

Senator Dembrow and members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Lane Shaffer and I'm a student at the newly renamed McDaniel High School. As a TAG-identified student, I have experienced the many inequities facing TAG students and undertook significant self-advocacy in order to have my needs met. I was told in the 1st grade by my teacher that unless I moved schools, they would be unable to provide me with an adequate education. I was privileged enough to be able to move schools and eventually end up at a TAG magnet program, but many students did not have that opportunity or went unidentified.

Once in high school, I found a lack of differentiation in classes and resistance to enrolling in AP classes. I had hoped that high school would provide all students with the individualized education necessary for all students, but especially TAG students. Unfortunately, this was not always the case for me and my peers.

I am here to support SB 486 along with its amendment because I believe it will have a positive impact on TAG student's experience and make TAG programs more accessible. By requiring that districts offer the opportunity to discuss programs available to students with the child present, we allow students to have more of an impact on their own education and ensure that TAG families are aware of the services available.

Additionally, by having the TAG plans developed by school districts published in accessible spaces, we keep districts accountable and allow parents and students to be informed on the availability of TAG services at that school.

Please consider supporting SB 486 so that all TAG students are able to receive a better education.

Lane Shaffer