

Submitter: Alex Vennebush  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB4137

I am a student in eleventh grade at Cleveland High School in Portland, and I am currently in the first year of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. The IB program is designed to prepare engaged and excellent students for post-secondary education through both rigorous courses and written assessments. A student who completes the Diploma Program is far better prepared for post-secondary education than a student who completes typical regular-diploma requirements. A major part of the Diploma Program is the internal assessments, which engage a student in individual exploration in each subject area they are studying. The student must research a topic of their choice and then write at length about their findings. In addition to these papers for each course, a Diploma Program student writes an Extended Essay in any subject area they choose, which also entails individual, focused research and a lot of writing. All of these projects prepare students for college courses, which require skilled research and writing skills to succeed. Diploma Program students must complete at least one year in six different courses at an IB level of rigor: one in mathematics, one in English, a natural science course, a social science or history course, one in a foreign language, one in the arts (or a second of another category). Each of these has its own internal assessment project, some of which are of the research type described above and some of which are unique to the course. In the natural sciences, for example, students must design an experiment of their own and explain their methodology and results; in English, students must orally compare and contrast two texts that they have studied in regard to a chosen theme. These course requirements are balanced by an extracurricular requirement in Creative, Active, and Service activities. Together, the Diploma Program ensures that all of its students receive a thorough and rounded high school education and that they will be prepared for their future educational endeavors.