



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 1748</b>		DATE: <b>1/15/2026</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Elementary and Secondary Education</b>			
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ALEXANDER WILEY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/14/2026 10:11 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

**Gifted education is important to all of Missouri. Since the state requires all students to get educational services, gifted education should be a priority. It is a disservice to Missouri to not provide services for gifted students because we will all benefit through generations from their contribution to society.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>ASHLEY HARMON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/14/2026 11:32 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

As a working parent/MO tax payer, I appreciated knowing that a portion of what I am required to pay into my school district will be used to support my daughter's strengths, not only the weaknesses unfortunately often present in my community. My daughter is highly sensitive and highly intelligent, who without Gifted and Talented Educational Services would not thrive in an eight hour school day. I greatly appreciate the support and extra teaching my daughter receives in this program, without it, we would be forced to make other educational choices for our family, i.e. homeschool or private learning.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>BETH WINTON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 12:00 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>CHRISTINA LANDBURG</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/14/2026 8:13 AM</b>	

**THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.**

As both a gifted education teacher and a parent, I strongly support House Bill 1748 and its inclusion of gifted education students in Missouri’s school funding formula.

In my professional experience, gifted education programs are often expected to provide specialized instruction, materials, and trained personnel without funding structures that reflect the true cost of those services. Defining a clear “gifted education pupil count” tied to students who are properly identified, enrolled, and actively participating in a State-approved gifted program brings much-needed clarity, accountability, and consistency to gifted education funding across districts.

I appreciate that this bill aligns funding with participation in State-approved programs, ensuring that resources are directed toward districts that are actively serving gifted learners. Including gifted students in the calculation for weighted average daily attendance and weighted membership—beginning July 1, 2027—acknowledges that gifted learners require differentiated instruction, curriculum adaptations, and educators with specialized training, just as other populations with unique learning needs do.

As a parent, I know that strong gifted programming cannot exist without adequate and sustainable funding. When gifted services are underfunded, opportunities shrink, identification is delayed, and students’ academic and social-emotional needs go unmet. This bill helps ensure districts can maintain and expand high-quality programming rather than treating gifted education as an optional or expendable service.

House Bill 1748 represents an important step toward recognizing gifted education as an essential component of a comprehensive public education system. By providing a weighted funding mechanism tied to verified participation, this bill supports equity, program quality, and long-term success for gifted students across Missouri. I urge lawmakers to support its passage.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-600-6018</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>MISSOURI EQUITY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>PO BOX 1352</b>			
CITY: <b>ST. CHARLES</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63302</b>
EMAIL: <b>dlb@missouriequity.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 11:18 AM</b>	

**THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.**

**The Missouri Equity Education Partnership (MOEEP) supports this bill because it recognizes the intellectual diversity of students and expands inclusion.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 11:57 AM</b>
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**As gifted student who was from an era when gifted education wasn't a thing, a parent who raised an identified gifted child, and a teacher who saw kids benefit from the programs as well as those who were missed, I believe in gifted education. Our budget shows our priorities. Please make this a priority.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>HEATHER R VAN OTTERLOO</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 12:30 PM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

Funding for gifted programs is crucial because these programs aim to develop high-ability students' potential for future innovation, support their unique learning needs (which standard classes often miss), prevent boredom and disruptive behavior, and foster critical thinking. These classes benefit society by cultivating future leaders, scientists, and innovators, while also closing achievement gaps for underserved gifted learners. Without proper funding, these students may stagnate, leading to unrealized talent and reduced national competitiveness.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>HEATHER TOMICICH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 8:10 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

I am writing in support of HB 1748. This bill is very important as the gifted/talented population is underserved. This population of students needs to have challenge, rigor and a way to explore their talents and gifts. These are the students who we love to recognize for getting high ACT scores, college scholarships, high AP scores; the list is extensive. The gifted programs should be able to have a weight for the daily attendance. As a Gifted Education Specialist of 26 years, I have seen the benefits that gifted/talented students have gained from these programs. I have former students who come back who reaffirm that these gifted classes/programs were extremely beneficial to the growth of their academic careers. One example is my former student is currently attending MIT to get his PHD on a full -scholarship. These students are out changing the world and we, as a legislature, should be in support of bills to help this population of students.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>HEATHER TOMICICH</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>636-734-4790</b>
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>GIFTED ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI</b>		TITLE: <b>EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT</b>
ADDRESS: <b>340 MEADOW GROVE CT</b>		
CITY: <b>SAINT PETERS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>
		ZIP: <b>63304</b>
EMAIL: <b>heather.tomicich.gam@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 8:53 AM</b>

**THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.**

I am writing in support of HB 1748. This bill is very important as the gifted/talented population is underserved. This population of students needs to have challenge, rigor and a way to explore their talents and gifts. These are the students who we love to recognize for getting high ACT scores, college scholarships, high AP scores; the list is extensive. The Missouri gifted programs should be able to have a weight for daily attendance. As a Gifted Education Specialist of 26 years, I have seen the benefits that gifted/talented students have gained from these programs. I have former students who come back who reaffirm that these gifted classes/programs were extremely beneficial to the growth of their academic careers. These students are out changing the world and we, as a legislature, should be in support of bills to help this population of students. The Gifted Association of Missouri and all it's members (students, teachers, parents) are in support of HB 1748.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JENNIFER M BLANK</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/14/2026 8:29 PM</b>	

**THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.**

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1748 introduced by Representative Scott Miller, which takes an important and necessary step toward ensuring that Missouri’s gifted students receive the educational opportunities they need to thrive.

HB 1748 appropriately recognizes that gifted education requires resources beyond those provided through standard per-pupil funding. Gifted learners are a diverse population whose educational needs extend above and beyond typical grade-level instruction. High-quality gifted programming often includes advanced curriculum, specialized instructional strategies, social-emotional supports, trained educators, and individualized learning pathways. These services require additional staffing, materials, professional learning, and program infrastructure, all of which come at a greater cost than general education alone.

For purposes of school funding, HB 1748 defines the “gifted education pupil count” as the number of pupils who qualify as gifted, as gifted children are defined in Section 162.675, RSMo, and who are enrolled in and have participated in a State-approved gifted education program by June 1 of the immediately preceding school year. This clear and responsible definition ensures accountability while accurately reflecting districts’ service commitments to gifted learners.

Beginning July 1, 2027, the bill further strengthens support for gifted education by including gifted students in the calculation of weighted average daily attendance and weighted membership, using a weighting factor of six-tenths multiplied by the district’s gifted education pupil count. This approach acknowledges that gifted education is not an add-on or enrichment, but a specialized educational service that requires sustained investment to be effective.

Missouri has long recognized gifted students as a population with unique educational needs. HB 1748 aligns funding with that recognition by providing districts with a mechanism to better support advanced learning, talent development, and social-emotional growth for these students—without diverting resources from other learners.

I urge you to support HB 1748 and its thoughtful, fiscally responsible approach to funding gifted education. Investing in gifted learners strengthens Missouri’s future workforce, innovation capacity, and civic leadership, while ensuring that all students are appropriately challenged and supported.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>KYNA IMAN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-651-1185</b>
REPRESENTING: <b>GIFTED ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI</b>		TITLE:
ADDRESS: <b>P.O. BOX 1483</b>		
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>
		ZIP: <b>65102</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 12:00 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MEREDITH WISNIEWSKI</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 6:59 AM</b>	

**THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.**

I am writing in support of HB 1748, which appropriately recognizes a designation of resources for gifted learners in our state. Gifted students are a diverse population whose educational needs extend above and beyond typical grade-level instruction. High-quality gifted programming often includes advanced curriculum, specialized instructional strategies, social-emotional supports, trained educators, and individualized learning pathways. These services require additional staffing, materials, professional learning, and program infrastructure -- all of which come at a greater cost than general education alone.

For purposes of school funding, HB 1748 also defines the “gifted education pupil count”, which recognizes our state mandate for serving gifted learners; to fully serve this mandate requires the ability to fund necessary and specific resources. Supporting the language in this bill ensures accountability while accurately reflecting districts’ service commitments to gifted learners. Gifted education is not enrichment, but a specialized educational intervention that requires sustained investment to be effective. Support of this bill is an understanding of the needs of gifted students, which would also show commitment to investing in Missouri s future.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Meredith Wisniewski  
 Springfield, Missouri  
 Gifted Association of Missouri



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MICHAEL HARRIS</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>615-202-3579</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>407 S. 6TH ST.</b>			
CITY: <b>COLUMBIA</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65203</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 12:00 AM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MICHAEL ZEITER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 8:09 AM</b>	

**THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.**

House Bill 1748 addresses an equally important issue: funding. Prior to the Missouri Foundation Formula adopted in 2006, the state explicitly allocated funds for gifted education. When gifted students were excluded from the weighted funding formula, districts were left without clear guidance, and many reallocated those funds elsewhere. As a result, gifted education was treated as optional, leading to widespread reductions or complete elimination of services across Missouri. The long-term impact has been a significant decline in both the quality and availability of gifted programming statewide.

Including gifted students in the weighted funding formula acknowledges that these students have distinct educational needs and deserve appropriate support just like other student subgroups. These bills together would restore fairness, improve educational outcomes, and reaffirm Missouri's commitment to identifying and nurturing student potential early. For families like mine, and for countless students whose talents may otherwise go unrecognized, these bills are not optional... they are essential.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MIKE LODEWEGEN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-638-2692</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MO COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>3550 AMAZONAS</b>			
CITY: <b>JC</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65109</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 12:00 AM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>OTTO FAJEN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-634-3202</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI NEA</b>		TITLE: <b>DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE POLICY</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>1810 E. ELM ST.</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL: <b>otto.fajen@mnea.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/15/2026 10:35 AM</b>	
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The Association believes educational programs and services for gifted and talented students must be supported by federal and state funding.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>ROBIN D BLAIR</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/14/2026 11:51 AM</b>
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**As a Clinical Psychologist and a parent of a child in a gifted program and one I would like to be tested for a gifted program, I strongly support this effort to include gifted students in the state's weighted funding formula.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>SARAH BERRY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>1/14/2026 3:16 PM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

**Chair and Members of the Committee:**

I oppose HB 1757 and HB 1748 as drafted, particularly when considered together.

HB 1757 mandates universal gifted screening while granting school districts broad discretion and explicit immunity from liability for identification decisions. HB 1748 then ties state funding directly to the number of students identified and enrolled in gifted programs.

Together, these bills create a closed system in which the same entities control identification, receive increased funding based on enrollment, and are shielded from accountability. There are no statutory requirements for independent oversight, external audits, enhanced parental consent, or enforceable limits on program scope.

When authority, financial incentive, and immunity are combined without safeguards, the risk is structural, not theoretical.

Additionally, the fact that multiple bills expanding identification authority, funding incentives, and reduced accountability are advancing simultaneously raises reasonable concerns about the cumulative policy effect. Major shifts of this nature warrant heightened scrutiny, not accelerated passage.

Until clear protections and oversight mechanisms are added, these bills should not advance.