## **Gifted Advisory Council**

**October 26th Homework Responses**

1. **How does your district or region define an innovative service?**

A sustained, research-based, meaningful experience that extends/replaces/enhances learning opportunities for gifted learners in their area of identification

\*\*This was difficult because most of the ideas generated would qualify under one of the existing service types listed in the operating standards.

Ideas/Examples:

Extended co-curricular experiences that require extensive preparation (Destination imagination, Mock Trial, We the People, Debate) provided equal access is available to all eligible students (could be during school or after school if accessible to all students in the district with transportation provided, no cost, population likely able to participate after school)

Specialized visual or performing arts troupes (honors choir, drama production, dance troupe, etc.)

An innovative service for gifted children (or an innovative way of servicing gifted children) is a district created response to meet the needs (affective and/or academic) of gifted students as determined by collected data, that they are not currently doing or unable to do within the confines of the established rules and regulations for gifted services. In furthering local control, this service would work within the district’s capacity to address the identified needs of individual or small groups of gifted students.

An innovative service may be one that does not fall into one of the service options defined in the operating standards but is purposeful and meaningful for gifted students. For example, one of our middle schools may have a homeroom period for 30 minutes three times a week. During this time a GIS meets with gifted students to work on an independent project in the student’s chosen interest area. Another example may be a weekly opportunity to have lunch with a GIS and other gifted students to have dialogue around social emotional needs, career aspirations, organizational skills, etc. A curriculum would be developed and implemented. The GIS may only be assigned to this building one day per week.

When I asked about these services, no one could give me a clear answer.  When I spoke to people at the county level, they replied that we do not offer innovative services or have a definition for what they are.  When speaking with parents and a high school student, they felt that there wasn't anything offered for students that was considered "innovative".  The student who has an interest in pre-med, stated that he can take a few classes that are geared towards medical students but they aren't solely for gifted students.  There is not any mentor or adviser for them at the high school level to help them tailor studies to meet their needs.  He has been provided an opportunity through the county ESC to shadow a dental anesthesiologist, but these opportunities are also open to any student with a certain GPA.

The gifted coordinators of Region 11 would like to define innovative services as those that occur beyond the school day.  For example, many districts offer Model United Nations, History Day, MathCounts, etc. for students as an enrichment opportunity under the current service guidelines.  These students achieve the service "hours" but not during school hours as they meet after school and/or compete during the evenings or weekends.  The enrichment opportunities run consecutively allowing students to receive a full year of "innovative service" if hours could be considered beyond the school day.

I am having a hard time with this assignment because we don't have any innovative services in our district that we are counting as gifted service.  There are some innovative opportunities for students, especially at the high school level.  A few that come to mind would include strands and/or courses such as: Performance Studio, Science Academy, DECA, Chorale, etc.  However, these courses are not currently counting for service.  Now I wonder, should they be?  What changes would need to happen for the current selection process of the courses, etc.  In middle school, we have a STEM class - but everybody is taking it - so then it's not really innovative.  Also, the thought of providing each of these teachers with 30 hours of PD would be daunting for us.  I am very interested to see what others are thinking about for innovative services.  At this point, I'm not seeing much innovation in our services.

*"Thank you for the inquiry. I am no longer in this position, however, to my knowledge there was never any Columbus City Schools definition, that I was aware of, regarding our definition of innovation."*

The previous sentences are a part of the email I received from the former Executive Director of

Improvement and Innovation. Her reply also informed me to reach out to a Columbus City Schools

Board member for further help. Although I was grateful for the response, I remained in the dark about

how CCS defines an innovative service. As I viewed the CCS website, the district has an Innovation and

Reform Committee that meets every second Tuesday of each month. The CCS website states, "The

purpose of the Innovation and Reform Committee of the Columbus City Schools Board of Education shall

be to assist the Board in fulfilling its responsibility to provide oversight and governance. Part of the

mission of the Board of Education Innovation and Reform Committee is to develop an ongoing, two-way

dialogue between the board and innovative, educational thought leaders and establish on-going

systems to receive, review and recommend new plans of action that help students succeed." The

committee is comprised of board members, business leaders, school principals and alumnus. The

overall goals of the committee are to pool together trends and stay abreast of the best practices to help

students succeed. I believe that the Columbus City Schools listed below are a good example of the

district's definition of innovation services:

Africentic Early College K-5

Columbus Gifted Academy (special program rather than an independent school)

Columbus City Prep School for Boys

Columbus City Prep School for Girls

Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy PreK-6

Ecole Kenwood French Immersion

Woodcrest (year-round)

The Innovation and Reform Committee also welcomes ideas from the community. A link to

submit a proposal was included on the website.

Upon further investigation, the website displayed an Office of Innovation and Improvement that

supports the district's Priority Schools, as well as innovative programs" but when I reached out to the

Director, as I stated above, she was no longer in that role for CCS. And, as you can guess, I stopped

looking!

1. Extend and deepen the specifications in The Rule.

2. Are either Research based or Based in Research (these are my words, I don’t have any support in the literature about this)

Research based – strategies and models that have been used elsewhere, found in the research and recreated in their building.

OR

Based in research – never before used strategies and models build from research done in the district/building (in response to needs).

3. Proof of change – qualitative, quantitative or both. Don’t Just focus on test scores!

4. Meeting a specific need in their district – responsive. But could be Pro-active as well.

5. Group effort, district buy-in

1. **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?**

Services offered in districts by service code

On the application - rationale for proposal with reference to research in gifted education, number of students to be impacted and eligibility criteria, qualifications of provider, provisions for equal access, why the alternative is needed rather than an existing service model described in OAC.

Some considerations that should be included in an application for innovative services:

1. A description of the services that are currently being provided in accordance with the operating standards for gifted services.
2. Identification of and data to support the needs of the student(s) which are not being met within the constructs of the district’s service offerings.
3. An explanation of how the established regulations place an onerous burden upon the district and/or limit the district’s ability to address the identified student needs and how the proposed service is within the district’s capacity to provide.
4. A description of the proposed alternative service, including:
5. How the proposed service will address those specific student needs (both academic and affective)
6. How the proposed service will be implemented
7. Responsible parties for providing the service with a description of their training/preparations and qualifications for working with the gifted population
8. Any unintended consequences that may result from the proposed service
9. Any special allowances or accommodations that will be necessary in other areas (state testing, attendance, reporting, etc.)
10. How and when the district will evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed service

The application process should include a rubric which will be used to approve an innovative service. Criteria would need to be agreed upon and point values assigned. Quality vs. quantity comes to mind.

Possible criteria:

1. What is the goal of the service?
2. What evidence exists to support the service has a positive impact on student growth (academic and/or social emotional)
3. Who is providing the service? What qualifications are needed?
4. What is the benefit for the student?
5. Is the service transferable to other areas/grade levels/etc.?

The suggestion from the county ESC teachers and coordinators I spoke with said that parents and students need to be surveyed to collect data about what innovative services they would like to see.  For me, due to the lack of any substantial mention of services or ability to provide them, I have a lot more questions than answers.

I suggest that the Council members begin to identify which innovation services are truly helping

students succeed. Perhaps parents, student ambassadors and alumnus could be involved with this

process. This would promote a sense of community in and out of the school environment.

How are other applications handled in other areas of Ohio?  
What do other states so, if that information is available?  
In terms of the process itself, I would recommend the following information be considered for each application:

* Capacity to deliver the innovative service.
* Alignment with best practice.
* Defined measures of success.