

## Detailed State Board of Education Detailed July, 2016 Notes

(NOTE: As always, this report is designed to provide the most detailed discussion of the events that occurred during the State Board of Education meetings. The discussion between board members, witnesses, and ODE staff is paraphrased as accurately as possible. Please excuse the inevitable typos. Explanatory notes are provided as needed.)

Achievement Committee – 7.11.2016 Gifted Discussion – Committee members present included Chair Rebecca Vazquez-Skillings, Vice Chair, C. Todd Jones, Melanie Bolender, Pat Bruns, Stephanie Dodd, Joe Farmer, Nancy Hollister, and Ron Rudduck. Committee member Ann Jacobs and was absent. New State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Paolo DeMaira, board president, Tom Gunlock, board member, Mary Rose Oakar, and House Education Chair, Andrew Brenner, were also present. Sue Zake, ODE Director of Office for Exceptional Children, led the discussion. She provided an overview of the several months of discussion and outlined future steps. The link to the presentation can be found at <http://www.oagc.com/files/Final%20ODE%20Achievement%20Committee%20July%202016%20Presentation.giftedslidesonly.pdf> . The audio tape of this discussion can be found at: [ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State\\_Board\\_Meeting\\_Audio/July\\_2016/7-11-16-Part%201-Achievement%20Committee.mp3](ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State_Board_Meeting_Audio/July_2016/7-11-16-Part%201-Achievement%20Committee.mp3) . The gifted discussion begins at 28:14.

Sue Zake: The next draft of the rule should be completed in late July. We are providing a synthesis of feedback on the gifted rule and how it is being used of the next draft of the gifted standards. The draft timeline is that there will be a complete draft finished by July and distributed to board members, specifically those on the accountability committee. In August, the draft will be posted for public comment and discussed in committee in September. We plan to move the rule forward to the full board this fall. Through the achievement committee, surveys, and public testimony, we've had a lot of input. Last fall we put out a survey and sent it to 10,000 people. Over 3,000 people responded and over 4,000 comments were provided. We also had invited presentations to the full board and there were individuals who provided public testimony. So we've heard a wide variety of input.

One area of support was whole grade screening since it provides equal opportunity for students who are traditionally underrepresented, such as low-income students, students with disabilities and those whose first language isn't English. The Written Education Plan (WEP) was an area of agreement, particularly the need for transparency of the WEP is important and that parents and students should be part of the process. We also heard that WEPs should be guided by individuals with gifted training such as Gifted Intervention Specialists (GISs) or gifted coordinators. We also heard the need for innovative service proposals. We may need to be open to new models that should be explored in the state. In the area of gifted services, there were three main areas: services for gifted children, funding, and accountability. The need to define gifted services was repeatedly pointed out as well as the need for greater transparency for when services should actual count as services. Some support the current minimum of minutes vs. those who want flexibility not to be held to those specific requirements. Other issues were caseload requirements vs. no caseload requirements. Many individuals asked us to please define services. There has been a request for best practice models. We've also had a request for gifted staff minimum qualifications for GISs, training of gifted coordinators, and ongoing professional training for these individuals. There was also a request for professional learning for general educators. Districts don't want to define this. They want a standard established.

When we looked at gifted services, there was input about the need to define what gifted services are but perhaps with more flexibility about how it has been defined. Funding was also an area of repeated input. There are two camps – one supporting local decisions and the request not to add requirements without increased funding. On the other hand, we've received input to please earmark the funds so that gifted funds are used for gifted services. We received comments about the need for greater transparency about what the funds are being used. Regarding accountability – the gifted performance indicator was seen as the only measure. Many individuals don't think the gifted performance indicator truly represents the quality of services being provided. On-site audits were also mentioned in feedback and there was a request to define what is being audited. There needs to be a balance between compliance and local flexibility. We need minimum standards but also to incentivize innovative services. So the gifted staff are trying to blend the comments to put together a new draft. The feedback we've received is being used to guide the next draft. We know that standards can't tell the whole story.

#### Questions from the Committee

Melanie Bolender – With regard to the WEP, I appreciate the idea of the student being involved but where is the follow up? I've heard that most WEPS are just being put into a folder. Answer – We've heard and witnessed this as well. The parent is now not included in the WEP and there is no requirement to show progress. So we need to decide how far do we go? Do we require the parent involved and regular progress monitoring? Should it be part of the accountability or monitoring process?

Nancy Hollister – To provide gifted services, is every district required to do so? Answer: No, they aren't so part of the transparency is how gifted standards should be used for those who provide services.

Hollister -- Is there a designated line item for gifted funding? Answer – There is funding provided, but it is not designated. It is part of a formula. (Note from Ann: OAGC has disagreed that the funds aren't designated even if they are part of the formula.)

Ron Rudduck – Could we get a break down of respondents for the survey? Answer – We have given some of it earlier. That information hasn't really changed.

Bolender – Was this discussed last month? (Note from Ann: Ms. Bolender was not at the June meeting.) Answer from Rebecca Vazquez-Skillings – There was another presentation from stakeholders. Staff is now just summarizing the everything for the committee. We've had a lot of feedback. We are using the current draft as a base along with board input, public feedback and information from presentations to put together a new draft.

Bolender – The questions about the funding, I got the impression from Senator Lehner that the legislature needs to begin addressing this. Districts say that they can't do things because of the funding. While more money isn't always the answer, the lack of gifted funding may be a road block to districts. So how do we move this issue forward? Answer from Rebecca Vazquez-Skillings -- This committee could make recommendations about funding. Paolo has talked about the budget process so we could suggest that this is a priority.

Bolender – Going back to Ms. Hollister’s question about whether gifted services are required. And the answer is no they are not. I find this appalling, quite frankly. We require our special needs students receive services. Gifted students should get the services that they need as well. We as a state have lost some of the opportunity for gifted students by focusing on other priorities. If we are trying to improve things for all students that needs to include gifted students.