

Testimony for S.B. 1055

Dear Legislators,

My name is Stephanie Heisler of Milford, and I am the parent of a 17-year-old child who was identified as gifted in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade through the public school system in Milford, CT. I support Senate Bill No. 1055 (Raised) An Act Concerning Gifted and Talented Students.

My daughter was a part of the G/T curriculum in 4<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and it was a beneficial experience for her both socially and intellectually. Being a part of this curriculum gave her a chance to meet and work with students who were just like her. It allowed her to explore areas of interest to her – in 7<sup>th</sup> grade she did a project on dolphins, using Mystic Aquarium as a resource for her research.

We are lucky enough to live in a community with an active Gifted / Talented program in our public school. We also have a townwide parent PTA for Gifted and Talented Students, called the Milford Association for Gifted Education (MAGE) PTA. MAGE PTA holds a major fundraiser for the G/T program in the schools. But not every community is as lucky as Milford's. Every gifted child in every community in Connecticut should have an equal chance at learning something new every day in the classroom, no matter where he/she lives. Having one SDE employee dedicated to providing information and assistance to local and regional boards of education regarding services to gifted and talented children will go a long way toward eliminating the disparity of education opportunity in all communities. I support the examination of best practices on addressing the intellectual, social and emotional needs of G/T students, and extending and advancing curriculum materials to provide adequate instruction.

Thank you!