

My name is Thomas Rimkunas and I live in Seymour. I am 12 years old. I support SB 1054.

I found out I had dyslexia when I was in the middle of first grade. But I had to endure trauma through all of Kindergarten and half of First Grade, failing every spelling and reading test before I was finally able to get the help I needed. My parents sent me to a tutor. I saw Mr. Les at Dyslexia and ADHD Institute in Shelton for three years. Thanks to him and my other tutor Miss Diana, I was finally able to learn to read. It cost my parents a lot of money. They are still paying it off. But they had to do it because the reading interventions that they gave me in school were not the right ones. I was always taken out of class and missed completing projects. My regular teachers would get mad at me because I didn't know what was going on in class. But the truth was that I was always walking into the middle of a lecture or a project.

I also wish that I had been able to be tested for dyslexia before I started school. I think that all kids who have trouble with letters should be tested before kindergarten. If they have dyslexia

they should be able to get the help they need right away and not suffer the humiliation I did.

Another thing I want to mention is that kids with dyslexia are not stupid. We just learn differently. When we are given accommodations, teachers must make sure our work isn't dumbed down. That is why it is so important to teach all teachers what dyslexia is, and how to teach students who have it.

I am homeschooled now but when I was in public school, the teachers would often give me easier work because they thought I was stupid. I was very bored and unhappy. I don't want other kids to be made to feel stupid like I was. Thank you for listening.

Thomas Rimkunas, Seymour