applications may report this program code.

What is the process and timeline? The Innovative Service Application and Evaluation Tool is available here on the Department website.

Application window opens – Nov./Dec. 2018

Applications due – Jan. 31, 2019

Districts notified of initial decisions – Feb. 15, 2019

Appeals by districts due – March 1, 2019

Districts notified of final decisions – March 15, 2019

Note: The Innovative Service Application will be available each school year. Districts that do not apply this school year or districts that apply but are not approved will have an opportunity to submit in subsequent years.

If you have questions regarding the submission or review of Innovative Service Applications, please email gifted@education.ohio.gov.

Thank you!