

Dear Legislators,

Please accept this as our written testimony since we will not be testifying at the hearing. We are writing to support SB 317, An Act Concerning Dyslexia but are 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.

We are asking for you to adhere to the following:

- Comprehensive teacher preparation using evidence based curriculum and content (graduate level) MUST take place in our CT Institutions of Higher Education, regarding the literacy instruction for students with Dyslexia.
- Teacher preparation must align with evidence-based standards that are proven to be effective.
- IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards For Teachers of Reading should be aligned with the Remedial Reading (102) Endorsement.
- This bill calls for "a Course" in Dyslexia - NOT SUFFICIENT.

As an educational leader and professional within the field of professional learning in Connecticut, it is pivotal that teachers are provided with job-embedded on-going professional learning in regards to research based teaching and assessment strategies to meet the needs of students with dyslexia. Several educators are being evaluated in the current evaluation and support plan mandated by the Connecticut State Department of Education, who are demonstrating proficiency in meeting the needs of 80 percent of their student population. The 20 percent of the student population that they are struggling to make growth with include students with dyslexia, because they lack the training and ongoing support within their districts. These same educators took courses to be certified but that does not mean that they have the tools to meet the needs of the students from the districts that hired them. With the state department recently publishing Connecticut Standards of Professional Learning, one time learning (a course) does not align to the expectations within the standards.

As a parent it has been difficult to advocate for our son within the educational system, because of the limited knowledge and strategies demonstrated in meeting his needs as a students with dyslexia. We have had to offer several professional learning opportunities to the staff in order to help them meet our son's needs as well as invest in certified tutors to work with him outside of school. The skillset of the certified tutors have greatly improved his educational progress. It is one thing for us to have to support our son's educational journey, but it is another to have to also support the teacher's professional learning to meet our son's needs. Out of respect for our son and the "1 in 5" students with dyslexia who deserve equitable education, we ask you to support ongoing research and standards based professional learning and a comprehensive higher education program for all educators by granting this amendment.

From,
Scott and Amy Drowne
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