

## **Gifted Indicator Workgroup Meets to Finalize Recommendations**

The workgroup on the gifted education report card indicator appointed by the State Board of Education had its final meeting Wednesday ahead of its required report to the board next week.

Workgroup chairman Chris Woolard, director of accountability for ODE, announced that the Gifted Dashboard will be released this Friday and should reflect the most current 2013 data.

The primary objective for the meeting, according to Woolard, was to have an agreement on the framework for the Gifted Indicator to present to the State Board of Education. He said the framework is broken up into three parts: Gifted Progress, Gifted Performance, and Gifted Inputs. The following components of the framework were voted upon by the work group during two sessions, the first on May 1. (See *The Hannah Report*, 5/1/14.)

### **Gifted Progress (Part 1)**

- The Gifted Value-Added Grade from the Report Card will be the progress measure.
- Any district that has Gifted Value-Added, regardless of district enrollment, will be evaluated as "Met/Not Met" for the indicator.

### **Districts for which Gifted Value-Added (VA) is not calculated**

- A minimum Average Daily Membership (ADM) level for grades K-12 will determine how a district is evaluated for the indicator in the absence of Gifted Value Added.
- The ADM level should be set at 600.
- The ADM level would be phased in: 1200 for SY14, 900 for SY15, 600 for SY16.
- If a district is at or above the ADM level and does not have Gifted VA, the district will be rated as "Not Met"
- If a district is below the ADM level and does not have Gifted VA, however does have Gifted Performance Index (PI), the district will be evaluated as "Met/Not Rated."

### **Buildings for which Gifted Value-Added is not calculated**

- A minimum ADM will not determine how a building is evaluated for the indicator in the absence of Gifted VA
- If a building does not have Gifted VA, however, does have Gifted PI, the building will be evaluated as "Met/Not Met" for the indicator, based on Gifted PI and Gifted Inputs.
- If a building has neither Gifted VA nor Gifted PI, the building will be evaluated as "Met/Not Rated" for the indicator, based on Gifted Inputs.
- Community Schools and STEM schools will be evaluated using the building level rules.

### **Gifted Performance (Part 2)**

- The Gifted PI, as originally calculated for the Gifted Rankings, will be the performance measure.
- The work group will advise the state board to revisit the issue prior to the 2016 Report Card, with respect to new assessment results and other potential additions, such as the ACT.
- ODE recommends that for the small number of buildings (11 in SY13) that do not have Gifted PI, however do have Gifted VA, the buildings be evaluated as "Met/Not Met."

### **Gifted Inputs (Part 3)**

- Gifted Inputs will not include gifted service as a percentage of enrollments.
- Gifted inputs will not include gifted screening percentages based on anticipated provisions of the new operating standards.

-Gifted inputs will not include formal acceleration percentages; however, the work group will advise the state board to revisit prior to the 2015 Report Card.

-Gifted Inputs will include the following: Gifted Identification as a percentage of enrollments and gifted service as a percentage of identification.

Woolard stated that the gifted grouping of Superior Cognitive/Academic Subjects would be disaggregated by grade bands K-3, 4-8 and 9-12. The gifted grouping of Visual and Performing Arts/Creative Thinking would be disaggregated by the same grade bands.

For minority students (all categories other than white, non-Hispanic), there would be no grade bands. Also, there would be no grade bands for economically disadvantaged students, he said.

The group noted that there are some districts with significant Asian populations and would make it appear that gifted services are above par for all minority and/or disadvantaged students. Woolard said they want to use federally mandated terminology – “All subgroups other than non-white Hispanic.” It was decided not to separate out the Asian population as it only affects a small number of districts.

Ann Sheldon, executive director, Ohio Association for Gifted Children, said the biggest change from this endeavor will be that high schools will begin documenting their service to the gifted population.

### **Scoring Inputs and Thresholds**

Matt Cohen of ODE said the group had decided they wanted more points for service than identification. Scoring is based on 100 point scale in these categories: Superior Cognitive and Specific Academic; Visual and Performing Arts and Creative Thinking; Economically Disadvantaged Gifted Students; and Minority Gifted Students. Each grouping is divided into two sections: identification of enrolled students and service to identified students.

The Superior Cognitive and Specific Academic as well as the Visual and Performing Arts and Creative Thinking groups are sub-grouped by K-3, 4-8 and 9-12. Economically Disadvantaged Gifted Students and Minority Gifted Students are all measured K-12.

Cohen said, “The problem is that if you have very low numbers, you get bonus points just by doing nothing; there is no clear cut answer.”

Sheldon said there are 10 districts that don’t have enough minority kids to get any points. “Perhaps when we decide on a threshold, we could prorate the possible points for those districts,” she suggested. Cohen said it makes it more complicated and won’t impact anything, but he liked the idea.

Woolard said, “This is one of the most complex metrics that will be on the report card. Conceptually, I want to make sure we’re on the right track, so we can move forward. Ensuring that you get some points, there should be a floor.” Sheldon countered, “It seems like a very low floor. It might suppress districts from identification if they are going to get more points for service. I personally would be more comfortable with a higher threshold -- I would double it.”

“Districts may not be selecting the right tests for identification. Appropriate instruments must be chosen for the district’s population,” said Colleen Boyle, supervisor of gifted and talented for Columbus City Schools.

Boyle made the argument for a C as a threshold. "If the board sets a D as the threshold, we will have problems from a PR perspective," she said. "It makes sense from a statistical standpoint, but not from the perspective of gifted parents."

Cohen said the distribution of grades would not be very much different from what it is today. "The Performance Index does have a ceiling, so you can't push it far either way. The decision that the board makes will be based on the distributions of today, at least for a few years out."

The Gifted Input median is around 34 districts that currently meet the standard. "That may change by only a few points in the next few years. It's a big ship, and it moves slowly statewide," Cohen said.

"This is largely a reflection of what we already know -- that we're not doing a good job with the gifted kids in the state. So what are we going to do with this Gifted Indicator?" Sheldon asked.

"The discussion with the public will have to center around statistical certainty in the realm of accountability," said Jamie Meade, managing director of strategic measures, Battelle for Kids.

Michael Tefs, superintendent, Wooster City Schools, commented, "This is a back door to public policy." Sheldon agreed and asked him, "Would you rather have an outright mandate?"

Sheldon noted that Ohio is the first state to "go down this path." All members agreed that this will be an on-going conversation.