

493 Columbus State Assessment Review for Budget Considerations

493 Columbus District Summary

(A) Identify the barriers that must be overcome for each student to achieve grade level proficiency on assessments.

Some of the key barriers that must be overcome in our School District include:

- High percentage/number of free and reduced students and increased poverty rate
- High or increased levels of homeless students and families and foster care families
- High levels or increased levels of student trauma (Adverse Childhood Experiences, ACE Study)
- Lack of or limited access to community health services and mental health services
- Special Education funding shortfall has limited supports of our highest need students
- Lack of instructional time or changes in instructional opportunities faced during the COVID pandemic created learning loss
- High levels or an increase in absenteeism among our student population
- An increasing level of social emotional challenges and needs of students
- High levels or increased student mobility affects the amount of instructional time we have with highly mobile students and creates instructional issues when students move in or out throughout the school year
- We believe using one assessment score is not an accurate measure of student success, especially because assessments are written in a way to avoid 100% success for every assessment participant.

(B) Identify the budget actions that should be taken to address and remove those barriers.

Given an appropriate level of funding for both general education and special education, there are a number of budget actions we could take to remove some barriers. Some of them include:

- Increased salary to recruit and retain high quality certified and classified staff
- Additional staff members hired to meet the individual learning and SEL needs of all students
- Increase paraeducator support in special education classrooms
- Maintain low teacher/pupil ratio for greater individualized instruction
- Allocating budget to focus on prevention, identification, and intervention concerning trauma and mental health issues

(C) Identify the amount of time the board estimates it will take for each student to achieve grade level proficiency on the state assessments if the budget actions would be implemented.

While our board of education, administration, teachers and classified staff work tirelessly to meet the academic and social emotional needs of all of our students, too many factors come into play that do not allow us to accurately assess when all students will be at a certain level. Some of those factors include:

- Our ever-changing student population brings a varying degree of cognitive abilities and disabilities which precludes us from being able to guarantee a date when all students will meet a singular level of proficiency.
- Lack of constitutional funding of special education continues to impact our ability to fully meet the needs of all students
- While assessment scores are one measure, our district does not believe that student assessment scores should be the sole measure of student proficiency
- Similar to how other professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, etc, cannot ensure 100% success due to a variety of factors and obstacles, we will be unable to achieve 100% proficiency
- Many of the factors that affect student success, such as trauma, poverty, mental health and student disabilities, are out of the local board's control, so giving a time estimate on things that consistently change, or are under the control of other agencies, is not a realistic practice of a local school board.