

My name is Sara Goertel and I live in Darien, 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 have a third grade son with Dyslexia named Thomas. Dyslexia is not like other learning disabilities. There are research based, proven ways to rewire these children's brains with the correct instruction. These approaches, like the one we are using with my son, a multi-sensory, Orton-Gillingham, direct instruction based approach, do not work unless they are delivered by highly trained educators. The good news is that these methods are effective many types of learners. They benefit not only children with dyslexia, but those with other learning disabilities and even typical children. I have been trying to work with my district to get all of the K-3 teachers trained in the Orton-Gillingham or a similar approach. Training classroom teachers as well as special ed teachers and reading specialists is essential to improving the outcomes for dyslexic students. It will also greatly reduce the exorbitant costs of sending children to special schools like Windward and Eagle Hill when they ultimately fail in the schools. Dyslexia rumination does not need to be as costly as it is if the tools are in place for early intervention in elementary schools. Again, this is an entirely treatable condition. Children at Windward who get appropriate education in the early grades go on to do as well or better than their peers in middle and high school. In Connecticut all dyslexic children deserve teachers who know how to teach them appropriately. I beg you to support HB 7254.

Please not this is my written testimony and I will not be testifying at the hearing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sara Goertel