

State Board of Education Report for March, 2016

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. Links to the actual audio tapes of the discussions are provided throughout the document. Explanatory notes are also provided as needed. Note: Due to the fact that BASA witnesses were provided almost two hours of time to address the board on gifted standards, this report is longer than usual.

Achievement Committee – Monday, 3.7.16

All committee members were present except Rebecca Vazquez-Skillings. Committee members include Melanie Bolender, Pat Bruns, Joe Farmer, Ron Ruddington, and Todd Jones, who chaired the committee for Ms. Vazquez-Skillings. The [presentation](#) regarding gifted education funding was led by Sue Zake, Director of the ODE Office for Exceptional Children and Aaron Raush, ODE Director of Budget and Finance. To access the audio tape of this discussion, please go to [ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State Board Meeting Audio/March 2016/](ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State_Board_Meeting_Audio/March_2016/). Click on on the 3.7.16 Part 1Achievement.Committee.mp3. The gifted discussion begins at approximately 23:08.

Aaron Rausch – How does gifted funding work and how gifted funding is provided to local districts? Roughly, \$72 million this year was provided to school districts and \$3.8 million to ESCs. Gifted funding is not provided to community schools. (Note from Ann: This was essential the whole planned update.)

Questions

Stephanie Dodd – Is the \$72 million broken out by students? Answer – No, by ADM.

Dodd – It's not based on the number of gifted students identified? Answer – No.

Dodd -- And the ID funding – how much does it cost to test in a district? Answer – It is a combo of achievement and ability testing and often with group testing that districts often use for other purposes (e.g. MAP testing.)

Rausch – The \$72 million is not restricted and doesn't have to be used for gifted students like most of the other 12 components. (Note from Ann: OAGC disagrees with this position.)

Dodd -- There is no requirement that districts spend the ID money on gifted students? Answer – There is no restriction on these dollars. (Note from Ann: Restriction or no restriction, there is a mandate to identify gifted students. ORC states that failure to do so could result in the removal of both gifted and other funding.)

Melanie Bolender – Can you help me understand student sub-group funding? Answer – There is a little bit different sub-group accountability than there is funding accountability. For special education, funding is provided only for each special education student.

Bolender – Why are special education students treated differently? Answer – There are components of linked funding and unlinked funding. Three areas are restricted – economically disadvantaged, special education, and career technical. For example, transportation funding doesn't have to be used for transportation. Though there is funding for ELL (English Language Learners) students, there is a not a requirement that districts use all those ELL funds for those students. There is a link between all of the

restricted funds and federal requirements. Maintenance of effort requirements restrict how funds are spent. Economically disadvantaged funding is tied through Title I funding. The formula doesn't fund each gifted student.

Bolender – There are pretty distinct similarities between special education students and gifted. They are a unique population. We need to do something better in Ohio even if there are no federal requirements.

Ron Rudduck – Some districts are spending gifted funding on report. But this is voluntary? How does it work? Answer – USAF codes are used. An audit would look at whether the funds would match.

Todd Jones – What other areas in the formula are not restricted? Answer – The funding formula consists of the opportunity grant, targeted assistance, LEP (Limited English Proficient also known as ELL) - restricted, capacity aid, transportation, TGRG (Third Grade Reading Guarantee) funding, high school grants etc.

Jones – When I look at this formula, there are three categories of funding: 1. Economic condition of the district. 2. Incentive money. 3. Money for particular purposes where districts are unrestricted and districts can figure out their own needs. When we're talking about transportation, did we used to have more restrictions? Answer – I would have to look. The new formula is different and more complex.

Jones – It strikes me that older formulas had more restrictions but were more inefficient than now as locals are now able to decide how to spend the funds.

Pat Bruns – The gifted sub-group is new to the report card? Answer – This is the second year.

Bruns – It seems to me that if we are identifying students as gifted, the funding should be there to provide the services to help each of those sub-groups to thrive and succeed. You're talking about unrestricted funds and I see how that flexibility could be okay. All districts aren't the same and because the funds are unrestricted districts are juggling where to put their money. Maybe we need to look at the funding formula. We need to look at continuing to find a way to identify these students and provide adequate services so that they can reach their potential. Focusing on gifted can help us focus on how to help districts.

Dodd – Every special education student receives services? Answer – SWD (Students with Disabilities) students are all provided services unless the parent has denied the services.

Dodd – SWD services are all unique? Answer – Yes based on the IEP (Individual Education Plan).

Jones – SWD students have to need the services though correct? Answer – The IEP team makes the determination.

Dodd – Not every special education student is served? Answer – Those students who need services are served, and those who don't would not get funding.

Dodd – What would be an example of student who doesn't get an IEP be? Answer – Students with a medical ADHD diagnosis that has no impact on learning based on IEP team. Sometimes there are articulation disorders. (Note from Ann: Of course, some twice exceptional students with ADHD who would benefit from services are restricted from these services as they are deemed above proficient and therefore don't require any additional supports.)

Jones – Does this included students who have learning disabilities or physical disabilities who have overcome their needs? Answer – Yes, they may just need accommodation plan through 504 plans. Re-evaluation is based on academic need.

Dodd – On the reporting side, there is a code that identifies gifted spending? Could there be money spent on gifted services that can't be coded on gifted? Answer – The level of specificity that a treasurer uses in 611 districts varies widely. The gifted coordinator and teacher are coded as gifted. But if a teacher has multiple functions they may not be properly coded. Accuracy varies widely. It is reported, but we don't pay much attention to this. Districts do report how they spend gifted, but the level of specificity varies. It depends on how the district reports. I hesitant to say how much. I question the accuracy.

Dodd – Indicated that she had met superintendents who had shared their potential concerns about the standards. In terms of everything they said, she believes there is an opportunity for compromise and that she believed we can be pleased with the same outcomes. (Note from Ann: Outcomes was not used in the same context here as outputs.)

Bolender – When you categorize the various formula amounts, I see things different. Transportation affects all students. Some categories are there to protect certain groups of students. They need extra effort and protection. I'm sure that all superintendents want to serve all students but they focus on the middle. We need to reexamine this because the subgroup funding could get lost. We ask that districts report but we don't hold them accountable. We need to advocate for the students who are two standard deviations above and below the median.

Rudduck – We aren't talking about a whole lot of money in some districts -- maybe \$80,000 and 800 kids. The question might not be relevant because there's not enough money to properly serve students. It is a have and have not situation again. The typologies 1-4 are in a deficit situation. They aren't spending all their money on gifted, but 5-8 they are spending well over. Wealthy districts are able to accommodate their kids. Rural districts have tighter budgets so they use them somewhere else. ESC supports works really well. But it isn't best practice. It comes back to inequitable funding. Can we get a report that look at the typologies? Answer – Yes. (Note from Ann: OAGC will be producing the state funding vs. expenditures report as soon as all the data is available.)

Jones – When I look at the areas where there are federal obligations, I have actively worked to eliminate these maintenance of effort provision as they are pernicious. There is an assumption that only spending more is an inherent good. This is a proverbially slippery slope. For example, LEP kids. We don't track these students. They have unique needs. (Note from Ann: Yes, but the outcome is quite clear for LEP kids: When they are proficient in English, the district has succeeded in serving their needs.) Civics education is an area that we know is inadequate. Pay for play is brought up often. We debated this. Arts and music and nursing education we debated heatedly. The question is if we pursue this path, we are spending money on tracking the funding rather than spending the money on services. Is it accurate that the more reporting we have the more training we need, do we need more categories. To what extent do we track the specifics but are we really tracking everything? Fractions of FTEs and fractions of functions and general enrichment are being missed. Answer – Rausch – I agree that the more that is required by districts, the more training that would be required. There would be an increase in cost to districts and ODE. (Note from Ann: I question how much can it cost for a treasurer to adequately track gifted spending. It was required routinely for gifted identification funds up until 2010.)

Jones -- To what extent does it become difficult to specify activities across multiple activities and students populations? Answer – It does make it more difficult.

Bruns – If once identified as gifted always gifted, what recourse does a parent has to work with the district to make sure that the district is providing those services. Answer – If the district elects to provide services that is the question? It's not like SWD. It's not an apples to apples comparison. There is no way to refer to it as an IEP team. Identification is required but services are determined by each district. If there is service, a WEP is provided. It is not as rigorous as an IEP.

Bolender – Do you think the mechanisms are in place to track funding? Answer – There are account codes that allow treasurers to account for funding.

Bolender – Would you say that we have placed a burden on the districts for accountability through the report card? I believe there are already mechanisms for reporting? Answer – Much of the information is already available. The information is there for ID and service.

Bolender: Is it a burden? Answer: It may be a perceived as a burden because it breaks out the group as a sub-group instead of a whole and it would show that districts may need to do more. Requirements around funding are a measure of inputs and the report card is about outputs.

Representative Andrew Brenner (House Education Chair) – How many gifted students are there? Answer – I don't know. Chris Woolard provided the answer -- 247,000. (Note from Ann: This is 4% lower than last year which could be an indication that districts are reducing identification to increase their percentage served numbers.)

Dodd – What is the process for tomorrow (for superintendent testimony)? Will staff be available to help us answer questions? Answer – (From Vice Chair Jones) You will have take this up with President Gunlock. I don't care how many meetings this takes to resolve this.

Informal Achievement Committee Hearing – (Stephanie Dodd had additional questions in achievement committee, but Vice Chair shut down questions supposedly due to time constraints. When it was clear there was adequate time for more questions and informal committee hearing was held.)

Dodd – The WEP (Written Education Plan) – I had not put together that a WEP is only done if a student is served. Is it possible that more difficult students to serve are less likely to be served? Is it possible to discriminate against students based on their needs? Answer – Yes, it is possible. Districts have to put together a district service plan. The plan is reviewed and the identification plan is reviewed as well. Some districts don't serve in the arts. We allow a lot of local decision-making in terms of who and how districts are going to serve. Some of the accountability measure is about how to shine a light on this.

Dodd – I was at a superintendent meeting last week. I believe generally that superintendents want to do the best for gifted students and want to focus on students. Please understand that I want you to have flexibility for what you need but there are districts where gifted services are extra homework and seeing Phantom of the Opera. Superintendents would like to see targeted assistance for these types of issues. What can ODE to do help these districts? I hope that isn't a loaded question. Answer – It is a loaded a question. There are 2 ½ gifted staff members. Their time is spent mostly in compliance by reviewing plans and answering questions from parents and complaints. Our efforts have shifted to providing better decision-making. Twice exceptional children are an issue. And we could also see LEP as an under-represented population. Unless somebody told us how they are serving gifted students ODE wouldn't know. A parent would need to complain or the district would have to identify this service in plan.

Bruns -- Do we require a gifted specialist if a district needs to be trained? Answer - We ask that teachers have training.

Bruns -- Should this language be reintroduced into the standards? Answer - There needs to be an understanding of gifted students served in the regular classroom.

Bruns – Services -- this is a semantics question maybe. It implies that I can give you services, but it really is a process. It sounds like a teacher can get training to give the student something rather than working with the students to meet their needs. Answer – While there is a WEP, the other piece that we know is that it is not the same entitlement as students with disabilities.

Bruns -- But does it matter that the teacher understands this population? Answer -- There is a need to understand the students that you have before you. Conceptually, you need to understand the students that you have before you. All students are general education students first and then you move from there based on their needs

Rudduck – One of the concerns that I’ve heard is what constitutes as a service. Does acceleration once? Answer – Sue Zake called on OAGC staff to answer as there were no ODE gifted staff in the room (nor have there been at any board meeting regarding gifted since 2015.)

Bolender – College Credit Plus courses can be used as a service option? Answer – Yes, with a WEP.

Bolender – Some CC+ (college credit plus) courses aren’t rigorous enough. Some courses aren’t as rigorous as we would like. I don’t want us to make the assumption that CC+ are appropriate for all gifted students as a service.

Bruns – Is there going to be a comparison between last year’s and this year’s report card data? Answer – Yes, we can do this. (OAGC staff provided a general breakdown to board member Bruns.

Tuesday March 8, 2016 BASA Superintendent Panel on the Gifted Operating Standards

Superintendents included:

Dr. Karen Hall, Director of Student Services for Springfield City Schools
Don Horstman, Superintendent of Ottawa-Glandorf Local
Dale Lewellen, Superintendent of Bath Local
Doug Ute, Superintendent of Newark City Schools
Carrie Knoch, Director of Student Achievement for Wapakoneta City Schools
Dr. Susan Lang, Superintendent of Wyoming City Schools
Carrie Riddel, Superintendent of Westfall Local Schools
Danielle Probaska, Superintendent of Mechanicsburg Exempted Village Schools

For the audio of this presentation, please go to:

[ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State Board Meeting Audio/March 2016/](ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State_Board_Meeting_Audio/March_2016/) and click on 3.8.16 Part 2-Presentation_on_Gifted_Standards_Presentation.

President Tom Gunlock indicated that OAGC will also be invited to address the entire board at a future meeting.

Dr. Karen Hall -- Springfield City Schools – She oversees several areas including gifted services. Springfield has a 95% poverty level and 8000 ADM. Springfield currently provides gifted services in cluster groupings. And they are expanding to services to high school. She asked for flexibility. Minimum minutes make districts difficult to deliver services. It would be easier to have all of our gifted students be in our neighborhood schools. This can cause unreasonable demands in terms of routes and staffing. Our district is motivated to get an A. We need the freedom and flexibility to do that. As a special education director, I am convinced that services for each student should be individualized.

Mike Collins – Do you have any staff in Springfield who have gifted training? Answer – I have a gifted supervisor.

Collins – Do you have any idea how many gifted students you serve? Answer – 195 out of 259. We are able to serve all of our students 3-8 in cluster grouping and a pull-out. We want to expand this. (Note from Ann: Springfield is not reporting that 195 students are served. They reported 84 students served.)

Collins – Are there any students served in an environment that is self-contained. Answer – They are served by cluster group teachers and one day pull-out.

Bolender – You mentioned minutes. I think that the minutes are very flexible. I don't want us to get caught up on the minutes. (Note from Ann: There was a question that I couldn't catch here.) Answer -- The WEPs are very general. They aren't like an IEP. When we are limited to certain options, we aren't able to provide the same individualization for gifted students.

Bolender – Are you suggesting that WEPs be more like an IEP? Answer – Yes.

Rudduck -- Do you know how much your budget is for gifted? Answer – No, but it it's never enough.

Bruns – How well do you think it's working to have classroom teachers provide services? Do we need gifted staff? Answer – This is difficult to answer. Some teachers are very talented. The GISs I have are excellent. It's an effective program but I know who which teachers have the passion to serve gifted students. I would like to place personnel in those roles to serve gifted students. (Note from Ann: Research does not support this. The majority of classroom teachers even after provided gifted training still do not provide adequate differentiation for gifted students. It should be noted that Springfield received an F in gifted value-added this year.)

Dodd – You've seen the current rule? Have you seen the proposed rule? And what OAGC has proposed? What compromises would you be able to make to satisfy the needs of everyone coming to the table? Answer – I've seen the rules from the gifted organization and the draft (9.11.15?).

Dodd – From what you've seen, is there any compromise to fit the needs of gifted students. Answer – I'm not prepared to answer. Can I get back to you on this?

Dale Lewellen – Bath Local Schools – Over the years, funds were able to use the funds as they see fit. We need local control over operating funds. The funding categories in Kasich's funding look like federal funding. Local districts fear that supplement not supplant is not applied. If our funds are restricted, we would have to eliminate these funds. How have we embraced differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all our students? We've hired a full time teacher to be in a science lab. We spend \$98,000 a year on this lab and Study Island and gifted identification. (Note from Ann: Study Island is state

achievement test practice software program.) We spend \$150,000 on CC+. Don't restrict our locals from providing gifted services. A year ago I had a parent in kindergarten to come to ask about our gifted services and now they are going to accelerate this child. (Note from Ann: There are currently no accelerated students reported in Bath Local.) We handle our gifted population on our terms.

Dodd – If you can do this under the current rule, how are you limited? Answer – If you create rules that say you have to spend X amount of dollars on gifted that limits us. We used to be able to do after school programming with unit funding. (Note from Ann: Not legally if this is what they were doing.) We got our funds cut and we couldn't afford to do that anymore. I'm looking down the road. I don't want to go down this road. This is a local control issue.

Dodd – Are you serving 100% of your gifted students? Answer – Yes, we believe we are. (Note from Ann: As this district is only identifying 12 students, it is unlikely that the district has any idea which students are gifted. The report serving zero gifted students.)

Bolender – How are your gifted students identified? Answer – we use a standard test in the 3rd. (Note from Ann: Bath Local is only screening for students in superior cognitive areas. It is unknown what test they are using.)

Bolender – I find it difficult to believe that only 12 students (out of 1700) have been identified. Answer – This process is working well. (Note from Ann: Bath Local identifies fewer than 1% of its ADM as gifted. The current process is clearly not working well – for gifted students.)

Bolender – This number doesn't look right. You believe that providing the science lab serves gifted students? You mentioned that you have 5 kids. Are they gifted? Answer: No.

Bolender -- Do you have any personal experience with gifted? Answer: No.

Bolender -- Have your teachers received special training to work with gifted students? Answer: No.

Bolender -- You keep coming back to the budget issue? Answer – We shouldn't be required to spend more than we were allocated. It was unrestricted. Now it's not. (Ann: I don't think the facts support his answer.)

Bolender – You keep saying that locally you are doing are pretty good job. I disagree. 75% of gifted students being identified aren't served. As a state, we are not doing a good job.

Oakar – I think this interesting. How many students are in poverty in district? Answer – We are at 50% poverty level.

Don Horstman – Ottawa-Glandorf – The political education landscape has rapidly changed over the years. Part of the problem is minimizing the views of professional educators. There is a lack of funding to identify and service gifted students. Ottawa-Glandorf has provided major funds to provide differentiation through Gizmos and Orton-Gillingham. (Orton-Gillingham is a phonics reading program often used for children with Dyslexia.) We have received \$72,000 for gifted students. We have 3 buildings. Our district has received 0 and 2.6% increases in overall state education funding. We are providing for all students. (Note from Ann: Ottawa-Glandorf reports zero gifted served.) The proposed solution is for a problem that doesn't exist. The best place to decide what gifted students need are at the staff meetings in our district. Special interests groups don't know anything about gifted students in our district. Our district was rated excellent or excellent with distinction. Who better to set program than the people who live and shop in our community?

Ann Jacobs – Local control is fine where parents are involved in the school district. But we have to look at the state performance. You need to open your mind a little bit in that regard. Answer – I’m not saying this isn’t a problem. But I’m saying that we know best and that by every measure our students are out-performing. (Note from Ann: Ottawa-Glandorf received a D in gifted value-added on the current report card.)

Bolender – When you say that you are out-performing you are looking at an average but that doesn’t always relate to students at the high and low ends. Local control would be a great thing if districts were providing services. But your district reported zero services. Answer – My daughter is identified as gifted. My daughter does receive services, but they aren’t outlined because they aren’t in compliance. My daughter’s teachers go above and beyond what is needed. The funding isn’t there.

Bolender – I agree that funding is a huge issue and we should be. Is your daughter getting that attention because you are the superintendent? Answer – No. I wasn’t in the district when my daughter was identified. (Note from Ann: He indicated that he was insulted by the question.)

Bolender – I am concerned about parents in rural and urban areas whose parents can’t advocate for them. We have data that shows that we aren’t doing a good job. We need to look best for our students. If gifted students are excelling to the best of their ability in your district great, but I think they can do better. Answer – I disagree that our gifted students aren’t receiving services. They get services they just don’t count. We have an acceleration plan. We’ve accelerated some students. (Note from Ann: Ottawa-Glandorf reports no accelerated students.) We have students who have gone to Boston College and University of Michigan.

Bruns – I was an art teacher. I wonder how much more I could have helped certain students had I been working with a specialist like students with disabilities. I think this is what is at the heart of my advocacy to have gifted specialists. Classroom teachers are overwhelmed. The expectation that we don’t need gifted specialists is like saying that we don’t need special education specialists. I think this is short selling our students. I will continue to speak out loud for more funding. And Ohio is not doing a good job in this area. I appreciate that you are struggling in this area. Continue to talk to us about this.

Dodd – It looks like you are identifying less than 15% and you are serving 0 students. How are you using your gifted funds? Answer – We receive \$72,000. We use the funds for programs (such as Study Island and Orton-Gillingham) and PD for staff to work the programs. We would like to do more. We aren’t serving the students with a specialist, but we are serving them.

Dodd – I do appreciate that if what you are doing in the classroom really is service than let’s count that. But you have to truly provide services.

Susan Lang – Wyoming and Chris Heybruck (Pupil services director?)– We have a strong partnership with our parents and children come eager to learn. We have high academic rigor and performance. I share a perspective from Wyoming. But I have worked in urban districts and other suburban districts. Wyoming has 48% of students who are identified gifted. The current and proposed identification is in grade bands. Services can choose to serve how they wish. The proposed standards require identification in VPA, and this is too subjective. We have robust identification standards that are prescribed by ODE. Gifted students once identified are always identified. A student on an IEP may meet criteria can be dismissed with later. Other accommodations can be use for those special education children off IEPs. Gifted students face an uphill battle. I believe that services need to be flexible. However, there is no mention of Honors, AP, and IB in the new standards. (Note from Ann: The 9.11.15 draft doesn’t define

any service option.) Gifted students can get differentiated options but only with trained teachers. In the current standards, there are resource rooms with a time limit. This time limit is a road block. All the classes are important to the child. We have a menu of services: Single subject course with GISs; inclusion with regular classroom etc. All districts should have at least one trained GIS. There needs to be some calculation for districts higher ADM. The role should be to support all teachers. Funding – there should be more emphasis on funding support. Our funding in Wyoming is \$207,215. We receive \$94,000 from the state. If the purpose of the gifted indicator is to drive service ODE needs to re-examine if the indicator is doing that. Currently, districts are jumping through hoops to put together about WEPs. Students and parents are confused. We have huge gains in input points, but no student is getting more services. (Note: Wyoming increased services by 60% largely by indicating that students are being served in the regular classroom.) Districts are now faced with one more ethical debate. Previously, districts could have accelerated students take grade level exams now students in Algebra have to take End of course exams. Our students did well, but didn't meet the 115 points. Should we do WAPs to increase our score? Our report card system is forcing districts to change reporting gifted services, but not actual services. I ask the state to look at effective services for gifted not paper work related to the services. (Note from Ann: It was actually interesting and maybe even refreshing that this superintendent admitted to some of the ways that superintendents are circumventing the intent of the gifted performance indicator.)

Jones – One of the topics seems to be about funding. My view is that school districts choose how they spend local funds on the individual needs of the students and community they have. So special education students get accommodations. If football is popular uniforms are bought. Bands get to go to events. But it seems that the focus on gifted is that it has to be derived by other money spent. Is the implication that gifted funding should only be from the state or do locals have some responsibility? Is the cost of gifted identification and services only about what is provided by the state? Would it cease to exist? Answer – It is an important piece of our state to move our students to move our students to Honors programs. If Ohio is really invested in a workforce, than this is an important piece that Ohio should invest in.

Frank Pettigrew – You stated that Wyoming believes in honoring teachers that are teaching Honors, AP, and IB, what does this mean? Answer—Gifted students once identified, always are identified. We have rigorous course offerings. If we didn't write WEPs those students wouldn't be reporting as served.

Pettigrew – We heard, this morning of the importance of the Honors diploma. How does this work for or against you? Answer – I've spoken to the provost of UC, and she believes that adding more diplomas waters down the current one. We need to keep the Honors Diploma as is. (Note from Ann: This was a topic of an earlier discussion. Todd Jones wants to expand the number of Honors Diplomas. Other board members do not.

Jones – I believe that gifted students aren't being served is a fallacy. It goes to the problem that Ohio is an inputs model. How do we move to an outputs-evaluation system? How do we evaluate this and see that gifted students are leading to success without a WEP? Answer – Give districts a choice instead of having districts writing written education plans. The CCIP is used for federal plans. Document how many students are in these programs. Answer from Chris Heybruck -- I feel the same as Dr. Lang some of the actions were bureaucratic. Our families saw right through that. It isn't that our families didn't know that students weren't being served but there wasn't a piece of paper. (Note from Ann: Removing WEPs would be just another step to remove any protections students and parents currently have.)

Carrie Riddel—Westfall –We are a rural district. I want flexibility. We went through severe cuts in 2009. Because of a gas pipeline we now have some funding. Now we have K-12 arts, PE K-12, and the Westfall business academy. We now have a curriculum specialist who has a gifted background. This is really important. We have redeveloped our gifted program. We identify in the elementary grades. We cluster in the 3rd grade. Then we have some things in 4 – 8. We have 8th graders going to foreign language offerings, AP offerings, and CC+ with several colleges. Funding is important. We just want you to give us the rules and then stop changing them. Just give us the rules and we will follow them. Recognize that in Westfall and down to the river, we don't have a lot of people educating gifted teachers. Not all programs are licensing in gifted. This makes it difficult. It is hard to recruit because I don't pay what other people pay because I don't have what other people pay. I come at this problem from a human resource perspective. Gifted students aren't going to educate themselves. They need a high quality professional to get them there. Westfall isn't there yet. But we are working on it.

Dodd – The flexibility you are asking for is one that we need to have a conversation about. You aren't identifying a lot of students, but you are serving 78% of them. (Note from Ann: Westfall received an F in gifted value-added this year. They increased their services by 50% largely by coding students in Honors and AP courses. In addition, one of the gifted programs requires "exemplary behavior" and good grades in their regular classes to participate. This is inappropriate on many levels and could lead to the discrimination of many students who made need gifted services the most.)

Bruns – I cannot express enough that we need to hear from the field. What I'm hearing that we are putting new expectations on districts but what you are saying is just give us the plan and we'll do it. We need to look at what services the ESCs could provide as a hub. Also, you should look at ODE as a resource. They could do training. Answer –Our teachers have gone through the Javits modules. (Note from Ann: The Javits modules are not sufficient gifted training for classroom teachers to be gifted service providers.)

Daniella Probaska – Mechanicsburg - I'm an advocate of local control. We cluster our gifted students. We differentiate in the classroom. We have math pull-out and enrichment. We've worked hard on the input side. We have WEPs for middle school and high school. We've had to cut a lot of staff. The service options in the draft standards focus on instructional practices. We need to focus on these. And what are the HQPD that classroom teachers need. We need to not just pull out kids for isolated services. We need to imbed. The minimum minutes requirement of services is currently is a hinderance. This is a focus of what we have in the data so that we can adjust accordingly. We can make adjust instruction in a timely fashion. For instance, middle school social studies can't be counted because of the minimum minutes of services. Qualified providers – GISs or classroom teachers with HQPD – we could use this to serve students to a larger degree than we currently are doing. We still have the challenge of moving our students forward. We need to be able to use our providers and be flexible. What is the compromise? The accountability measure is the compromise. We still have to answer for the gifted performance indicator. Let us respond to the accountability measures.

Mary Rose Oakar – You would prefer revising standards handle the problem. Answer – Yes, we have a human resources and a financial issue.

Oakar – There is movement to requirement to require standards for gifted students but it is an unfunded mandate. We can't keep doing this. We shouldn't do this.

Oakar – Gifted students are termed gifted right away when they are little kids. Do gifted students remain gifted throughout? Answer – yes.

Oakar – We can resolve this by tapping into the rainy day fund.

Carrie Knoch – Wapakoneta – Oversees gifted, special education etc. She is a licensed GIS. I would like you to consider flexibility in staffing and services. Flexibility in identification and accountability is not appropriate. We are dealing with things in our district that are not ideal so we need flexibility. I will share some things. Because of the flexibility we have now, we are focusing on equity and social justice. We are far from the model of social justice and equity. We need the flexibility of providing a continuum of services. Not the rigidity. We have some students who miss the cut-off so they can't get services. We have students in the gray area, and so not providing services is inappropriate. We want to provide summer school opportunities, enrichment before and after school and acceleration. On-going PD is needed. Two years ago we had 1 student who was subject accelerated. Last year, we had 6 students acceleration. One student was whole grade level accelerated. (Note from Ann: If services are not provided during the school year and during the school day, equity and social justice are not likely to be served. The most vulnerable gifted students will be the least able to access these services. Wapakoneta reported no gifted students served until this year. Gifted students served are in AP, Honors and other regular classroom settings.)

Dodd – You are able to provide the services. What can't you provide? Answer – The proposed services standards are more flexible. But we want to count some of those services that we aren't able to now. (Note from Ann: She never specified what she couldn't count as services.)

Doug Ute and Stephanie DeBevoise – Newark – 10% of the population is ID'd. \$280,000 given. We are only officially offering services in AP and Honors programs. We are currently doing more for gifted students than we count. We have a mentorship program. We cluster students with PD in the regular classroom. We have STEM courses in robotics. We want to put three new gifted intervention specialists in these programs. We support a flexible framework that accommodates the needs of the districts and allows innovation and supports gifted students.

Sarah Fowler – At some point it was mentioned, that once gifted always gifted, does this impact the desire to identify students? Does this have a negative impact on the identification of gifted students? Answer – No, it does not.

Rudduck – I appreciate the superintendents coming in. Gifted is one piece of the puzzle – a big puzzle. It is unfortunate that funding is driving a wedge between community leaders and districts. We I see I'm hearing that we are creative and working hard to serve the needs of all kids. We need to go back to the word trust. And we need to trust locals will do the right thing. I agree with Carrie that we should give districts the rules, leave them alone, and let them get to work.

Public Testimony

To hear the audio of this testimony, please go to [ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State Board Meeting Audio/March 2016/](ftp://ftp.ode.state.oh.us/ODEMediaWeb/State_Board_Meeting_Audio/March_2016/) and click on 3.8.16-Part-3-Non_Agenda_Public_Participation. Gifted testimony begins at 37:55 . Because there is no written testimony, I encourage everyone to listen to the audio of public testimony.

Sophia Bowe – I am here to advocate for more funding for gifted services. I am 16 year old high school student who now is in a gifted high school program. Before I was in the gifted program in elementary school, I hated school. When I was in the gifted program, all of a sudden, being the geek, the nerd, and the dork became cool. There needs to be more funding for the higher end kids. We need to be able to achieve greater things. If you fund gifted education, they can meet their potential. Gifted kids will pass

the test wherever. They can go beyond that. Do you want us to achieve greater things, because need help to do that. I get to be taught by teachers who understand me and be with students who understand. When I ask my normal classrooms teachers can you challenge me, I don't get anything. When I am I'm with my gifted coordinator, I get challenged. We're not getting enough funding and we need some requirements for gifted education. If we don't have any requirements, then districts will do nothing. I want to go beyond the bar. I want to go as far as can be. I can't achieve amazing things if I don't have a gifted teacher and gifted friends. Gifted education encourages me to think and grow my own opinions. If I don't have a GIS than I am just capped off. I'm sure I'm a pain to some teachers. With my gifted teacher I'm in a safe environment. My gifted teacher tells me, don't strive for perfection. You can meet that standard. Instead, you need to strive for excellence. I 'm not going to strive for perfection. I'm going to strive for excellence.

Marty Bowe, Assistant Superintendent of Stark County ESC and former Superintendent of Perry Local Schools. -- I have a global view. The world has infinite humor giving me this daughter. I had a significantly different view trying to raise my daughter. I've watched her stall because she would peak too quickly. Her teachers didn't know how to deal with that. I had 6900 kids in my district with 300 special education instructions and 3 gifted teachers. It wasn't enough. I applaud you for growth measure and for the gifted performance indicator. But why aren't we tracking the upper quintile just the bottom quintile? I don't know why we are so focused on the gap closing proposals. We need every child be everything that they can be. I completely disagree with the superintendents that came before you this morning. We need you to hold our feet to the fire do that we can do everything we can do to for the top end. If we are holding up the top to get the bottom end help, we are doing the wrong thing. If it isn't required, it doesn't get done.

Bruns – What role can the ESCs play in moving this needle? Answer – You could look to us to help solve the problem. We could hire gifted staff for our school districts. We could share these staff across districts. We could do that to help.

Fowler – What shouldn't we be regulating? What should we be regulating? Answer—We need to start regulating the top 20%. We need to watch them as closely as any other group. If you've tried to teach gifted kids, it's like herding cats. I couldn't teach gifted kids. When you teach gifted kids you have to have 5 different plans. My daughter was told there were no more books to read in the regular classroom. She needed a gifted instructor who understand her and could meet her needs.

Fowler – Specialized gifted instruction - do the outputs address this? Answer -- We need gifted instruction, we need gifted standards; the outputs aren't enough. I commend you for the gifted performance indicator, but it's not enough. In our area, Jackson Hts. got an F in the gifted indicator. (Jackson Hts. is viewed as an excellent school district.) So now NE Ohio says that that the gifted indicator isn't meaningful, because Jackson Hts. can't meet the standard.

Jones – I'm going to put the challenge back to you. The challenge was that we treat gifted kids the same as the bottom 20%. When we were younger we used to prescribe to a certain set of needs and specified. But then we went to the success model. Gifted education does not occur without inputs. But what do we do to judge the success? Policy is about how to measure. What I'm hearing from you that we need to retrench to a model that was functional 40 years. Why is that we can't craft a better model such as the number of AP credits or how many years gain. Why do inputs matter for this population but nobody else. (Note from Ann: Answer – In an ideal situation, it might work, but there are not enough resources. So when you don't have to do things, you don't get it done. You'll get dinged a little later bit you're going to be good enough. Districts just ignore it. The model is brilliant but we aren't there yet.

Jones – There is a belief that if it isn't mandated it doesn't get occur. But if we mandate it becomes a compliance mentality. If we didn't mandate there would be no gifted services at all in some places. (Note from Ann: And yes that does happen.) There are bands and theaters. These aren't mandated. No one says we shouldn't have gifted education. Everyone has a passion. But the way we fix this is the outputs. The gifted community gave us lists of inputs that 2/3rds were inputs just aggregated. Answer – I agree that the input model isn't where we want to end. But the input model gets you started. Band and orchestras are there because parents demand them. But our parents don't know what gifted looks this. If they did, they would demand it. We need inputs to get this started. If we don't have inputs, but we just won't get there otherwise.

Jones -- What are the steps to get to the next level? Is there a path? Everyone is saying we need we can't go down this path. What is the next step? Answer – I don't have an answer. But I want to be part of the solution. But I fear that that we are going in the wrong direction with the right intentions. I appreciate what you are trying to do with flexibility, but there are certain things won't happen without intervention.

Oakar – I think that everyone agrees that everyone should educate their gifted. But superintendents say they don't get the funding. We should educate people according to their capacity. But if we mandate about more education and special programs, then we've got to pay for it. I don't say anyone advocating for more money for these students. It's an unfunded mandate. You have to get after the governor to do this. We need to have a state board resolution for more funding. We don't need all professional lobbyists. We need regular people to ask. Answer – We will certainly do this. We can't just yell at the board and make magic happen.

Collins – I would like us not to get captured by inputs and outputs. Based on your experience parentally and professionally, is it our role to present or regulate what happens for children and districts should decide how? Answer – The short answer is yes. But the focus should be on focusing on our top end kids and not just the bottom quintile. I see this more attached to the role that we have with our exceptional children.

Collins -- Do you think we would be where we are for SWD if we didn't have requirements? Answer – Absolutely not.

Timothy Souder – principal and parent of a gifted student – He pointed out staff disparities between the district he works in the district where his son goes to school. In his district, Honors classes have been added. The allocation to gifted is driven by our support of the support of the administration. Many districts do not have the support of administration either through ignorance or apathy. The district refuses to do anything about gifted services where his son goes to school.

Bolender – Given your experiences and knowledge, do you think gifted students in rural and urban schools have more difficulty getting services? Answer – I don't know about the rest of the state, but in our part, yes. My district has an ESC real close by, but they don't provide services. PD would help. But if districts aren't accountable, they don't do anything.

Groveport Madison Team – Superintendent , Bruce Hoover – I'm here to tell you why we chose to invest in gifted education. We had \$17 million in general education. We had \$ 8 – 10 million in special education and \$250,000 in gifted. We wondered how do we raise achievement when we are doing so little for our gifted students. We now are investing \$1 million to try to do it right. Moved from a compliance model to what we are doing that is right. When we look at our growth gains in this year, we are looking at growth gains from 200 to 400%. We have been chasing the SIP (Student Improvement)

dollars for a long time in our district. We are committed to getting growth for all our kids, but when you look at our small investment in gifted, the gains have been tremendous. The GISs have helped to provide models for the rest of the staff. There are only two bodies that I know of have the educational training – the ability to scaffold and social-emotional needs: gifted and reading specialists. We don't see this in general education teachers. We now have a model for what a high level model for our students. Even though the services go to our gifted students, the effort has had an all over effect for all of our kids. High expectations get high results. If you lower expectations, you will not get lower results. I've been in rural areas etc. and I know. Superintendents need to look as gifted as a broader investment.

Aric Thomas, Groveport-Madison high school principal – We accelerate students. We go faster but the rigor is lacking. But we are doing is missing the mark. When we talk to outside agencies about what they are looking for, they are not looking for Microsoft skills. They want creative problem-solving. We had 200 students in Algebra in 8th grade, and we end up with only 6 – 8 kids are in AP math. We aren't meeting their needs along the way. The agencies are aching to get more students who are creative, and we need to work on that.

Brandy Grieves, Groveport-Madison middle school principal – We restructured our middle school so that all of our gifted students are in one building. We have a five year plan. Our district vision is, "Every student. Every lesson. Every day." Our instructional strategies from gifted intervention specialists are bleeding into the regular staff. Our gifted students are just as at risk as special ed. students, ELL, and economically disadvantaged. What we have done in one year is amazing. We've made great gains with gifted students. It has a high cost. But our gifted students deserve to have their needs met.

John Walsh, Groveport-Madison district treasurer – I worked with the gifted coordinator, Kelley Rains, on budget issues and then my two sons were identified in a different district. Our previous district identified them. But the new district wanted to do something for him. The previous district didn't notify us from kindergarten and provided no services. My son finally had the teacher that he needed. She challenged him. We need to have teachers in the field who have training. We need to have standards that require that training. Many treasurers don't want to spend any money on gifted.

Bruns – I'm very intrigued. Did you start down this journey by looking at your data to try to raise all ships? Or did you look to improve gifted services. Answer – When we looked at our district, our students had a lot of social-emotional needs, and so we looked at what kind of initiatives would have the biggest impact. GISs would number one deal with social emotional need and, two, raise the rigor.

Bruns – You have 20% transient students. Are you having any luck stabilizing families? Answer – For gifted, our new services do have a stabilizing effect. For other students, we haven't bridged it completely.

Oakar – You mentioned something which stimulated this question. Do gifted students who don't get gifted services have an attendance or drop out issues? Answer – In my building, there are severe issues with social emotional needs. We have worked hard to make sure that school is a place where these students want to be, because they won't come if they don't want to be there. I was concerned that students from other middle schools and how it would work out. Some of those students are so happy to be at the middle school. It was the right path. We are touching on the needs of those students.

Oakar – If a student is gifted, are they gifted in all subjects? Answer – No, this is why it is important to have a GIS to help our teachers know how they behave differently. For example of a music teacher who was discussing colors asked the color of the sky. The gifted student said black. The correct answer was

black. But the teacher actually knew it was correct and that the student wasn't being a smart aleck even if other students thought so.

Oakar – Did you have to rob Peter to pay Paul? Answer – It was part of our levy campaign. We promised the community we would do this.