

March 1, 2016

Testimony for SB 317: An Act Concerning Dyslexia

Representatives, Senators and Members of the Education Committee, I present written testimony on behalf of the students and educators of the State of Connecticut. While I support SB 317, An Act Concerning Dyslexia I am requesting an amendment that candidates seeking a remedial reading endorsement complete a graduate level program aligned with evidence-based practices and the IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading.

One class. **One** class? Would any of you amongst us choose to go to a physician who had **one** course in the diagnosis and treatment of illness?

Of course not! Yet, unlike the present healthcare system where one has the opportunity to choose a provider with a network, families of dyslexic children have no choice. They are unable to view one's credentials and determine the most expert teacher who will offer their dyslexic child the best course of treatment. One class is insufficient. Prospective teachers require more than one course.

I am a Connecticut-certified Reading and Language Arts Consultant currently servicing teachers across the state as a Literacy How mentor. I have spent 15 years post secondary education studying reading development, diagnosis and remediation of dyslexia and have learned first hand from numerous experts in the field. I have mentored countless teachers of reading across our state wo, like me, did not receive adequate training through their higher education programs in the diagnosis and remediation of children with dyslexia. **15 years** and I have yet to work myself out of a job. Teachers are hungry for the in-service training they did not receive through Connecticut's higher education programs. It takes time to learn the vast body of scientific knowledge associated with the diagnosis and treatment of dyslexia. Parents are desperate. I continue to receive pleas from parents for evidence-based tutoring services for their beloved dyslexic children for whom the public education system has failed.

We need to build the *most expert* teaching workforce Connecticut can offer.

This begins by requiring **more** than just one class. Let us offer a comprehensive series of courses, one in diagnosis, one in remediation using evidence-based methods proven to be effective and a supervised clinical experience just as *you* would expect of the physician treating *your* illness.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the amendment to Senate Bill 317.

Sincerely,

Margaret R. Balboni

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