

Dear Education Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs and Ranking Members:

I am writing to ask that you please support Bill HB.6501 raised by the education committee:

"That section 10-76ff is amended to require that each local and regional school board of education shall ensure that evaluations and determinations of eligibility under this section are carried out promptly and are not delayed while a child undergoes interventions under the Connecticut response to intervention program."

I have a personal and painful reality to share with all of you. I am writing this to pay it forward so that no other family has to go through this for their child.

I have a son who is in second grade for the second time. Misinterpretation of the tiers of SRBI resulted that appropriate services were delayed well over a year. District testing did not show a delay in reading yet there was no progress in months and months. He was tested privately and diagnosed with a severe Learning Disability and below Kindergarten reading level at the end of first grade. SRBI intervention was never appropriately monitored, no data collected or implemented. No scientifically based program is required by law to be put in an IEP, leaving all instruction open to interpretation. No reading specialists were trained in ANY scientifically based, explicit, researched reading program. There were no solutions for his continued decline but more of the same - just for longer service hours. And a protracted fight for any data of any kind beyond regular ed DRA's 3x a year.

I have another child in first grade this year. SRBI was started in November of his Kindergarten year. As per the current law, we were not even notified that he was placed in SRBI!

We requested a PPT and 44 days later in the Spring of Kindergarten we had a PPT. District reviewed testing that showed a large discrepancy between performance and academic abilities. There was no explanation identified by their own admission. We hired a private educational evaluator who determined LD. Again, SRBI progress monitoring went "missing" for weeks. When we finally received notes - no monitored, data based decisions were possible from the information tracked.

Two children and years of time wasted by saying SRBI is being implemented at all as written which it is not without recourse. My kids have a right to learn to read. We hired lawyers, advocates, educational consultants, reading evaluators and tutors. Now they both have appropriate reading programs. Why does this happen?

How many times and in how many ways does "Early Intervention" have to be proved... it is the only solution. SRBI is only appropriate intervention if the

problem is pinpointed by accurate testing and remediated by trained reading teachers. Which just isn't happening. SRBI is a theoretical dissertation -- this process it just not used in public schools.

The purpose of this Bill is to not delay the evaluation of children indicating a disability as well as the identification of such children requiring special education. This is a goal I endorse and hope you will champion as well.

sincerely,

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