



Testimony submitted to the Senate Education Committee, February 20, 2024
Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted (OATAG)

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Education Committee

OATAG supports HB 4137 because we believe that the International Baccalaureate diploma represents a high level of student achievement. This bill removes unnecessary roadblocks to student success.

However, we also hope that in future you will support *and fund* ways to make advanced learning opportunities such as the IB program available to *every* Oregon student.

Today we have large disparities in access among districts based on geography, income, and ethnicity, and even from school to school in our larger districts. For example, most Portland students do not have access to IB classes.

Students need appropriate services long before the final two years of High School to be prepared for advanced programs, but according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Oregon trails other states in the proportion of students at the “advanced” level in both math and reading, in both fourth and eighth grade.

Our TAG mandate would offer one effective pathway to identify and serve students in need of advanced instruction at every age if it were adequately funded.

For students at all grade levels, a lack of access to accelerated learning hurts achievement, attendance, discipline, and engagement.

Increasing access to advanced instruction for *all* students would support our economic development and begin to reverse decades of neglect for our hard-working, ambitious, and capable children.

Sincerely yours,

Margaret DeLacy
President
Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted