

March 3, 2025

Dear Chair Cwodsinski and Senate Education Policy Committee Members,,

I am reaching out to seek your support regarding an important matter affecting educational resources for students with dyslexia. My granddaughter, Molly, was diagnosed with dyslexia during the 2019-2020 school year, following three years in a public preschool program provided by Independent School District 622.

Throughout her time in preschool, my daughter and son-in-law received consistent feedback from Molly's teachers indicating challenges with letter and sound recognition. Molly has shown reluctance to engage in activities such as singing and group participation involving poetry or rhyming. Despite their concerns about the possibility of dyslexia, they were repeatedly assured that children develop at their own pace and that there was no cause for concern. After three years of such responses, they decided to utilize their private health insurance for testing, hoping to identify any issues before kindergarten. The positive diagnosis brought relief, as it clarified her needs, but it also necessitated cooperation from the school and its educators.

Over the weekend, my daughter reached out to Molly's teachers via email, only to discover that they had been instructed not to respond, effectively rendering their communication unacknowledged. Throughout most of kindergarten, Molly did not receive any accommodations or modifications to support her learning. My daughter raised concerns regarding this lack of support, but was informed that Molly was not far behind her peers, so no additional assistance was provided. While Molly later qualified for an extended school year program, which offered her specialized instruction, it initially appeared that the school district was hesitant to implement such measures during the regular school year. This concern only came to light after my daughter engaged in difficult conversations with school district personnel. It became evident that many teachers lacked sufficient knowledge about dyslexia and the necessity of timely intervention following diagnosis.

It is crucial that all students in Minnesota have access to high-quality literacy instruction based on the science of reading. The importance of investing in our educators and students cannot be overstated, as they represent the future of our community. I kindly urge you to lend your support in advocating for the passage of bill #SF 1842.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,
Susan M. Erickson
School District 622