

Submitter: Devon Lawson-McCourt
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: HB4137

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my fervent support for the proposed bill that mandates the State Board of Education to adopt rules allowing students who have completed an International Baccalaureate (IB) program to satisfy specific requirements for a high school diploma in Oregon. This legislation is a significant step forward in recognizing and valuing diverse educational experiences and achievements, ensuring that our educational system is inclusive, equitable, and reflective of the global standards of excellence.

The IB program is renowned for its rigorous academic standards, emphasis on students' personal development, and its commitment to creating a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. By recognizing the IB diploma as satisfying high school graduation requirements, we are not only honoring the hard work and achievement of students who have chosen this challenging path but also promoting a curriculum that prepares students for the complexities of the modern world. This approach aligns with our collective commitment to developing well-rounded individuals who are capable of critical thinking, empathy, and leadership in their communities and beyond.

Moreover, this bill is a step towards democratizing education by validating alternative educational pathways. It sends a powerful message that our state values diverse forms of academic excellence and is committed to adapting its policies to accommodate and celebrate this diversity. Such recognition is crucial for students who have opted for an IB education, often with the aim of broadening their perspectives and engaging deeply with global issues. It ensures that these students are not at a disadvantage when transitioning to further education or the workforce, purely because of their choice of educational program.

Furthermore, adopting this bill would serve as an incentive for more schools to offer the IB program, thereby expanding educational choices for students across Oregon. It would provide an opportunity for students from all backgrounds to engage with a curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking, research, and an understanding of global issues, preparing them for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

In conclusion, this legislation embodies a forward-thinking approach to education that values diversity, equity, and global preparedness. It is a testament to our state's commitment to creating an educational system that not only meets the varied needs

of its students but also prepares them to be active, informed, and compassionate global citizens. I urge you to support this bill, recognizing it as a vital step towards an inclusive and equitable education system that respects and celebrates diverse educational achievements.

Sincerely,

Devon Lawson