

Laurie Brannigan  
Westport, CT.

March 13, 2015

RE: Written testimony in support of the S.B. No 1055 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING  
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

Education Committee,

I support S.B. No 1055 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS. Please make Connecticut a place where every child can learn something new every day! We need this! My son, now in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, has been in the gifted program in Westport since grade 2. While there is always room for improvement, it has been a great place for him to grow and learn in a comfortable, nurturing environment with like-minded children. He never feels embarrassed or shy to share his ideas. His mind is able to explore in ways it doesn't in the traditional classroom where there is a rigid structure to assignments. This has helped him build confidence and learn to his greatest abilities. All gifted children should have these opportunities to grow to their potential. Here are a few more reasons:

- 34% of Connecticut's school districts do not report identifying any gifted and talented students, in violation of CGA statutes Section 10-76d.
- Connecticut is one of just five states with no one in state government assigned to the coordination of gifted and talented identification and services in public schools. The others are Michigan, Idaho, Rhode Island and Vermont.
- 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.
- Because we are asking for a shifting of current resources, this bill places no additional cost burden on the state budget.
- Every child in Connecticut deserves an education that is suitable to his or her needs.
- Best practices in gifted education include instructional strategies that have been proven to raise the achievement of ALL students.
- Providing for the needs of gifted and talented students is an investment we cannot afford NOT to make.

Sincerely,

Laurie Brannigan