

Dear members of the Senate Education Committee:

Senate Bill 706 creates a pilot program to provide professional development and instructional resources to school districts through education service districts.

The Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted, a non-profit 501(c)3 statewide membership organization supports this bill and asks you to vote in favor.

However, we would also like to point out that the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) rules for state applications for federal grants under the Title II Professional Development program (section 2101, *Formula Grants to States*), requires that every state application for federal professional development funds shall include

"A description of how the State education agency will improve the skills of teachers, principals, or other school leaders in order to enable them to identify students with specific learning needs, particularly children with disabilities, English learners, students who are gifted and talented, and students with low literacy levels, and provide instruction based on the needs of such students."

The current draft plan that the Oregon Department of Education has prepared does not address the needs of gifted and talented learners.

We believe that the coordinator specialists provided to ESDs should include among their required areas of speciality the identification and instruction of children with special learning needs including TAG students.

We therefore request that if possible the bill be amended to this effect.

We are appending to our testimony relevant findings from the "Quiet Crisis" report submitted to the Oregon Legislative Assembly under SB 330 in 2012. This report pointed to a lack of state infrastructure throughout Oregon (especially rural Oregon) to support district efforts to provide appropriate TAG services.

We are also appending a statement of the standards for teachers who have Talented and Gifted students in their classrooms established by the National Association for Gifted children (NAGC).

In addition, we are attaching a copy of the ESSA summary prepared by the NAGC.

Sincerely yours,

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From "The Quiet Crisis in Talented and Gifted Education in the State of Oregon, Report to the Interim Legislative Education Committees, October 1, 2010.

Findings related to the Charge in Item ?A? Instruction and Services

"Districts are struggling to comply with the state Talented and Gifted Education Mandate.

Services do not adequately reflect the goals envisioned by the TAG Mandate of 1987. . .

Services are inconsistently delivered across the state.

The services provided do not necessarily reflect the best practice programming (instruction and services) for TAG students. . . .

Teachers who are tasked with delivering TAG instruction lack access to professional development to improve their craft in appropriate instruction for TAG students in their classrooms. . . .

The lack of statewide infrastructure about TAG does not support district to implement appropriate TAG services.

Districts attempt to maintain a commitment to these learners despite the lack of state funding. . . ."

NAGC: Knowledge and Skill Standards in Gifted Education for All Teachers

"It is critical that all teachers are able to recognize a high-ability student who may need more depth and complexity in instruction or be referred for further assessment and services.

NAGC has developed the standards for use in general educator preparation programs as well as for training all teachers already in the classroom. These knowledge and skill standards present the primary understanding of the issues, learning differences, and strategies that all teachers should possess. The standards were drawn from the larger set of 2013 NAGC-CEC Gifted Education Teacher Preparation Standards.

All teachers should be able to:

- recognize the learning differences, developmental milestones, and cognitive/affective characteristics of gifted and talented students, including those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and identify their related academic and social-emotional needs;
- design appropriate learning and performance modifications for individuals with gifts and

talents that enhance creativity, acceleration, depth and complexity in academic subject matter and specialized domains; and
-- select, adapt, and use a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance the learning of gifted and talented students."

<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/national-standards-gifted-and-talented-education/knowledge-and>