

Representative JohnLively@oregonlegislature.gov

RE: Oregon SB595 & SB596 - please support these bills!

Dear Representative Lively :

I am a veteran public school educator who works as the Teacher On Special Assignment (TOSA) for Talented and Gifted Education in the Eugene 4J School District. I previously taught 5th grade in Cottage Grove, Springfield, and Eugene. I reside in your district as I live out in the Camp Creek area of rural Springfield.

I strongly support SB595 and SB596. **SB595** ensures that 1% of state dollars to schools is earmarked funding for TAG for each district. We desperately need this funding to help provide training for our teachers to better meet the needs of students who demonstrate a level of exceptionalism that requires modifications to their instruction. **Teachers need training** on how to skillfully **differentiate their instruction** to meet the needs of their students who are needing more. Funding for high quality training is key to improving instructional practices, and earmarked TAG funding would make a significant difference in the quality of instruction.

We also appreciate **SB596** that requires our district to be more transparent when reporting our TAG data to the Oregon Department of Education. Oregon needs to improve its identification practices and services to TAG students and these demands for greater accountability is an excellent first step in that direction.

As the one person in 4J who is responsible for advocating for TAG student needs and helping teachers improve their practices to meet those needs, I will tell you that teacher training is sorely needed in this regard. We need funding to increase teacher skills and to compensate the building TAG Coordinators at each of our schools for this added responsibility.

Please vote YES on SB595 and SB596! We are counting on your support so we can better support the needs of this population of students.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn Mendelssohn
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