



This document represents the Ohio Association for Gifted Children's response to the Gifted Draft Rule: 3301:51-15 posted on January 12, 2024. These are the most pressing issues OAGC has identified through a series of public meetings with our members.

There are 225,000 identified gifted students in Ohio. Comparatively, we have fewer than 940 Gifted Intervention Specialists (GISs) and fewer than 1,150 gifted staff - including ESC staff. These ratios are deeply unsatisfactory and directly contributes to the daily burnout, struggles, and exhaustion of gifted staff. A gifted intervention specialist with thousands of identified gifted students cannot feasibly be required to also provide cluster grouping, meet with each and every parent or guardian, and provide talent development to students not identified as gifted.

*As a solution, OAGC supports and recommends a gifted service mandate.* Mandating service in Ohio would require districts to hire more gifted personnel and would alleviate the already overworked gifted staff in this state. Barring that monumental change, OAGC must underscore that best practice for gifted children is currently not possible for all gifted students in Ohio. Without appropriate numbers of credentialed GISs and Gifted Coordinators, there simply isn't the infrastructure to effectively support the needs of all gifted students.

### **Student Talent Development Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section D**

OAGC recommends that this section clearly outline that GISs are teaching gifted students as *gifted funding must be spent on gifted education alone*. Talent development must happen with input from gifted staff; however, talent development classes should not detract from gifted student education, and the rule as proposed would erode services for gifted students across the state.

If GISs are to be allowed as talent development providers, OAGC recommends that there be a cap of no more than 15% of a GIS's time leading talent development programs

### **Cluster Grouping Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section C (4)(e)**

OAGC recommends the use of cluster groups *where possible*. In small districts with few students identified as gifted, cluster groups are not ideal, nor are they beneficial to the gifted child. Additionally, cluster groups should only occur with students of the same gifted identification.

Temporary waivers mentioned in this section also need to be defined in greater detail. How often are waivers available? How often and how quickly will they be approved?



## **Written Education Plan**

### **Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section C (5)(a)(iii)**

As written, this section would require a GIS to meet with the parent or guardian of each identified gifted student and obtain their signature on the WEP. While OAGC supports parent and guardian involvement in a child's education, this requirement is extraneous. For a GIS with 100 gifted students in their caseload, this would equate to over two weeks of nonstop parent or guardian meetings.

OAGC requests that ODEW outline specifically what a "reasonable attempt" at communication would be. Additionally, we suggest rewording this section to state, "The district will make a reasonable attempt within one grading period after the student is placed into service, and each year thereafter in which a student receives gifted services, *contact the parent or guardian via email, phone call, online conference, or in-person conference.*"

## **Professional Development**

### **Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section F(1)(c)(ii)**

OAGC supports the five clock hours of on-going specialized training in gifted education for general education teachers. It is crucial that the providers of this professional development are themselves gifted specialists.

We encourage the final draft of this rule to clearly identify credentials for the providers of professional development and recommend that only those certified in gifted specialties are allowed to provide professional development. Not everyone who teaches university courses are experts in gifted education.

## **Gifted advisory council**

### **Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section E**

Membership to the Gifted Advisory Council must be more explicitly stated. Membership should include the executive director and one governing board member as chosen by OAGC.

We also encourage membership of the Gifted Advisory Council to include one member from each regional coordinators of OAGC affiliates. This representation would provide unique perspectives from gifted coordinators around the state of Ohio and would also ensure that those on the Gifted Advisory Council are currently serving gifted students.



### **Duplicative Language**

#### **Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section A**

ODEW has been very clear that duplicate language provided in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) must be removed. OAGC disagrees with this change as it creates an undue burden on those providing services. OAGC instead recommends that the gifted rule retains this language as it aids in complete understanding of the rule. If we are unable to include duplicate language, OAGC recommends the creation of a guidance document that outlines references and standards to make this document more easily understood by school staff and parents alike.

### **No Service Letters**

#### **Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section E**

OAGC recommends the inclusion of no service letters. Districts should also provide ongoing updates on gifted services to parents and guardians of gifted children.

### **Accountability**

#### **Gifted Rule Draft 3301:51-15 Section G**

The previous draft included a corrective plan following an audit which OAGC supports. Parents or other individuals should be allowed to file a gifted education complaint and request that ODEW investigate alleged violations of either Chapter 3324 of the ORC or the Gifted Rule. After an investigation, districts will be provided an opportunity to respond to allegations. The department will proceed with corrective action after a gifted education complaint investigation is completed.