

Testimony in support of SB 486A

SB 486A will make finding information about TAG at the district level easier. School districts in OR organize their websites differently and do not use standardized titles for the people responsible for TAG. It can be frustrating to search for this information. Requiring districts to report the name of the person responsible for TAG to the Department of Education would allow the State TAG Specialist to communicate more effectively with the educators who are responsible for carrying out district TAG plans. It would also allow district educators to better communicate with each other to share best practices and collaborate on professional development.

My three adult children were identified as gifted and participated in programs in their schools in California. While they were in school, I was employed as the administrative assistant for the district gifted administrator. A regional group of administrators met regularly to share information and provide professional development. These opportunities to consult and cooperate strengthened local programs and minimized costs. Even without a state TAG mandate, my children received advanced opportunities as gifted students. Oregon needs this type of communication and cooperation across the state. SB 486A would strengthen TAG identification and programs by making communication between TAG administrators easier. This communication is especially important for small rural districts where collaboration can provide resources for TAG students that may not be available locally.

SB 486A also allows for students to join with parents in having input into their programs. TAG students have unique needs, and their perspective is needed to help educators understand their needs and challenges.