

Gifted Advisory Council

State Library of Ohio
Columbus, OH
April 30, 2025, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Members present: *Michelle Andears, Erica Baer-Woods, Leah Barger, Lynn Carney, Kylie Duskey, David Eby, Jennifer Ehlers, Anne Flick, Deborah Glynn, Brandi Goodwin, Kara Gummel, Maggie Gunnerson, Stacie Hayne, TK Kuykendall, Kimberly McCormick, Elizabeth Ratliff, Abbie Sigmon, Tom Smith, Carmen Tarbill, Heather Townley, Paula Hemmelgarn, Michelle Barbosa, Thomas Betsa, Dawn Harris, Claire Hughes, Shana Stober*

Welcome and Introductions

Sherry Birchem called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. and welcomed the members to the final Gifted Advisory Council meeting for fiscal year 2025. Mrs. Birchem thanked the council members for their hard work on the draft State Plan for Gifted and their feedback on the Council's Bylaws. Mrs. Birchem also introduced Kerry Martinez, Associate Administrator of the Integrated Systems of Academic Support Unit, and Doris Davis MacKenzie, Program Administrator 2, who will take over support and communication to the Gifted Advisory Council from Andrea Mallory.

Agenda Items

MINUTES APPROVAL AND CONNECTION BEFORE CONTENT

After TK Kuykendall called the roll, Maggie Gunnerson called to approve the February 2025 meeting minutes. Debra Glynn motioned to approve with one update, Erica Baer-Woods seconded.

Maria Lohr led a connection activity where members were given four images to look at. Council members were asked to share which image resonated with them and why.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Bylaws

Mrs. Lohr shared the Council's thoughts on what should stay in the Bylaws and what needed strengthening. Mrs. Lohr then walked the council through the key changes to each Article and offered time to ask questions and share comments suggested edits. Jessica Oldham from the Department's Office of Legal Counsel was there to answer any legal questions. Discussion primarily focused on voting, membership, and meetings.

OFFICER ELECTION

With a quorum of 26 council members present, Maggie Gunnerson opened the floor for chair-elect nominations. Dawn Harris nominated Anne Flick, who accepted. With no opposition, the council voted for Ms. Flick. She will be Chair-Elect in Fiscal Year 2026. TK Kuykendall will become Council Chair, and Maggie Gunnerson will become Past-Chair.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

State Plan Review

A draft of Ohio's Plan for Gifted Education was sent to committee members to review before the meeting. Mrs. Lohr reminded the council members that the draft plan and related documentation shared within the

Gifted Advisory Council should not be provided to anyone outside the Gifted Advisory Council or the Department of Education and Workforce. This information and documentation may be subject to a public records request, which is handled through the Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Education and Workforce.

SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT

Before lunch, council members broke into four small groups to review and discuss sections of the draft state plan for gifted. The council members were asked to share the strengths of each section, the areas of improvement they felt each section needed, and feedback on any areas that were confusing or missing from each section. Small groups rotated so that all members had the opportunity to provide feedback on each section of the plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT AND MEMBER DISCUSSION

Mrs. Gunnerson led the group in a vote to hear public comment at a different time on the agenda. Carmen Tarbill, member of the Gifted Advisory Council, addressed the Council during public comment (see appendix).

After lunch, Abbie Sigmon addressed the council with legislative updates for HB114, SB113, SB19, HB62, HB158, and HB96.

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING AND PRE-MORTEM EXERCISE

Mrs. Lohr led the council through an activity where council members were asked to imagine the State Plan for Gifted rollout and address what challenges may arise, along with strategies to overcome challenges. Small groups worked together to offer solutions and recommendations to the Department related to the rollout and state-wide implementation of the draft state plan for gifted education.

DEBRIEF, NEXT STEPS, AND CLOSING COMMENTS

In closing, Mrs. Lohr announced tentative future meeting dates, travel reimbursement reminders, and thanked the council members for productive work time. Mrs. Gunnerson asked for a motion to adjourn, which was made by Jennifer Ehlers and seconded by Kylie Duskey. The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

APPENDIX: PUBLIC COMMENT

Good Morning, I am Carmen Tarbill from the ESC of Central Ohio and a member of the original Inclusive Identification Practices Work Group which was renamed as the Universal Identification Practices Work Group.

As you know, just being gifted is a barrier in itself, even for those students who have been historically included in the educational system, like myself. Those students who face additional barriers such as race, gender, ethnicity, neurodivergence, and socio economic status need assessments, services and access to quality instruction that is specifically designed to meet their unique needs if they are to be successful in our educational system.

At the February Gifted Advisory Council meeting, the members of the Inclusive Identification workgroup were asked to change wording in the Ohio Gifted Plan Strategies and Action Draft that has been in creation for years by esteemed colleagues and well respected professionals in gifted education. It was explained to us that this request was made due to recent guidance from the federal government that any wording related to DEI be removed from state documents. I am speaking today in support of our original recommendations and district actions that we created prior to the last meeting. I ask for careful consideration to the shift in wording and tone that sets the path forward for gifted education in Ohio.

The Gifted Advisory Council members, both past and current, include many professionals who are passionate about advocating for the needs of each and every student from diverse backgrounds. The combined expertise of professionals from multiple universities, educational services centers, local school districts, gifted advocacy associations including parents, teachers and administrators contributed to this comprehensive plan that we are in the final stages of revising. Their work and sentiments are integral to the quality of this document and should not be dismissed due to an interpretation of recent changes in federal law.

Additionally, the list of assessments that are approved for gifted identification includes several options that districts can use according to the unique needs of the students to be tested. How are we to recommend that districts use multiple assessments for underrepresented populations, such as students of color, rural, economically disadvantaged, English learners, twice exceptional learners and students who have experienced trauma if we cannot name which students we are referring to when we are aligning our assessments? My concern is that the ambiguity of this revised document will lead to groups of students being excluded from the opportunity for gifted identification with an appropriate assessment.

Today I am asking that the minutes of this meeting reflect that I formally oppose these changes and that I stand behind the original document created by the current and past members of the Gifted Advisory Council and is supported by a multitude of research included in our recommendations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.