

My name is Adam Glassman. I live in Orange, Connecticut. I fully support HB 7254, An Act Requiring Special Education Teachers to Complete a Program of Study in Evidence-Based Structured Literacy Intervention for students with dyslexia. I am a student at Amity Middle School. I am 13 years old and in seventh grade. I am dyslexic. In the summer before I entered fourth grade, I got a special teacher to help me with my reading and writing skills. Before that, school was always challenging. I had a hard time learning how to read and I hated writing. My worst years were fourth and fifth grade. My teachers didn't understand my disability and I would get in trouble for not finishing my work on time. The teachers thought when I advocated for myself I was being rude. They said I couldn't finish my work because of my behavior. It was like they thought I wanted to struggle and not complete my work. Who would want to fail? In fifth grade my teachers even put me on a behavior plan. Even my special education teacher didn't understand me. She didn't believe in dyslexia and she didn't help me at all. One of the paras even called me lazy. In sixth grade the teachers were much better but they still don't truly understand me. I got a new special education teacher. She was much better than my other special education teacher because she has some training about dyslexia. She seems to understand me more. She tried to help me and give me what I needed to succeed. Even though she understands dyslexia, she was not trained in the proper interventions for dyslexic students, like my tutor was. My tutor was trained in Orton Gillingham, a program to teach dyslexic children like me. I wish all schools had teachers trained in Orton Gillingham, so all dyslexic kids could get the proper help! This year I am in middle school and they took away my Orton Gillingham tutor. The teachers try to help me but they don't have the same training as my tutor. I can tell that the teacher doesn't plan lessons the same way my tutor did. It seems like I am always playing catch up. They are always one step ahead of me. If my teachers understood how to teach me and recognize my dyslexia in kindergarten, they could have helped me earlier. Please pass Bill Number 317, but include ongoing, quality training for all teachers. Please pass Bill HB 7254 which would require training for special education teachers. Please give dyslexic kids a chance to succeed!