

Kelly Dibble  
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Stamford, CT

**RE: Written Testimony in Support of S.B. No 1055 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING  
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**

For Joint Committee on Education Public Hearing, March 11, 2015

To the education committee:

I am the enrichment teacher for two schools in Stamford. I teach at the two lowest achieving schools in the district, which are two of the lowest in the state. My job is funded by the Alliance Grant. I am the only enrichment teacher for the district. Since I started teaching five years ago I have noticed a lot of things about teaching in an urban school. There are many students who are leaving the Stamford school system because they are not receiving the enrichment that they need. Almost all of our funds, teachers, resources, and curriculum is directed at the students who do not “meet proficiency” for their grade level. We have a lot of pressure on us to raise the scores of the students who are below grade level. As an enrichment teacher for the upper grades, I have noticed some common behaviors of the gifted children at my two schools. These children have little intrinsic motivation to do well in school. By the time they are in fifth grade they are so used to completing work quickly that they are handing in assignments with very poor work quality. They have been so bored in classes going over information that they already know that they have disengaged completely. These are both learned behaviors. They also do not know how to react when an assignment is challenging because they have never faced difficulty in their learning. Throughout my five years in the system, I have never seen a child identified for their gifted ability or talent. Stamford is not the only district, though. 34% of Connecticut's school districts do not report identifying any gifted and talented students, in violation of CGA statutes Section 10-76d. Many of these children are becoming behavior problems or completely disengaged in school. To me, this is a terrible thing to watch, as these gifted children hold the future in their hands. It is these children that will grow up to be the next Bill Gates, and we are ignoring them in pursuit of raising the test scores for the intervention students. We cannot afford to lose these children. These children and more will continue to be overlooked unless S.B. No. 1055 is passed, which makes someone in the Department of Education responsible for the identification and coordination of g/t services in every district. We are asking for a shifting of current resources, therefore this bill places no additional cost burden on the state budget.