

SARA GELSER
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 16
CORVALLIS AND PHILOMATH



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 14, 2013

Chair Hass, Members of the Committee,

Under current law, a student may earn an extended diploma if they have demonstrated an inability to maintain grade level achievement due to a significant learning, instructional, or medical barrier. Additionally, a student must have participated in an alternate assessment beginning no later than grade six and lasting for two or more assessment cycles, or have an illness or injury that occurs after grade eight that changes the student's ability to achieve at grade level and that results in the student participating in alternate assessments.

HB 2193 eliminates the alternate assessment from the eligibility requirements for an extended diploma. Some students have been ineligible for an extended diploma because their IEP teams chose to exclude them from inappropriate assessments. Others may have attended private or homeschool in their early school years, making access to alternate assessments unavailable on the timeline required by statute. Students moving to Oregon from out of state face similar barriers. This has had the unfortunate consequence of preventing some otherwise eligible students from earning an extended diploma. Instead, they receive an "Alternative Certificate," which is the equivalent of a certificate of attendance. Because there are no standards for earning an Alternative Certificate, students are counted as non-completers.

Passage of HB 2193 will fix this error, give students access to the higher standards of the extended diploma and will help Oregon achieve its 40-40-20 goals.

This bill is a small but important technical change. HB 2193 passed unanimously through the House Education Committee and unanimously across the House floor. I hope it will find similar success in the Senate.

Sincerely,

Sara Gelsler
State Representative, HD 16 – Corvallis and Philomath.

