

Testimony for Public Hearing
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
House Bill # 1131



Good morning Chairman and members of the Education Committee;

My name is Kari Bucholz, Founder and Executive Director of Haley's Hope. Haley's Hope is a comprehensive dyslexia learning center located in West Fargo; however, we provide services to the entire state of North Dakota.

Thank you for the opportunity to address House Bill #1131...

As a mom of a profoundly dyslexic son, who has dedicated the past 15 years studying dyslexia and language based learning disabilities, I had always hoped North Dakota could start to say the word **dyslexia**, **believe** it is real, and work on **discovering how to help students** across our state who struggle with this learning style. That happened with the passing last session of HB 1461.

I have been working with the school districts granted funds through HB 1461 to research dyslexia in our State. It has been exciting, yet still frustrating. Exciting that many great teachers and administrators are working to understand and learn how to help these particular students, but frustrating that again, they are being asked to accomplish goals they are not qualified to do.

I have received calls about how to identify students, what assessments to implement, what programs to use as interventions. I have talked to special-ed personal who now have some good teaching tools, but don't know how, when, or why they are using them. Some have our students in two or more programs at the same time- an extremely frustrating situation for each child. Don't get me wrong, I am happy to help, but my limited communication with these well intended individuals, who are just trying to understand what they were asked to do, is extremely inefficient and inadequate.

The knowledge required to answer these questions to guide successful outcomes take years of education. Like any specialty area; in business, health care, or academics; dedication to studying researched based information is critical.

Dyslexia is the most misunderstood learning disability in our nation, not just in North Dakota. Truly understanding dyslexia, or language based learning disabilities, takes dedication and time.



The State of North Dakota needs to invest in the proper training and certification for dyslexia specialists in order to truly move our state forward in the area of effective literacy instruction.

I have provided a lengthy list of training programs recommend by the International Dyslexia Association. These trainings are invaluable to understanding what dyslexia is, how to properly identify it, and when and what interventions are appropriate.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to stand for any questions.

Kari Bucholz

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