

Submitter: Clare Lanusse
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB595

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Clare Lanusse, and for the sake of transparency, I am a Legislative Assistant for Senator Dembrow. However, my written testimony is from my own lived experience and not a reflection of my employer or employment.

I am writing in support of SB 595.

I am the mother to three school aged children who have all been identified as highly gifted, or "Talented and Gifted" (TAG). I was also identified as highly gifted way back when I was a K-12 student.

Having dedicated funds to help meet students where they are at in their rate and level will keep kids engaged in school. Investing in and supporting TAG services for students across the state is a smart investment in the future since it will help Oregon nurture incredible minds that could go on to do amazing things in innovation and help grow our workforce. All students deserve to be challenged and engaged, and SB 595 will help provide a base funding level for schools and staff to meet their students' needs.

There is often a false narrative that TAG students will be fine without any additional support or programming. I want to share how this was not the story for me. I grew up in Washington state and was in TAG classes from first grade until my family moved into a new district in the middle of my freshman year of high school. My new school did not offer any advanced classes, so I went from being in accelerated classes that met my rate and level to being in classes where I was assigned repetitive and boring work. I went to my school counselor when I noticed how disengaged I felt, and she told me there was nothing she could do. Long story short, I ended up dropping out of high school. I managed to finish a high school completion program when I was 20, but carried a tremendous amount of secret shame about my perceived failure until I started my undergraduate degree at age 35 where I was (fortunately!) reintroduced to my love of learning. Please support SB 595 so more students in Oregon can stay engaged in school.

Two of my children were able to go to a school through 8th grade where their rate and level were met. This included "walk to math" programming where every student was in their appropriate level math class, regardless of their grade. Some kids were

in their grade level math class, while other students were in math classes 1-3 years ahead. This contrasts greatly with the response we received when looking for ways to keep our third child engaged in math at a different school. We were told our child could not advance a grade level in math because they'd "run out of math" to be taught in elementary school. Opportunities like "walk to math" could be a reality for all students if Oregon funded the professional development required to support students at higher math levels. This is just one of many examples of how SB 595's dedicated TAG funding could help make Oregon better.

Please vote yes on SB 595.