

ENABLING PARTNERSHIPS IN DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTION
HB 1306 - SUPPORT Testimony

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Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for the record, my name is Kayla Effertz Kleven and I am here in support of HB 1306.

Vouchers -- just the word makes many in the room uncomfortable. It even makes the hairs on the back of my neck go up. I'm a public school supporter, but at this juncture of the road, I can tell you first hand that 100% of our public schools are not equipped to provide support and assistance to students with dyslexia. Let's crosswalk this idea to schools who don't have enough kids in an area to justify a bus for transportation in a specific area--we allow for "transportation grants" where families are reimbursed for the mileage they drive to get their child to school. In essence, that program is a transportation voucher. This makes economical sense--when there is not the economy of students to put a bus route in place, a reimbursement happens for the family. Why wouldn't we do the same for kids with a learning disability? Furthermore, I would ask what is the point of funding transportation if when the student arrives, they aren't able to learn?

Progress has been made and I applaud that hard work, however even if we could implement professional development, universal screeners or even add more teachers to the system, we won't be ready this fall to fully address the needs. We are in need of **partnerships** of qualified and vetted individuals to get kids and families the assistance they need to simply learn.

And as the word voucher makes me queasy, even more uncomfortable is the idea that **only the kids who have families with means are the ones who are getting assistance**. Assistance can mean tutoring, but it also means finding tools to help learn differently, because people with dyslexia learn differently. Supports for each child is different throughout the evolution of the child's learning. For our example, a 3D printed keyboard guide was created for my stepson that he no longer needs. It was helpful. However, not every school has a 3D printer or a tech coordinator as aggressive as we had to just find solutions any way possible. It took her roughly 2-3 tries to figure out how to get it to fit on the laptop--is that the best use of her time? Having resources available to purchase these tools gets us focused back on the mission--educating.

I am strongly in support of lines 15 and 16 of the current bill. *"A school district shall permit private tutors to provide tutoring services on school premises."*

Our family takes my stepson to private tutoring 2 times per week. We were able to successfully work with the school to take him out during the same time as when his reading support time was scheduled, being very clear to not confuse instruction but simply replace with a different type of

instruction that the school was not able to offer at the time we started. And believe me, I'm the first one to say, kids are adaptable, but it's clear to me the **additional anxiety and stress that it causes my 8th grader when we leave and come back to the building**. Nevermind the embarrassment when there's a substitute teacher and he needs to argue in front of the class why he is excused to leave. When he misses the first 5 minutes of a class, he has missed the oral instructions for the day and plays catch up the entire class period.

I would normally advocate that this is a local decision, however after the past year it's been proven to our family that there is resistance for allowing outside educational entities in the public school--even with the suggestion of proper background and an RFP process for approved providers. The reasons I'm given, in writing, "**we don't have precedence**", "**we don't have time to establish protocols.**" I was even given the initial solution of having to pay for space, but when I asked "How much", the conversation ended abruptly. It's exceptionally clear that in my circumstance, enabling language is required to remove the disruptions for the kids.

Thank you for your time, and I will take any questions you may have.