

Jill Boeschstein – IB Coordinator (Beaverton)

Testimony in support of HB 4137:

I would like to submit this written testimony in support of House Bill 4137, which proposes allowing students in Oregon fulfill their high school graduation requirements through successful completion of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program. In our rapidly changing world, providing more pathways to graduation could enable more students to choose a pathway that prepares them for post-secondary learning and employment.

As an internationally recognized, rigorous and *balanced* course of study, the IB Diploma Program develops students' knowledge and critical thinking skills in core subjects (e.g., English, Mathematics, History and Social Science, Science, World Languages and Arts.) The approaches to learning that emphasize inquiry, writing, speaking and collaboration skills across all IB subjects also develop essential capacities our students need to adapt as the world continues to shift. High school students who successfully complete the IB Diploma Program are awarded an IB Diploma, which includes the following requirements:

- a rigorous course of study over their junior and senior years that includes college level preparatory courses from every academic discipline (English, Math, Social Science, Science, World Language and the Arts)
- successful completion of IB Exams in these six subject areas, which are scored by outside evaluators, much like AP exams are scored by the College Board. Each IB subject has multiple (3-4) assessment components/exams that require depth of knowledge in order to succeed.
- the completion of a service project
- a 4000-word independent research paper in a subject and topic of their choosing.

The comprehensive nature of the IB curriculum aligns seamlessly with the objectives of the Oregon Department of Education and is recognized around the world, with IB programs being taught at over 5,700 schools in 160 countries. In many countries, an IB Diploma is the credential upon which university admissions decisions are made. In my role as an IB Coordinator I have the privilege of seeing how the IB Diploma learning experience shapes knowledgeable, well-rounded young people who are well-prepared to tackle the challenges of post-secondary education and beyond. For students of color and/or those coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds, the impact may be even greater, based on research on the long-term outcomes and effects of the IB Diploma.

By recognizing the IB Diploma as equivalent to a regular high school diploma, HB 4137 would rightfully acknowledge the academic and personal growth achieved by IB students and improve access to this program for all Oregon Students.

Right now, one of the barriers limiting students' completion of the IB Diploma is due to scheduling conflicts and curriculum overlap between IB requirements and those of a traditional high school diploma. Students are often forced to make difficult choices between pursuing the IB Diploma and fulfilling their high school graduation requirements. This dilemma has led to instances where students opt out of the IB Diploma Program forgoing the opportunity for a demanding, globally recognized credential.

I urge you to support House Bill 4137 and take a proactive stance in **advancing educational equity** and excellence in Oregon. Thank you for considering my views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Jill Boeschstein
Portland, Oregon