

March 16, 2017

Education Committee  
2017 Legislative Session

On behalf of the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists [CASP], we agree with **Raised House Bill 7254 AN ACT REQUIRING SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS TO COMPLETE A PROGRAM OF STUDY IN EVIDENCE-BASED STRUCTURED LITERACY INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA.**

Dyslexia is a specific kind of learning disability that impacts an individual's ability to learn how to "decode" words despite having average to above average intelligence. School psychologists are trained individuals in the schools that have the knowledge and expertise of assessment procedures and research-based structures, strategies and methods that may identify and support students with dyslexia. Many special education teachers assess and work together with school psychologists to support students with evidence-based interventions to target their learning difficulties. Representing the most common learning disability, students with dyslexia make up approximately 20% of the school-aged population.

The bill raised will make special education teachers aware and knowledgeable of specific interventions for students with dyslexia. A student with dyslexia has weaknesses in the following areas: phonemic awareness, rapid retrieval of verbal-visual associations and naming abilities. By passing this special education teachers will learn specific interventions that target these areas of weakness in order to help a student read and access the general education curriculum. With a program of study in evidence-based structured literacy interventions for dyslexia, special educators should be able to do the following: a) have an awareness and knowledge of how dyslexia impacts a student's ability to learn, b) an understanding of how to recognize dyslexia and c) implement instruction that is systematic, explicit and evidence-based to meet the educational needs of students with dyslexia.

We hope that the committee will consider this testimony when making a final determination of this bill.

If the Committee has any questions please contact CASP President, Karla Vazquez at [knv.313@gmail.com](mailto:knv.313@gmail.com) or by phone at 203-545-8973. You may also contact Frances Aponte, CASP Legislative Liaison at [aponte.frances1@gmail.com](mailto:aponte.frances1@gmail.com) or by phone at 203-521-9790.

Respectfully submitted by,

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