

Amy Drowne

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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Amy Drowne, I live in Hanover, Connecticut. I fully support HB 7254, An Act Requiring Special Education Teachers to Complete a Program of Study in Evidence-Based Structured Literacy Interventions for Students with Dyslexia. I am writing this testimony in support of our nine-year-old son, Wess, who is a student with dyslexia and out of respect for the level of educator knowledge that he and all students deserve to see in the classroom to support their growth in literacy.

For three years, my husband and I have paid out of pocket for a tutor to provide direct explicit instruction to our son outside of school for two hours a week. You may ask, why? The answer is clear...our son has attended two different elementary schools due to a family move and in neither school, have they been able to provide the targeted instruction that my son needs. Let me be clear, it is not the will of these teachers to want to teach Wess, it is the "skill" of these teachers that deems them as not the most effective professional to be teaching my son the phonics instruction that he has consistently needed since first grade. Without having teachers learn evidence based literacy interventions in "Programs of Study", engage in practicums working with students with dyslexia, or supporting training for teachers, families will have to continually compensate for the system that has failed their child in regards to meeting his/her literacy needs. Higher education and educational systems need to truly dedicate their program requirements and professional learning to meeting the needs of students with dyslexia.

I have witnessed more students than I would want to admit be identified with dyslexia in high school because of a lack of understanding on the part of teacher and parent in effective ways to instruct students with dyslexia. It is the pre-service learning and the professional learning in the field that could minimize this failure to meet student needs. As parents look to teachers as partners in the learning experience of a child, the expertise and knowledge that the teacher possesses becomes a key factor and impact on the child's educational outcomes.

On behalf of Wess, please pass this act in hopes that he receives qualified and effective educators for the rest of his educational journey and we continue to support our educator's skillset in being able to meet the needs of all learners.

Sincerely,

Amy Drowne