

Perreault Matt

From: Karen Litvin <klitvin@att.net>
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2017 9:34 PM
To: HED Exhibits
Subject: my gifted son

Importance: High

I came across this on the OATAG website. I have a 6-year-old gifted son who is entering first grade this fall. **There is no place in Salem for him to go to school** and be with children like him. I've shopped the private schools and can find something that still **doesn't work for his need for accelerated rate and level of learning with kids his own age**, but it will cost \$8,000-\$12,000. My other option is to **let him fall completely through the cracks** in public school. I could request an in-district transfer and was told by the TAG office that **no one can help me make a plan** for him. I have to call each school separately and talk to each principal. If I find one that can help, or cares, I can request a transfer and maybe get one. Why do I have to pay for education to make sure my child is cared for and nurtured the way he should be in school.

My child has a right to a quality, free education, like everyone else. Not given extra work to stay busy, not sent ahead with older kids, not pulled out and made "special." He deserves the same classrooms of similar kids with appropriate curriculum to reach his full potential. **The Portland ACCESS program should be replicated in EVERY district of the state of Oregon** immediately! This is the environment for these kids and having cohorts to go through high school and protect from bullying, etc. is amazing. I wish we had anything close to that in Salem. We have nothing.

This is so exhausting and frustrating. It should be exciting to go to first grade. Well, not if you're reading at 5th grade, spelling at 5th grade, and are a gifted kid with giftedness social and emotional needs to be accepted in the classroom. We operate on a bell curve. Everyone in the curve, fits the box of public school—well most. Those below have an exceptional level of special education supports: classrooms, teachers, resources. **Those above the curve are being sacrificed.** Our brightest and most gifted are falling through the cracks because no one is taking the time to learn what giftedness really is and what they need. Not all kids in TAG programs are gifted kids. They are different, they learn different, they see the world different, they think different, they act different. They are amazing and should be nurtured to their fullest potential. **They are our world leaders.** These are the people with the capacity to be world-changing. Imagine harnessing all of their potential.

I have not read this bill, but see that comments are due. **We desperately need to address this gap.** We are sacrificing one of our greatest resources to the status quo.