Celia Baculi

386 Rural Avenue SE

Salem, OR 97302

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My name is Celia Baculi and I am the mother of two TAG sons and a bilingual tutor and mentor. I am writing today to urge the Oregon School Funding Task Force to include TAG students in the Oregon education funding formula.

Being identified Talented and Gifted should be a great achievement and the beginning of an enriched or accelerated path of study to take advantage of the faster learning speed of TAG kids. Instead, TAG identification is most often the end of any process. A child is given a mandated label with no plan or intention to develop their potential in any way beyond that label.

Including TAG students in the education funding formula would make having TAG students a positive rather than a negative. TAG students currently represent extra paperwork in the form of “TAG Instructional Plans” (which many times are inaccurate and inadequate). Schools are sometimes monitored as to the percentage of TAG students identified at their sites and questioned if the percentage seems “too high”.

Teachers are not trained in how to work with TAG kids and differentiate while keeping them engaged and learning in their classroom group. In Salem-Keizer we are told that our child will be taught according to an “in-class model”. I have come to learn as a parent that the “in-class model” means “pray for a good teacher”.

Wouldn’t it be great if TAG students were welcomed and celebrated? If schools and teachers could be excited about how to use a little extra funding because they have some TAG kids?

TAG students who are not allowed to learn at their rate and level manifest frustration, rage and/or apathy. The costs of ignoring our most able students are extremely high and even account for part of our dropout rate. If Oregon wants to achieve 40-40-20, we need to be working on the top 5 or 10!

The cost of not having the doctors and engineers that Oregon needs is even higher. We routinely import technical and professional talent that we should be training here at home. We are unable to staff many medical and technical job openings, slowing our economic growth and straining our ability to provide good medical care.

Sincerely yours,

Celia Baculi

Mom to Noah (13) and Aaron (10)

Board Member, Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted

Past President, Salem-Keizer Title I Parent Advisory Committee

Past member, Salem-Keizer TAG Advisory Committee