



Testimony to the Senate Finance Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee on HB49
May 24, 2017

Chairman Hite, Vice Chairman Sykes, members of the sub-committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the behalf of the Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC).

Gifted education funding in Ohio has gone through multiple revisions over the last eight years. With the dismantling of the gifted unit funding system after 2008, gifted education funding operated under a “maintenance of effort” provision until 2014. This provided absolute flexibility for districts to use state gifted funding to meet the needs of gifted children as they wished. This approach resulted in huge decreases in gifted identification, service, and staffing levels. (Please see the attached **“2017 State of Gifted Education”** for more details). The gifted funding component introduced in the latest funding system provides, at least on paper, significant increases in funding through a formula that is calculated inside the foundation funding formula. (In the old gifted unit funding system, gifted funds were allocated outside the formula.) However, because the accountability provisions for the funding are weak and unenforced by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the only funding that is undisputedly allocated to gifted education is **\$3.8** million in ESC funding for gifted coordinators and intervention specialist units.

In HB49, the gifted education funding formula from the last biennium is retained. This should result in the current funding level of about **\$72** million to districts. *(The formula allows **\$5.05** per ADM for the identification of gifted students. In addition, one gifted coordinator unit of funding is allocated for every **3,300** students in a district’s gifted unit ADM, with a minimum of **0.5** units and a maximum of **8** units allocated for the district, plus one gifted intervention specialist unit is allocated for every **1,100** students in a district’s gifted unit ADM, with a minimum of **0.3** units allocated for the district. Each unit is valued at **\$37,750**. The value of each unit is very low, which would suggest that the formula does not provide an adequate level of funding particularly for smaller, rural districts.)* Unfortunately, the majority of school districts report that they are not spending the current allocated amounts of state gifted funding on gifted students. Under-spending on gifted education is a particular problem in smaller, rural districts. In part, this is due to the cut in gifted ESC unit funding in 2014 from **\$8.1** million to **\$3.8** million. Smaller districts depend heavily on ESCs to provide gifted services. The theory when the latest funding formula was introduced was that districts would use gifted funding inside the formula to pay ESCs for needed services. In practice, this has not happened in many cases.

OAGC requests that the Ohio Senate maintain the language in the current sub bill that instructs the Ohio Department to conduct a gifted cost study. This study would be conducted over the next year in order to inform the General Assembly on a better way to fund gifted education in Ohio. In addition, OAGC asks that a portion of the Straight A funds be utilized to fund a rural, gifted

initiative. Finally, OAGC requests that gifted ESC funding be increased back to the 2013 level of \$8.1 million. ESCs supporting smaller, low-wealth districts should be given priority in funding.

Accountability

As critical as funding is, accountability for the use of gifted funds is just as important. Despite the fact that ORC 3317.40 states that districts are intended to use student sub-group funding for that specific sub-group, **317** districts are spending below their (capped) allocated gifted funding formula amount. Licensed gifted staff employed by districts and ESCs has declined **25%** since 2008. Identification of gifted students has declined by **5%** since 2014. Eighty-seven districts report serving no gifted students. Most disturbing is the **157%** increase of gifted students supposedly being served in the general education classroom with teachers who have little to no gifted training. If gifted students were all performing well, this might be less concerning. Yet, very few districts met the 2016 gifted performance indicator. **OAGC requests the following provisions be enacted to improve this situation:**

1. **Increase the level of accountability for gifted funding by requiring all districts to spend gifted funding in the foundation formula on identification and appropriately licensed gifted personnel.** Districts showing great promise in the area of gifted performance could be waived from this requirement.
2. **Require ODE to collect and post data on gifted services offered by each district by grade band as well as the number of licensed gifted personnel employed or contracted by the district.** This would allow parents to determine the types and levels of services provided to gifted students.
3. **Revise the sub-group accountability language to allow ODE to use the full gifted performance indicator to gauge the success of the gifted sub-group.** Currently, ODE only uses the gifted performance index and gifted value-added scores. ODE staff has indicated that ORC restricts them from including the full gifted performance indicator. ODE should be able to evaluate the gifted sub-group based on the full gifted performance indicator.
4. **Require that districts indicating that gifted students are served must be providing services that are either accelerated or supported at minimum levels by qualified gifted intervention specialists.** Too many districts are indicating that gifted students are being served even though the “services” provided are undefined levels of differentiated instruction from a classroom teacher with minimal or no training in gifted education and no support from a gifted intervention specialist. This is an attempt by some districts to increase served numbers to gain gifted input points on the gifted performance indicator. Beyond the inherent ethical question of this practice, it greatly hinders the ability to determine whether and which gifted services have the greatest impact on gifted student performance. If anything can be called service, than nothing is service.

Additional Concerns/Requests

In addition to funding and accountability issues, OAGC has the following concerns and requests:

Creation of a Gifted Rural Taskforce -- Ohio, in general, has an excellence gap between gifted students who are economically disadvantaged versus those who are not. While urban districts appear to be increasing efforts to address this issue, Ohio’s gifted rural students on almost every

measure are falling behind. **OAGC recommends that a gifted rural taskforce be created to address some of the issues unique to rural gifted students. In addition, as stated previously, funds for ESC gifted units should be increased to support rural areas that are vastly underserved and a portion of the Straight A funds should be allocated to develop rural gifted initiatives.**

Development of Alternative Providers for Gifted Services -- OAGC believes that it is time to open up alternative service models for gifted students such as regional gifted schools, expanded community schools for gifted children in areas of high need, open enrollment, and vouchers. Gifted students represent **16%** of the student population in Ohio and well less than half of this population is served.

Administrators Serving as Coordinators -- OAGC requests that the provision that allows qualified principals and others to serve as gifted coordinators be revised. This provision has been misinterpreted to mean that *any* administrator can serve as a gifted coordinator. This has undermined gifted support in many districts, where very few individuals have any gifted training. There are some counties in Ohio with little to no access to licensed gifted coordinators. Districts in these counties lag in services to gifted students. Gifted student performance is suffering as a result.

Changes to College Credit Plus (CCP) – OAGC is concerned about some of the changes regarding College Credit Plus in HB49. Specifically, we are troubled by the removal of language that would allow parents to appeal to the state board of education any local school district decision to prohibit the student to participate in CCP after the deadline. We are also concerned that HB49 restricts access to certain courses as determined by rules developed by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) without a pathway for the parent or student to appeal the restriction. In addition, we object to the current rules developed for CCP which prohibit students from taking more than 30 college credits per year with a cumulative limit of 120 college credits requiring some students to self-fund under Option A of CCP. Finally, OAGC believes more funding is needed for nonpublic and homeschooled students to meet the demand for CCP courses. OAGC recommends removal of proposed language that rescinds the ability of parents to appeal to the state board of education any district decision to prohibit CCP participation. In addition, new language should be included that would allow a student to appeal any restriction to specific course access. We also recommend that language be added to clarify that all participant-paid courses that fall under Option A will follow all other Option B CCP procedures, including that colleges and universities charge the same course rate to self-paying students that is normally charged to districts under Option B. Finally, we recommend that increased funds be allocated to ensure that all students have full access to CCP, including non-public students, home schooled students, and public school students who wish to access CCP courses from private colleges.

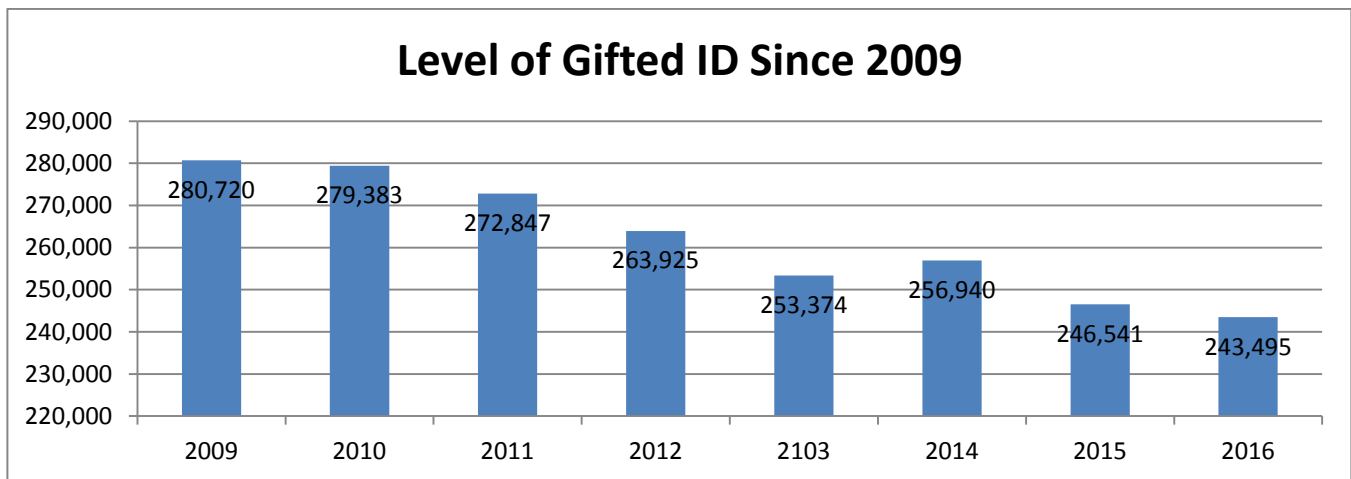
For any questions regarding this testimony, please contact Ann Sheldon, OAGC Executive Director at 614-325-1185 or anngift@aol.com.



2017 State of Gifted Education in Ohio
Updated February, 2017

Gifted Identification

In school year ending in 2009, districts identified 280,720 students as gifted. That figure is now down to 243,495, a drop of over 13%. While there was a steep drop from 2011 to 2012, another large decline occurred from 2014 to 2015, which is highly concerning. Gifted identification declined by 4% from 256,940 in 2014 to 246,541 in 2015 and declined another 1% from 2015 to 2016. Reducing identification allows districts to increase their percentage of gifted students as served. This is a troubling trend. The number of districts that were not rated in gifted value-added because of a lack of data due to low identification numbers increased from 51 to 59 districts in 2015 and stayed at 59 in 2016. Only 23 of those districts were below the 600 ADM threshold set for “not rated” districts on the gifted indicator to count against the district.

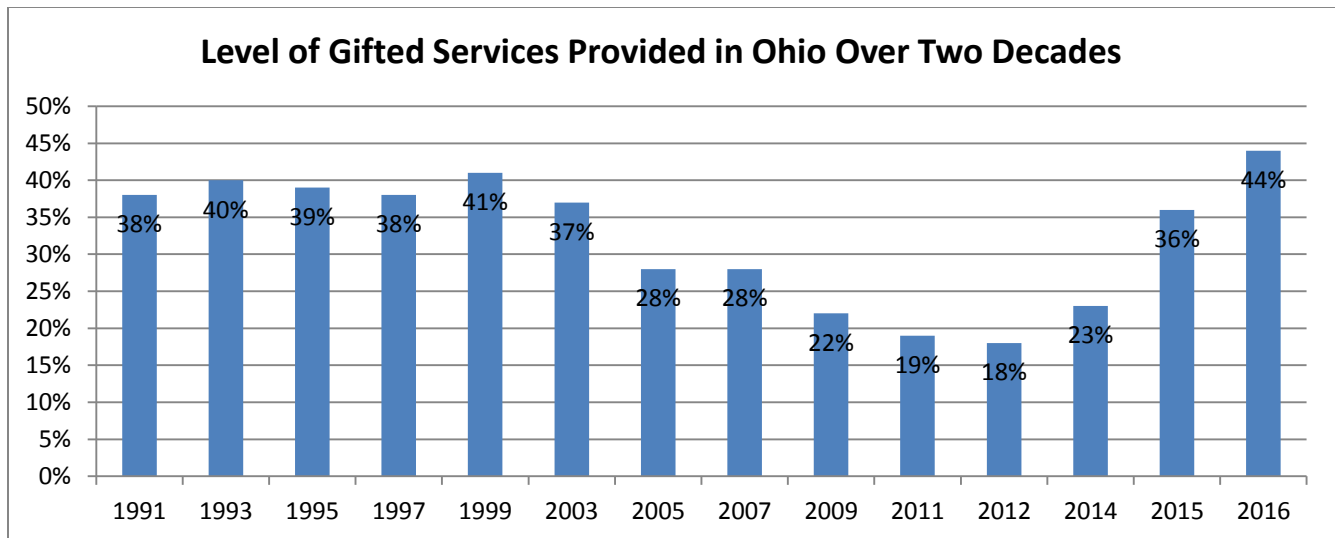


The breakdown by district typology demonstrates that gifted students are much less likely to be identified in rural districts, small towns, and urban districts. Identification has declined in all district typologies

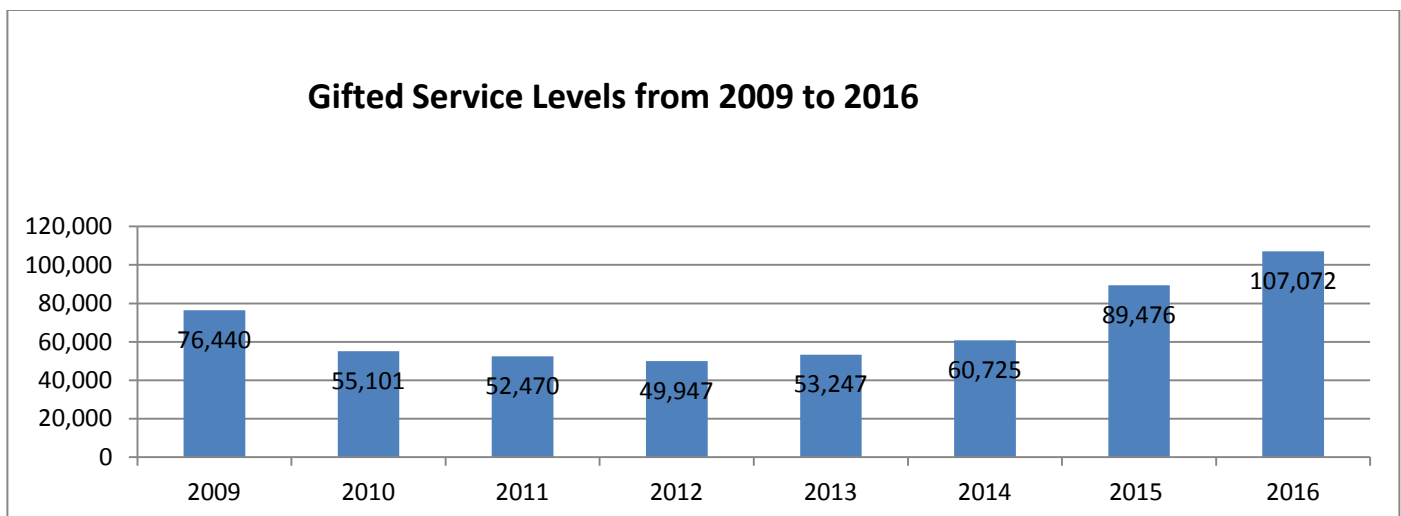
<u>District Typology</u>	<u>Grouping</u>	<u># of Districts</u>	<u>2016 % ID'd</u>	<u>2015 % ID'd</u>	<u>2014 % ID'd</u>
1	rural, high poverty	123	12.13	12.05	12.49
2	rural, average poverty	106	13.74	13.52	13.69
3	small town, low poverty	111	15.33	15.65	15.93
4	small town, high poverty	89	10.74	11.04	12.03
5	avg. suburb, low poverty	77	18.36	18.53	19.62
6	lg. suburb, very low poverty	46	30.83	31.00	31.68
7	urban, high poverty	47	8.7	9.00	9.87
8	large urban, very high poverty	8	8.04	8.36	9.47
State Average		607	15.59	15.77	16.53

Gifted Services

Services to gifted children reached a peak in 1999 and slowly declined in subsequent years. In school year 2012, service levels hit a new low, dropping below 19%. There has been huge increase in services over the past three years. However, it is **highly unlikely** that these are truly new services as the number of gifted staff and expenditures continue to decline. Districts reported an increase of **158%** in the numbers of gifted students being served in general education classroom with no support from any trained gifted staff. It is unlikely these students are receiving any true services. As districts continue to identify fewer gifted students, the percentage of served also increases artificially. In addition to being unfair to gifted students receiving sham services, these false service numbers hinder any ability to determine effectiveness of services based on output measures.



Districts increased services to gifted students from 60,725 in 2013-2014 to 89,476 in 2014-2015. There was another big jump in “services” provided in 2015-2016 to 107,072 students. The overwhelming majority of these “new” services over the past two years are being provided in the regular classroom with an increase of over 18,000 students. There was an actual reduction in the number of services in pull-out and resource rooms with dedicated gifted intervention specialists. In high school, 15,000 more students were reported as served in College Credit Plus, Honors courses, and Advanced Placement than two years ago. Almost 11,000 students are now being reported as subject-accelerated, the majority of these students are likely 8th graders taking Algebra.

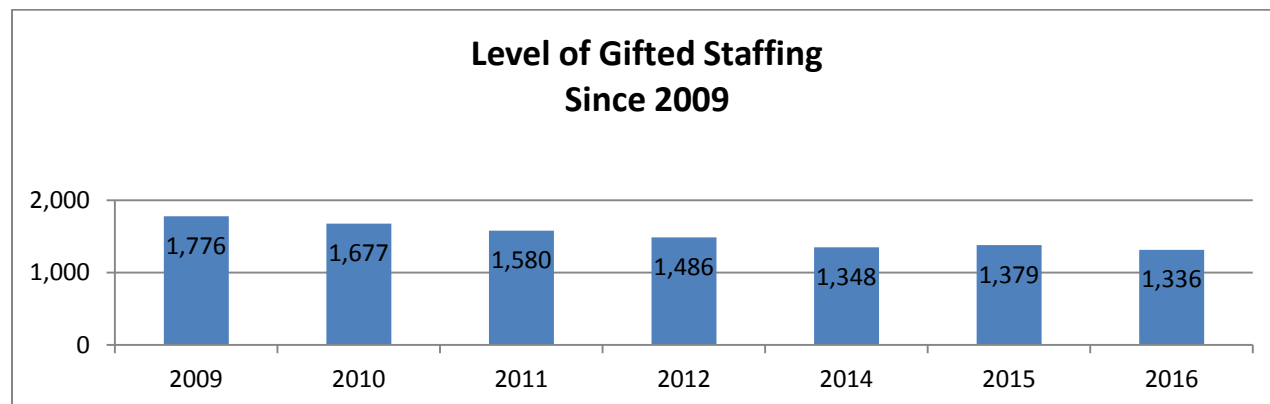


Viewing services by typology is an interesting exercise, because it shows that across all districts there appear to be huge service gains for gifted students. In 2016, 370 districts reported serving more gifted students though 87 districts still report serving no gifted students, the majority of which are rural districts. Approximately half of the statewide service increase can be attributed to 25 districts, the majority of which are suburban.

District Type	# of Districts	2016 % of ID Served	2016 % of ID Served by ADM	2015 % of ID Served	2015 % of ID Served by ADM	2014 % of ID Served	2014 % of ID Served by ADM
1	123	46.09	8.19	33.85	3.83	20.13	2.51
2	106	43.24	5.94	31.88	4.31	18.84	2.58
3	111	48.79	7.48	40.16	6.28	23.11	3.68
4	89	52.25	5.61	40.13	4.43	25.26	3.04
5	77	46.61	8.56	38.67	7.16	24.91	4.89
6	46	39.5	12.18	34.07	10.56	22.29	7.06
7	47	43.23	3.76	32.84	2.96	24.56	2.42
8	8	36.07	2.9	37.08	3.1	29.1	2.76
State Average	607	43.09	6.86	36.29	5.72	23.54	3.89

Gifted Staffing

The increase in gifted services should logically include an increase in licensed gifted staffing levels. But that is not the case. Gifted staffing has plummeted over the past few years. As of 2016, there were only than 1,336 (down from about 1,379 in 2015) licensed gifted coordinators and intervention specialists working in Ohio school districts and ESCs. Considering that 15.5 percent of Ohio's student population is identified as gifted, this level is entirely inadequate. Licensed gifted staffing in districts and ESCs has decreased by almost 25% since the FY2008–2009 school year. Gifted coordinator numbers decreased by 39%, while the number of gifted intervention specialists decreased by 20%. The issue of appropriate gifted staffing is critical to any discussion of gifted services. Classroom teachers in Ohio are provided no preservice training to understand, identify, or provide rudimentary services to gifted children. Districts indicated that gifted students are being served in the classroom with no support from a gifted intervention specialist are usually doing little more than filling out a checklist to gain gifted service points for the gifted performance indicator.



The breakdown by district typology reveals once again that rural districts have seen the worst of gifted staff reductions in the state, though the decline of gifted coordinators seems to be acute in smaller suburban districts, as well. (Note this graph does not include ESC staff which have also declined.) The one bright side is the increase in staffing in large urban districts, which can largely be attributed to one district that is making huge changes to

gifted services. Declines in staffing have continued from 2014 to 2016. Only large urban and the wealthy suburban districts have seen increases in gifted staffing. Every other district type continues to cut staff while claiming to serve almost 64,000 more gifted students in just two years!

<u>Typology</u>	<u>Number of Districts</u>	<u>% Decline in Overall Gifted Staff from 2009 to 2016</u>	<u>% Decline in Gifted Coordinators from 2009 to 2016</u>	<u>% Decline in Gifted Intervention Specialists from 2009 to 2016</u>	<u>% Decline in Overall Gifted Staff from 2014 to 2016</u>	<u>% Decline in Gifted Coordinators from 2014 to 2016</u>	<u>% Decline in Gifted Intervention Specialists from 2014 to 2016</u>
1	123	-49.74	-65.91	-45.05	-23.77	-50.24	-15.71
2	107	-43.64	-51.00	-41.79	-26.83	-33.58	-25.24
3	111	-42.64	-49.26	-41.06	-15.21	-32.42	-10.55
4	89	-36.66	-43.33	-34.76	-12.72	-20.08	-10.68
5	77	-25.03	-59.88	-17.80	-1.2	-13.46	.24
6	46	-9.24	-62.65	-2.88	11.6	-53.28	19.18
7	47	-33.62	-58.06	-26.50	-8.37	-9.74	-8.14
8	8	9.92	-5.77	12.07	55.55	-50.03	105.51
State Avg.	608	-26.57	-52.52	-21.03	-.43	-33.51	6.35

Vulnerable Populations

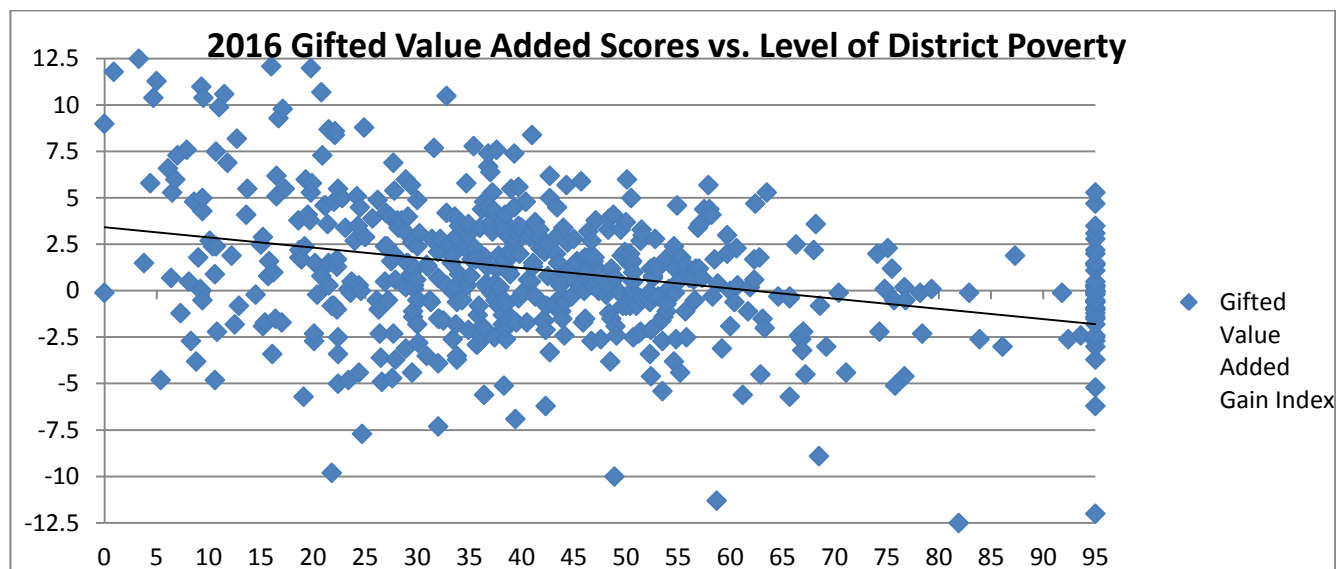
The gifted performance indicator—the only current output measure for gifted students—breaks out district identification and services across grade bands, types of giftedness, and student demographics. Data on gifted identification and services in grades K–3, disadvantaged, and minority students tell a bleak tale.

Economically Disadvantaged Students: Students classified as economically disadvantaged are less than half as likely as other students to be identified as gifted in the state of Ohio and are only 92% as likely to receive gifted services. Service numbers of economically disadvantaged gifted are markedly worse in rural districts. The lack of identification of this population supports the need for whole grade screening, which is widely supported by research.

<u>Typology</u>	<u>Number of Districts</u>	<u>2016 % ID'd</u>	<u>2016 % of ID Served</u>	<u>2016 % of ID Served by ADM</u>	<u>% Gifted Disadvantaged ID</u>	<u>% Gifted Disadvantaged ID / % of Overall ID</u>	<u>% Gifted Disadvantaged Served</u>	<u>% Disadvantaged Served / % of Overall Served</u>
1	123	12.13	46.09	8.19	7.44	61.33	39.08	84.78
2	107	13.74	43.24	5.94	7.29	53.02	37.32	86.32
3	111	15.33	48.79	7.48	7.57	49.26	43.78	90.73
4	89	10.74	52.25	5.61	6.25	58.15	43.52	83.28
5	77	18.36	46.61	8.56	8.47	46.16	39.21	84.13
6	46	30.83	39.5	12.18	11.77	38.18	37.95	96.08
7	47	8.7	43.34	3.76	6.05	69.4	43.44	101.82
8	8	8.04	36.07	2.9	6.68	82.98	33.91	94.02
State Avg.	608	15.59	43.09	6.86	7.59	48.71	40.42	91.92

Another way to view how serious this issue is becoming is to look at the value-added scores of gifted subgroup by district poverty levels. The distribution for all student value-added scores has no relation to poverty. The scatter

plots show no trend. This is not the case for the gifted student subgroup where there is a clear decline in value-added scores based on the level of district poverty. It comes down to opportunity. Wealthier districts are providing more true services while poorer districts while reporting services continue to cut staff and limit opportunities for gifted students.



Minority Students: Districts also have some issues identifying minority students especially considering these figures may be somewhat skewed. This is because the minority gifted student category includes students identified as Asian, who historically have been more likely to be identified as gifted than any other subgroup in the state of Ohio, including non-Hispanic white students. Overall, however, minority students are less likely than non-Hispanic whites to be identified as gifted, particularly in small towns and urban districts. While on average, minority gifted students are more or just as likely to be served if they are identified as non-minority students, this is not the case in some rural districts and small towns.

Typology	Number of Districts	2016 % ID'd	2016 % of ID Served	2016 % of ID Served by ADM	% Gifted Minority ID	% Minority ID / % of Overall ID	% Gifted Minority Served	% Minority Served / % of Overall Served
1	123	12.13	46.09	8.19	7.65	63.01	37.5	81.35
2	107	13.74	43.24	5.94	9.69	70.47	40.25	93.09
3	111	15.33	48.79	7.48	8.97	58.39	43.85	90.87
4	89	10.74	52.25	5.61	6.24	58.09	45.51	86.9
5	77	18.36	46.61	8.56	11.71	63.81	48.73	104.55
6	46	30.83	39.5	12.18	25.38	82.33	49.75	125.97
7	47	8.7	43.34	3.76	4.83	55.43	42.14	98.77
8	8	8.04	36.07	2.9	4.96	61.49	32.4	89.82
State Avg.	608	15.59	43.09	6.86	9.63	61.76	42.87	97.5

Grades K-3: As with all student subgroups, the earlier that gifted students are identified and provided with appropriate intervention, the more likely they are to realize their potential. Unfortunately, in Ohio the majority of

districts do a poor job of identifying young gifted students. Almost 10% of Ohio's districts do not identify any gifted children in grades K–3. Over one third of districts identify fewer than 3 percent of their K–3 population. While on average, Ohio districts identify about 15.59% of their students as gifted, only 6.46% of students are identified as gifted in grades K–3. While no district typology group appears to do a good job of identifying gifted children in the early grade levels, the problem is particularly acute in urban areas where it is particularly important to identify and provide services as early as possible.

<u>Typology</u>	<u>Number of Districts</u>	<u>2016 % ID'd</u>	<u>2016 % of ID Served</u>	<u>2016 % of ID Served by ADM</u>	<u>% Gifted K-3 ID</u>	<u>% K-3 ID / % of Overall ID</u>	<u>% Gifted K-3 Served</u>	<u>% K-3 Served / % of Overall Served</u>
1	123	12.13	46.09	8.19	5.76	47.44	44.89	97.38
2	107	13.74	43.24	5.94	5.11	37.16	37.47	86.67
3	111	15.33	48.79	7.48	6.28	40.9	44.48	92.19
4	89	10.74	52.25	5.61	3.59	32.86	39.77	76.11
5	77	18.36	46.61	8.56	7.32	39.87	44.06	94.53
6	46	30.83	39.5	12.18	18.68	60.58	39.93	98.57
7	47	8.7	43.34	3.76	3.92	44.97	37.44	87.74
8	8	8.04	36.07	2.9	3.69	45.84	28.46	78.91
State Avg.	608	15.59	43.09	6.86	6.46	41.43	41.36	94.06

Gifted Performance and Growth

The gifted performance indicator (GPI) is composed of three components: gifted value-added scores, the gifted performance index, and gifted input points, the last of which is a measure of gifted identification and service across student demographics and grade bands. Districts must meet each of the component cut scores to meet the overall GPI, with the exception of districts under 600 average daily membership (ADM). The cut scores required for 2015 were a gifted value-added grade of C or above, a gifted performance index score of 116 (out of 120) or above, and a gifted input score of 60 (out of 100) or above. The GPI will be fully phased in by the 2016–2017 school year, when the cut scores will increase to align with other report card indicators. With the change in state assessments, very few districts met the gifted performance indicator in 2015. While 155 districts met the indicator in 2014, only 13 met the mark in 2015 growing to 49 in 2016. Due to the huge numbers of newly reported gifted students, gifted input points rose in every typology.

Gifted Performance Indicator Element Comparison			
	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Average Value-Added	1.09	.34	.31
Average Gifted Input Points	47	43	36
Average Performance Index	112.5	110.5	115.8

2015-2016 Gifted Performance Indicator Breakdown by District Typology			
	<u>Gifted Value- Added</u>	<u>Gifted Performance Indicator</u>	<u>Gifted Input Points</u>
Type 1	.64	111.98	45.5
Type 2	.66	112.60	42.4
Type 3	.67	113.98	48.7
Type 4	.71	110.96	44.8
Type 5	2.67	114.65	54.4
Type 6	4.7	116.51	48.7
Type 7	-1.68	107.05	43.6
Type 8	-2.88	105.59	38
State Average	1.09	112.54	47.26

VALUE-ADDED CHANGES BY TYPOLOGY				
	<u>2015/2016</u>	<u>2014/2015</u>	<u>2013/2014</u>	<u>2012/2013</u>
Type 1	.64	-0.67	-0.30	0.01
Type 2	.66	-.19	0.02	0.023
Type 3	.67	.44	0.07	-0.15
Type 4	.71	-.76	-0.21	-0.22
Type 5	2.67	.01	1.30	0.24
Type 6	4.7	6.03	3.31	1.70
Type 7	-1.68	.28	-0.65	-0.63
Type 8	-2.88	-.69	-2.34	-1.67

While suburban districts are more likely to meet the gifted performance indicator, it is clear that these districts tend to spend more on gifted students and are more likely to identify gifted students. There does appear to be some correlation between funding and performance.

Type	<u># Distri cts</u>	<u>% ID'd</u>	<u>% of ID Served</u>	<u>% of ID Served by ADM</u>	<u># Met GPI</u>	<u>No VA Score > 600 ADM /No VA Score</u>	<u>% High Value- Added Scores*</u>	<u>% Low Value- Added Scores*</u>	<u>Avg. Value- Added Gain Index</u>	<u>Avg. Gifted Performa nce Index</u>	<u>Avg. Gifted Points</u>	<u>Gifted Expenditure to State Funding Allocation</u>
1	123	12.13	46.09	8.19	4	16/24	36.59	18.70	.64	111.98	38.87	76.66
2	106	13.74	43.24	5.94	6	8/15	36.79	17.92	.66	112.6	38.02	65.37
3	111	15.33	48.79	7.48	5	4/6	41.44	27.93	.67	113.98	42.5	86.77
4	89	10.74	52.25	5.61	6	6/9	35.96	17.98	.71	110.96	38.38	111.98
5	77	18.36	46.61	8.56	13	1/1	67.53	24.68	2.67	114.65	47.92	138.76
6	46	30.83	39.5	12.18	14	N/A	71.74	19.57	4.7	116.51	53.85	264.91
7	47	8.7	43.34	3.76	1	2/3	23.40	40.43	-1.07	107.05	39.66	130.71
8	8	8.04	36.07	2.9	0	N/A	50.00	50.00	-2.88	105.59	36.38	127.50
State Avg.	607	15.59	43.09	6.86	49	36/58	43.16	23.06	1.09	112.54	42.62	130.16

*A or B grades

**D or F grades

Funding

Gifted education funding in Ohio has gone through multiple revisions in the past decade. After the dismantling of the gifted unit funding system at the end of the 2009–2010 school year, gifted education funding operated under a maintenance-of-effort provision until 2014. This system provided districts absolute discretion with few or no barriers to using state gifted education funds to meet the needs of gifted children. Unfortunately, the approach resulted in staggeringly negative consequences for gifted students across the state. The new system introduced in the 2014, at least on paper, significant increases in funding through a formula that was calculated inside the core funding formula. (In the gifted unit funding system, all gifted funds were allocated outside the formula.) Because the accountability provisions are weak and unenforced by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the only funds that truly support gifted education is the \$3.8 million allocated to educational service centers (ESCs) for gifted coordinators and intervention specialists.

While approximately \$73 million of state gifted education funding (based on capped amounts) was allocated to districts in FY2016, more than half of all districts spent less than the amount allocated to them under the state funding formula. The theory was that districts would use formula funds to pay ESCs for services if needed. The theory appears to have failed, however, in many smaller districts (particularly in typology groups 1 and 2) that spend disproportionately less of their gifted formula amounts than do other, larger groups. Gifted students in these smaller districts have been hurt by this formula shift as well as by the cut in ESC gifted funding.

<u>Typology</u>	<u>Number of Districts</u>	<u>Gifted Expenditure to State Funding Allocation*</u>	<u>Districts Spending Under the State Gifted Allocation</u>	<u>Districts Spending \$0 on Gifted</u>
1	123	78.3%	87	13
2	106	73.6%	66	12
3	111	97.2%	61	14
4	89	113.7%	48	5
5	77	144.1%	24	2
6	46	280.9%	4	1
7	47	136.8%	23	2
8	8	152.5%	4	0
State Avg.	607	139.5%	317	49

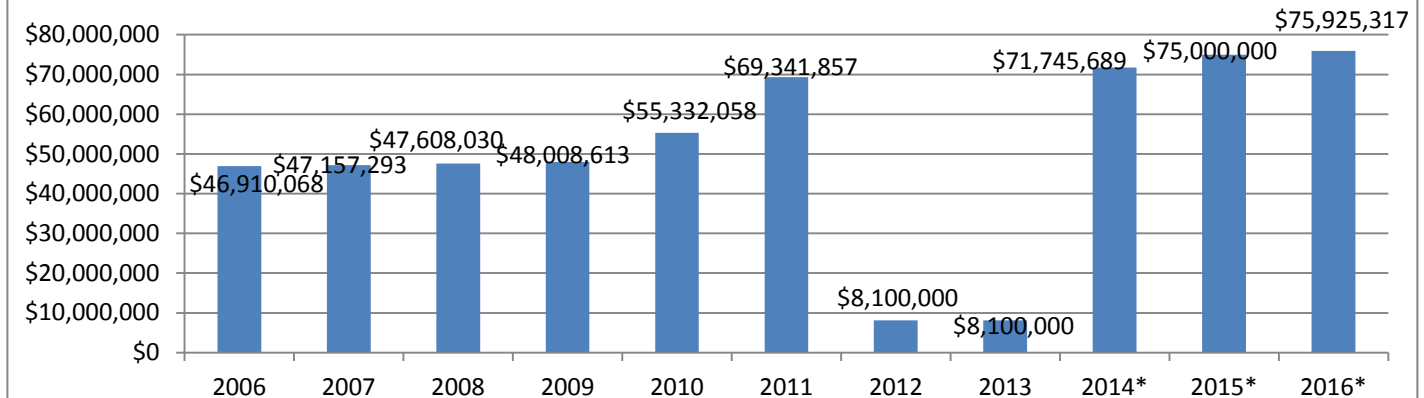
*Numbers may vary slightly from ODE allocation data based on data available at the time of this analysis

Historic Levels of Gifted Funding

Depending on one's viewpoint, gifted funding either is at the highest level in history or has experienced a decrease of almost 95 percent. Funding was relatively stable until 2009, with the introduction of the evidence-based model. On paper, funding rose for 2010 and 2011, but because districts were operating under only a maintenance-of-effort standard, they were not required to spend the state levels of gifted funding beyond that provided in FY2009. A similar situation existed in the FY2011–2012 biennium. On paper, there was no funding in the bridge formula for gifted, but districts were technically required to meet the 2009 maintenance-of-effort state spending level. Compliance with this requirement was inconsistent at best and, in many cases, nonexistent. In addition, \$8.1 million was allocated to educational service centers (ESCs) for gifted education. In the FY2013–FY2014 biennium, the legislature introduced a new funding formula for gifted education. The formula included funds for identification, gifted coordinators, and gifted intervention specialists. ESC gifted unit funding was cut from \$8.1 million to \$3.8 million. While the ORC states that funding for student subgroups under the formula must spent on those subgroups, it is clear that the majority of districts do not feel bound by the law in this area. This is particularly true of smaller districts previously served almost exclusively by ESCs.

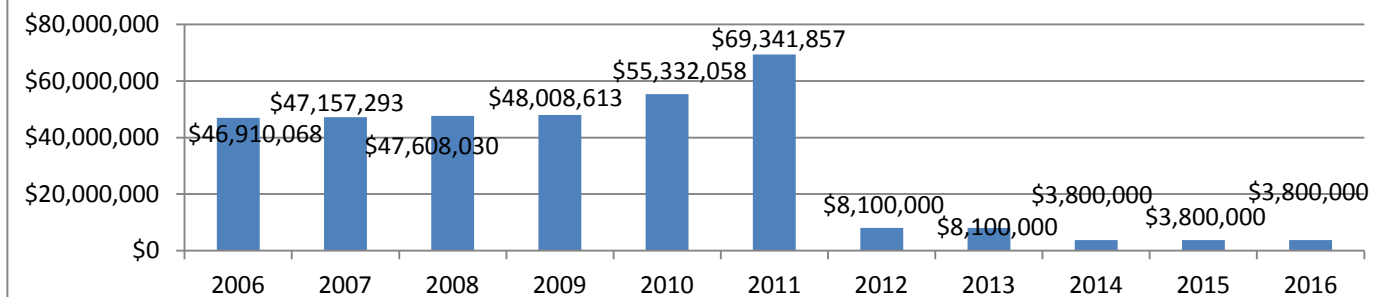
Gifted Funding Levels from 2006

* includes \$3.8 million in ESC gifted unit funding



OR

Gifted Funding Levels from 2006



Summary

Since 2009, the state of gifted in Ohio has declined sharply. Identification of gifted students continues to decline. Even while districts are reporting more services, gifted staff levels continue to drop except in wealthier suburban districts. Services are often nothing more than report-only. It is clear from value-added data that the lack of opportunities for gifted students in districts in higher poverty leaves Ohio's most vulnerable gifted students at risk. Many districts continue to spend less on gifted students than the state funds allocated for this purpose. Gifted performance is lackluster. Gifted students in small, rural, and urban districts are the least likely to be identified and served. Young gifted students or gifted students who are minority or economically disadvantaged are the least likely to be identified or served in the state—even in wealthy suburban districts. The lack of funding accountability, the lack of services across the state, and the lack of oversight from the ODE have created a situation in which the vast majority of Ohio's school districts do not meet the new gifted performance indicator. The gifted performance indicator offers some small hope in terms of providing transparency about the state of gifted education in each district, but without changes in services, funding accountability, and oversight, gifted students will remain perpetually underserved in Ohio.

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