

Gifted Education Testimony to State Board of Education

Tuesday, June 14, 2016

- President Gunlock and members of the board. I'm Dr. John Richard (OASSA) and I'm Dr. Julie Davis (OAESA). We're here today representing building administrators across Ohio, primarily principals and assistant principals, sharing a wide perspective on the gifted standards. As a result, our comments are general in nature, reflecting the overarching concerns and guiding principles of our membership.
- The first point we'd like to mention is the importance to maintain flexibility when you design rules for servicing students. Flexibility is important in developing programming that fits the needs of unique students residing in unique communities throughout Ohio. It is important to maintain local decision making in order to best meet the needs of our students, and our belief is this is best accomplished at the local level.
- By maintaining flexibility (rather than being over prescriptive) in the rule-making process, unintended negative consequences can be avoided. As some examples, if service rules become too prescriptive, this would potentially affect schedules of other classes, breakfast and lunches, and even transportation schedules. Other examples would include staffing levels and decisions regarding staffing as it relates to the overall budget. While we recognize that we are describing adult issues, without adequate funding we do not support additional requirements that have an end effect of increasing costs. This places demands on districts that are already creatively managing budgets to meet requirements. Additionally, with the added opportunities for college coursework available to our students, we are seeing needs of many of our older students being better addressed than ever before.
- In conclusion, the education of our gifted students, as with all students, is of utmost importance. We believe that at this time it is important to maintain flexibility and local decision making as priorities in how to best meet the needs of these students.