

**GIFTED ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OCTOBER 26, 2017**

ATTENDEES

Council Members: Dwayne Arnold, Colleen Boyle, Curt Bradshaw, Kim Frasher, Jennifer Groman, Monica Hall-Green, Kerry Jones, Susan Larson, Sarah Lee, Brad Ritchey, Ann Sheldon, Tracy Wheeler
ODE Staff: Dr. Kim Monachino, Maria Lohr, Mike Demczyk, Beth Arledge

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Kim Monachino, ODE Director of the Office for Exceptional Children, opened the meeting with a welcome to all, and had each council member and ODE staff introduce themselves. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria joined the meeting briefly, and thanked council members for their participation. Superintendent DeMaria expressed his excitement about the Gifted Advisory Council and said he sees the group as ambassadors for Ohio's gifted students.

Dr. Monachino reviewed the packet of documents which were distributed, then quickly discussed norms of collaboration.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Gifted Advisory Council, as defined in *Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-15(I)*, was reviewed:

The superintendent of public instruction shall establish a gifted advisory council. The council shall:

- (1) Represent a variety of stakeholders from diverse regions of the state, including parents, general and gifted educators, administrators and others as determined by the superintendent;
- (2) Assist in the development and updating of a department-approved plan for gifted education in Ohio;
- (3) Advise on policy recommendations;
- (4) Serve as advisors in establishing criteria for review of proposals to implement innovative gifted services; and
- (5) Establish criteria for identifying and recognizing schools, districts, and other educational providers.

GIFTED OPERATING STANDARDS

Maria Lohr and Mike Demczyk, ODE Gifted Program Specialists, shared a PowerPoint and presented an overview of key changes to the Gifted Operating Standards.

Timeline

- November 2016: Draft voted out of Committee
- December 2016: Draft unanimously voted on by full Board
- January – March 2017: Draft filed with JCARR, Chapter 119 hearings, and JCARR approval
- July 1, 2017: *Operating Standards for Identifying and Serving Students Who are Gifted*, effective

Identification

- Summary of Key Requirements
 - Whole grade testing: Superior Cognitive, Creative Thinking, Mathematics, Reading/Writing
 - At least once in grade bands K-2 and 3-6
 - Not required in grades 7-12
 - At least two opportunities per year based on referrals: Any identification area
 - Required at all grade levels

Service Settings

- Summary of Key Requirements
 - Educator Meets Professional Development Requirements and, for General Educators, Receives On-going Support
 - Class Size and Caseload Equivalent to District Class Size and Caseload – *except where noted*
 - Instructional Time Equivalent to District Instructional Time – *except where noted*
 - Identified Students are Deliberately Placed into Services
 - Services Guided by Students' Written Education Plans
 - Maximum class size is twenty students
 - Full-time self-contained classroom
 - Co-teaching cluster group setting
 - Resource room/pull-out setting
 - Maximum caseload for the gifted intervention specialist is 80 students
 - Co-teaching cluster group setting
 - Resource room/pull-out setting
 - Instruction is 15% of the instructional time for a school week OR one core content class period per day
 - Cluster group setting in a general education classroom
 - Co-teaching cluster group setting
 - Resource room/pull-out setting

Equal Access to Services

- Summary of Key Requirements
 - Service criteria must not limit equal opportunity for underrepresented populations, and must include an explanation of how service placement methods ensure equal access.
 - Students cannot be excluded from services due to: reassessment, outside scores, specific named test, specific named grade level, or other restrictions such as requiring multiple qualifying scores, etc.

Written Education Plans

- Guidance
 - WEPs must be developed in collaboration with an educator with gifted licensure or endorsement.
 - Provide a copy of the WEP to collaborating educator, service provider, and parents.
 - Report progress to parents and students at least twice per year.
 - WEPs are for the duration of the course and may cover more than one course
 - Reasonable attempt to obtain parent signature must be in writing.
 - Students may not be denied services due to a lack of a parent signature on the WEP.

Professional Development

- Summary of Key Requirements
 - Must meet eight competencies
 - Provided by an educator who: holds gifted licensure or endorsement, holds a graduate degree in gifted education, and is a state or national presenter in gifted education
 - 30 hours during year one, 30 hours during year two, additional hours in year three and beyond
 - Receive ongoing support

Overview: State of the State

- The Gifted Indicator
 - Created in response to Ohio Revised Code 3302.02.
 - Reflects the level of services provided to, and the performance of, students identified as gifted, including value-added growth.
 - Included as part of the district's overall graded measure, *Indicators Met*, and carries the same weight as all other indicators in that measure.
- Gifted Indicator Thresholds
 - For the 2016-2017 school year and beyond:
 - Gifted Performance Index = 117 points
 - Gifted Value-Added = Grade of "C" or higher
 - Gifted Input Points = 80 points

Data slides were also shared, and are available by request to elizabeth.arledge@education.ohio.gov.

Questions and comments from the Gifted Operating Standards Overview

Q: What is the thinking around targeting subgroups for opt out letters?

A: Districts should not target subgroups for opt out letters. Additionally, districts can decide if they want

to send the opt out letters to all or not.

Q: We are to accept scores from any state, correct?

A: Yes, if it's an approved test, but scores from other states are only valid for 24 months.

Q: Is there a recommended timeline to send the gifted service letters?

A: That is left up to the district, as there is nothing in the operating standards around this.

Q: Is there a standard form for the Written Education Plans?

A: No, it is up to the district.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF GIFTED EDUCATION IN YOUR AREA OF THE STATE?

Council members participated in a SWOT analysis activity, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. After a lively discussion, these topics and themes were identified:

Strengths

- Focused PD on instructional practice
- Urban teachers have grit
- Regional student programming
- Strong parent support
- VPA process
- Resources available
- **Strengths themes identified**
 - **Professional development** focus for general education teachers; Same PD for all staff 3-6; PD at 30 hours – general education teachers need PD; Renewed interest in gifted PD; Getting needed PD to teachers who otherwise wouldn't take it
 - **Identification** of the number of students who are gifted; Wider opportunities for identification; Potential increase in the number of Identified students in underrepresented populations
 - **Awareness** has increased the opportunities and course offerings to our gifted students; Student growth increased among students; Receiving lots of positive attention on GT; Increased focus on differentiation and all kids; High quality services in co-taught, cluster

group and resource room settings; Positive shift in classroom teacher attitudes and their understanding of gifted kids; Increased gifted buzz, increased focus and interest in learning and specializing in gifted

- **Districts** are recognizing the need to provide service and work to meet the needs of gifted students; Smaller districts with good leaders are really making inroads in PD/training; Districts are looking at K-2 grade levels; Renewed district focus on service quality

Opportunities

- Teachers are interested in facilitating inquiry/creative problem solving
- Districts are adopting profiles of a graduate that will prompt 4Cs integration into curriculum.
- K-12 continuum of services
- Test instruments specifically designed for underrepresented populations (i.e., rural/poverty) would be helpful for our districts
- Students have the opportunity to receive cog pullout, reading pullout, math cluster
- A real opportunity to see what strong rural districts are doing as a model
- Future expansion of services – levy passed in '16 means new gifted staff in 2017-2021
- **Opportunity themes identified**
 - **Parents/Community** involvement; Parent education; Empowering parents of gifted learners to become involved stakeholders
 - **WEP** development; Teacher collaboration to improve practice; Teachers trying new ideas
 - **K-2** testing; Possibly offering services earlier; Not testing and then not offering services; Working with K-2 students
 - **Professional development** for more students getting service; High quality PD; Sharing of PD resources because we are all creating similar modules; Teachers who hear about the PD offered and want it even though they are not service providers; Some teachers will get gifted endorsement because of PD being required; PD around meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted students; PD provides excellent opportunities for further education on the needs of gifted students; Myths and misconceptions around gifted students are reduced as more teachers receive gifted training
 - **Gifted operating standards** provide the opportunity for gifted coordinators to have the ear of superintendents; The value of a knowledgeable gifted coordinator will increase

Weaknesses

- Good PD on instructional practice can only be provided by gifted professional
- Very little research on the challenges of meeting suburban kids' needs
- Change in student outcomes is very slow in large districts
- Accountability of the quality and implementation of general education gifted PD
- Location of "good" schools within district
- Focus on WEPS and reporting to parents, especially concerning non-cognitive students
- Enough time to coordinate for districts
- Some districts do not understand the HQPD requirements and are meeting the letter but not the spirit of the law
- Gifted student boredom in general education classes
- 6-8 program for cog gifted that lacks student engagement; students opting out
- Can't serve all – too many kids
- **Weakness themes identified**

- **Funding** lacking to provide 30 PD hours to staff; Lack of funding and resources to expand services or provide quality enrichment opportunities
- **Identification** early using MAPs and the validity of that with K-2 who may otherwise not be Identified in reading or math; Gatekeeper practices that exclude twice-exceptional students; Under Identified due to behavior, poverty, etc., and screening (whole grade tests) don't ID well; Lack of ID and service options for students is a challenge due to funding
- **Buy In** of district and building administration, lack of understanding of gifted policies, services, needs; General education teacher misunderstandings of needs of gifted learners; Lack of teacher training around inquiry and creative problem solving; Teachers who have not worked with gifted students are current cluster teachers; Teacher/admin buy in; Still some classroom teacher resistance
- **Lack of support** from GIS for our staff and no team teaching for cluster classes; We lack qualified individuals at our ESC to assist in training teachers; The number of gifted specialists

Threats

- Plenty of great teachers and educators could provide PD; too much pressure on gifted staff and budgets
- No requirement for whole-grade testing for science and social studies, we could lose programming/services in these areas
- Bypassing gifted testing committee for test approval risks tests being inappropriately approved
- Not serving students other than 3-6, K-2 missing foundation ideas, 7+ really specializing in their abilities
- The State understanding districts are catching up, does not seem compatible with the LRC measure
- Revised local policies resulting in a “weeding out” of twice-exceptional students
- Opt out letters may subvert intent of casting a wide net for potential gifted student ID
- Buy in of administrators
- Middle age students (lack of staff who understand)
- Teachers not able to recognize students who may be gifted to make sure needs are being met, especially K-2
- **Threat themes Identified**
 - **HB 216** trying to remove PD requirement; PD guidelines helped my district to have a clear path for improving service
 - **Cost** of stipends for teacher PD; Many GIS are being pulled from serving students for administrative tasks
 - **PD** needed to meet requirements; 30 hours have threatened some GIS positions; Districts who may choose “not serve” because of PD requirements; Some districts cutting services altogether; No mandate to serve; Some teachers refuse to do PD; Pushback on PD requirement from districts that don't understand why it is necessary; Unqualified providers of PD; Fudging of service and PD hours; PD funding for general education teachers

NEXT STEPS FOR DECEMBER'S GIFTED ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Dr. Monachino asked the group to start thinking about the charge to establish criteria, and to provide answers to two questions:

- How does your district or region define an innovative service?
- Based on the information we shared today, what additional data should we identify to assist in the development of an application process for innovative services?

Responses are due to Beth at elizabeth.arledge@education.ohio.gov by the end of November.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 5, 2017 – 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. at ODE.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.