

Strategic Planning Break-Out Session Discussion Notes

The goal of this session is for participants to give input about how Maryland can move toward consensus and work to increase consistency in the identification procedures for gifted and talented students in the state.

Discussion Topics	Potential Agreements to enhance COMAR Chapter 13A.04.07	Possible Barriers to Implementation
Universal Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add “shall employ a universal screening process” to part A • Interview or asset-based screening • Same process across the state • What can we use for screening that we are already using? • Eliminates subjectivity • State contract for testing • Agree that universal screening provides more info than just gifted services • Provides an effective baseline for all students • 2E and EL still struggle with ID • All students screened through Central Office • Naglieri and OLSAT used, as well • Parents can request retesting in Washington • COMAR should include the word universal screening. “Must” language (vs. “shall consider”) should be in the COMAR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding (3) • Language barriers in assessment • Interpreting assessment results of universal screening – needs common standards (3) • Local norms need to be defined clearly • Training in culturally responsive pedagogies • Fidelity • Staffing for programs • Is MSDE looking at a state product/contractor for a test to universally screen the students? If so, the instrument should be vetted heavily against “bias” for various student populations. • Amount of testing time required would result in “push-back,” especially at various grade levels (2)
Grade Bands for Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early and/or initial identification -- current common bands are K or Gr. 2) • Parameters for ongoing ID in COMAR 13A.04.07.02. D • Multiple ID bands; not just screening in one band • Cog AT in fall of 2nd grade, again in Grade 5, PTD data in FCPS • Grade 2, PTD Pre-K-2 in AACPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Pre-K and K data • Barrier to ongoing – lack of resources (assessments) • Assessment restrictions-time allocations (4) • State recommendations could be, “by Grade__” • What do we do with testing info? LEAs need to define why they are testing and what programming look like? (2)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen individual students at any grade level when needed in Carroll • Baltimore City screens in K with Naglieri, Pre-K when needed • K in Talbot • K-2 for districts with high poverty (a strong reason exists for earlier ID, especially for kids in poverty) – It makes sense to ID K-2 students only if programming exists for them • The earlier that you assess, the more that you need to keep reassessing students at older grades • 3-5 (a grade band for new registrants, transient populations – Individual districts will need to decide how to handle these populations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of the testing w/in the school year (month of administration) • Ability to properly train every teacher to administer ID • Funding (3)
<p>Multiple Methods of Identification (to include potential, aptitude, & achievement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden COMAR to provide specific parameters for measures such as, but not limited to: portfolios, work samples, academic achievements, PTD, and others • Clarify purpose for multiple instruments to prevent gate keeping or rigid criteria • MSDE Primary Talent Development Program • Flexibility with alternative measures (SPED) • Auditions/interviews • How “local” are we considering the norms to be? School, area, region, district? • Use local benchmark assessments • Teacher checklist • Work samples • PTD a critical tool, REPI scores used • PARCC • Use both quantitative and qualitative data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigor between schools or LEAs • Standards can vary • Measures vary from LEA to LEA • Potential issues of equity if same measures are used across LEAs • Issues with reporting with small vs. large populations – metrics • Definitions & services of gifted can vary between LEAs (gifted, talented, highly able, etc.) • Are we interpreting Multiple Methods the same way? • Use of strict cut-offs • Professional development, especially GT characteristics • Time! • Local autonomy

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observational Rating Scales (teacher) for potential and/or parent rating scale as part of the appeal process (AACPS had used Renzulli rating scales) • Work samples/tasks, portfolio products (observational data) • Interviews • Question: Would the PTD program be a norm across the state? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding (3) • Need to consider types of measures for special populations • State should not say which measure is used, just that multiple measures need to be used • Could identify for different levels-gifted, advanced, above, on. Look at both ability and achievement • Concern for multiple measures need to be identified. Uniform measures needed so it is equitable between districts • NAGC has standards, minimum criteria for standards. Use as a guide for uniformity so it is consistent for students • Teaching training • Timing of assessment measures
Use of Local Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and national norms currently not addressed in COMAR **There should be standardized guidelines for establishing local norms and/or group-specific norms • Discussion of services versus identification with school-specific norms (gold standard, but not really feasible in district context) • How “local” are we considering the norms to be? School, area, region, district? • Same criteria used in all schools • Flexibility provided to ensure identity of underrepresented groups • Uniformity needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local or group specific norms are not the same by school or between districts – Who calculates local norms? (2) • Transience of students • District programs – not necessarily school programs • A TON of professional development is necessary for everyone involved • Managing data and reporting – access may be a barrier (3) • No additional comments from the “BLUE” group • Please consider the needs of the smaller districts

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have a standard range across the state • Other student groups do not use local norms under ESSA • This causes a challenge for GT, we need to think more broadly • Measures need to match tools of accountability, performance may not match accountability measure • Measures used in one district may not match another district's needs • Need a range of options so that we do not miss students • Add an index by school to match students to services • Testing should provide services for gifted programming or for components of programming • COMAR should specify that the use of local norms is allowable • Terminology for how to use local norms 	
Use of Alternate Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age based advocacy? • Self-nomination • Creativity assessments • Assessments for ELLs in primary language • Variation in grade levels • What is working across the state? Where are the GT students growing the most? • Going deeper into data**Requires a paradigm shift • Arts integration • Talent development groups • Creativity Assessments • Higher than expected growth by using different markers for different student groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COST – Particularly people • Concerns about expansion of COMAR without commensurate funding – BUT some districts might better fund gifted if there is accountability from the state to keep local boards motivated • Assessments for ELLs in primary language not matched with services • Included non-traditional teachers • Not as standardized, therefore it can be more subjective • ESSA subgroups as part of the school's reading and math data – Principals will

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The measures that we are currently using may not give an accurate picture of various populations of students • COMAR should have specific language about alternate pathways for specific populations of students – make it more explicit in COMAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> only focus on students whose strengths are in those subjects vs. the other areas of giftedness • If we identify student strengths in various subject areas, then we need to have GT programming in those areas
<p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at new teacher certificates from higher education- What are the higher ed. institutions doing to prepare for this? • Please consider the outcomes of making GT an ESSA subgroup- Potentially schools would only ID students for reading and math since those are the areas of accountability • Question: Would students who are ID as GT in math be expected to show the same amount of growth in ELA PARCC? • In other states (PA for one), students identified as gifted have an IEP, just like Special Ed. That is developed with parental input and is revised annually. Has MD thought about this? A barrier to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is working across the state? Where are the GT students growing the most? • Conversations need to take place with content supervisors and school psychologists in order to give our colleagues a greater base knowledge in gifted education – Those colleagues typically make GT programming decisions, especially at the secondary levels) • More PL across the state to help with the GT content consistency (math, ELA, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional comments from the “BLACK” group • No additional comments from the “RED” group • State must consider funding as districts cannot handle an unfunded mandate (2) • Law and advocacy

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doing this would be the time and effort to develop and review the GT IEPs		

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