

dys-**LEXI**-a *Inspires...*

February 29, 2016

Re: SB-317 AN ACT CONCERNING DYSLEXIA - To require any person applying for a remedial reading, remedial language arts or reading consultant endorsement to have completed a course that includes instruction on dyslexia.

Senators, thank you for this opportunity to talk about dyslexia and the importance of teacher preparation at the graduate level. I had the honor to testify last year and I thank you for continuing to support our dyslexia cause.

My name is Sherryl Hauck and I am here with my daughter Lexi, my reason for testifying. She has inspired me to learn everything I can about dyslexia and to advocate so that she and other children can read without struggle.

We first learned of Lexi's dyslexia in her senior year of high school, two years ago, January 2014. Lexi was 17 years old with the reading fluency of a second grader. She did not have the ability to sound out words and memorized words to read. She is brilliant, courageous, is filled with determination and was an honors student achieving A & B grades throughout high school. She never gives up. If Lexi's disability had been caught early on, years of frustration could have been avoided, and remediation for her dyslexia could have begun in elementary school instead of the spring term of her senior year. Lexi continues tutoring today with the Orton Gillingham Approach and has made tremendous strides closing her ten year reading gap.



Lexi  
5 1/2 years  
August 2002  
Entering  
First Grade

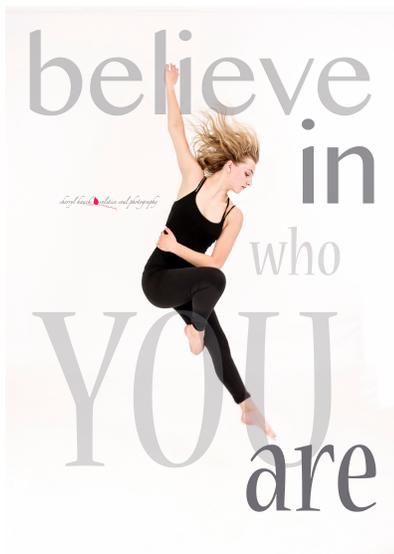
...when  
struggles in  
school  
started and  
when early  
detection/  
intervention  
could have  
been!

Lexi's story highlights why early recognition and remediation is paramount and why teacher preparation at the graduate level, aligned with evidence based standards, must be part of a comprehensive program in Connecticut institutions of higher education. The International Dyslexia

Association (IDA) clearly outlines literacy practices and standards for classroom teachers. These practices and standards are backed by decades of scientific research from the National Reading Panel (NRP.) Based on these systematic findings, along with evidence based literacy instruction for students with dyslexia, reading struggles can be resolved or minimized when reading is taught by a highly knowledgeable, skilled educator who uses a structured approach to teach reading. Lexi and I are witness that a qualified practitioner could have made all the difference in the school life of a dyslexic child.

A teacher educated about dyslexia can be the one person who saves a child and his/her family from years of frustration and anxiety. That teacher can play a pivotal role in changing the whole culture of a school.

There is a quote that makes me think of the dyslexic: "Sometimes it is the people who no one imagines anything of who do the things no one can imagine." Alan Turing, The Imitation Game. This quote brings me to think about the dyslexic constantly coming up against a "just try harder" attitude. We need educators to fully understand the different mind of the dyslexic, a right brained learner who responds to a multi sensory approach to learning. The right brain houses our creativity, where color and movement and emotion live. There is so much to know about dyslexia that cannot be taught in one course of study.



If teachers, at the onset of their careers, are prepared to teach dyslexics to read in the way they are wried to learn, and if teachers can empower dyslexics to believe in their differences, imagine the possibility of ideas that can be unleashed, ideas equal to those of dyslexics like Steve Jobs, Einstein, John Lennon, Richard Branson, our own governor and countless others. Connecticut must prepare teachers in institutions of higher education with NRP evidence based standards and IDA Knowledge and Practices.

Sherryl Hauck  
New Fairfield, CT

Lexi Hauck - 19 Years old  
This Fall 2016 Lexi will begin her sophomore year at The College of Fine Arts, University of Utah.  
She will be studying for a BFA in Modern Dance