

March 3rd, 2025

Dear Chair Cwodsinski and Senate Education Policy Committee Members,

My name is Sarah Frenz, I attended school in Minneapolis's District and I live in Minneapolis, MN.

I am writing to you as a concerned dyslexic adult on behalf of the dyslexic students in Minnesota. I urge you to support the SF1842 that requires teachers to receive two hours of professional development on dyslexia for teacher licensure requirements.

I was diagnosed dyslexic in first grade and had multiple years of one-on-one tutoring in structured literacy using the Orton Gillingham method. Some kids do not get diagnosed right away though and try to blend in until middle school or later when they finally get diagnosed meaning multiple developmental years were wasted where interventions should have been taking place to improve literacy.

Additionally school is very stressful for the dyslexic students, especially when teachers and fellow classmates do not understand the needs and learning differences of students with dyslexia. Teachers knowing the signs and symptoms along with how dyslexia works would greatly improve literacy and the student experience for dyslexic students. All teachers knowing the signs of dyslexia would help get testing and diagnoses assessed sooner. This would mean that interventions could be put in place sooner. Having the ability to put students into academic programs that suit their needs to help students improve earlier matters. If I hadn't had the interventions I had, I would have been held back due to my dyslexia. Additionally teachers respecting accommodations matters. There are still teachers that are ignorant and that do not take academic accommodation needs assessed seriously at all levels of education in Minnesota due to their lack of awareness of dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

Dyslexic students will benefit when they have teachers who understand the difficulties that they have. Without teacher understanding, dyslexic students are blamed for their struggle, rather than being helped. I urge you to support this small step toward helping the 20% of students in our schools who are dyslexic.

Sincerely,
Sarah Frenz