

Submitter: David Stein
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB595

Hello,

I am writing today in support of SB595, which would create a Talented and Gifted Education Account amount that equals one percent of total amount available to school districts as general purpose grants. I further oppose proposed amendment two, which would delay implementation of this bill for a full year in spite of the bill's intent to declare an emergency, a delay during an emergency is incongruent.

My son, a second grader, started receiving TAG services this school year. We spent last year trying to get him tested and then lobbying on his behalf for services to meet his academic development abilities. It was a tough year as he kept being bored with subjects he already knew and challenged himself with his older sister's third grade homework. It was a frustrating year for all of us as he was not fully engaged and didn't always have a good outlet for his desire to learn new things at school. Fast forward to this year and it's been a completely different experience as he has been consistently challenged with the accelerated coursework. We recently received his midyear test scores and while he maintained his very high overall scores, the growth was very high and he is excited about school. My daughter, now in fourth grade, is also in the process of applying for TAG as some subjects are becoming much too easy for her and we are hoping for similar educational benefits when she is accepted.

Having dedicated resources for other students to reap the benefits of TAG programs across the state is important for keeping them engaged in their learning journey AND other state goals when it comes to long-term economic growth. For all of the state funding that is going into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) based jobs Oregon, our employment base has usually not been deep enough to support these industries. The state is best served by retaining students in programs that will continue to grow their abilities rather than depending on people moving into the state.

Passing SB595 is an investment in our students that are not receiving the services they need, and Oregon's future economic health.

Respectfully,
David Stein