

Decoding Dyslexia Maryland



Testimony, HB 763: A Task Force to Study the Effectiveness of Teacher Education Program in the instruction of Reading Support

My name is Laura Schultz and I am a member of Decoding Dyslexia Maryland, a grassroots movement of parents, teachers and related professionals who see HB 763 as a chance to improve reading equity for Maryland students.

Decoding Dyslexia Maryland offers parent support groups across the state for families of students with reading difficulties like dyslexia. We hear the same story over and over: intelligent students are not learning to read, the school doesn't have anyone trained to provide appropriate, evidence-based instruction and the parents/students are forced to find instruction outside of the school system.

In every classroom in this state, there is a teacher who is concerned about an intelligent student who just can't learn to read. Teachers ask us: "What can I do to help this student learn?" They are hungry for information about reading differences like dyslexia, which, through no fault of their own, **they were not taught during their university training.**

HB 763 is the first step to address the inequity and lack of appropriate instruction that exists in our public school system. All students should have access to teachers well versed in Structured Literacy which describes highly organized, carefully sequenced, repetitive, and cumulative instruction of the basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students systematically and explicitly learn the structure and use of sounds, syllables, words, sentences, and written discourse. For more information about what teachers of reading should know: <http://eida.org/knowledge-and-practices/>

Decoding Dyslexia Maryland



Decoding Dyslexia Maryland is part of a 50-state movement – since its formation in 2012, 17 states have introduced and enacted dyslexia legislation. Overall, 21 states have a dyslexia law on the books. In 2014 alone, 6 states enacted dyslexia legislation and in 2015, 18 states introduced dyslexia and reading legislation. The numbers tell us that something is not right and part of the solution is legislative.

Thank you Madame Chairman and the Committee for your consideration of this bill and a step toward literacy equity for all students.

Decoding Dyslexia Maryland: www.decodingdyslexiamd.weebly.com

DecodingDyslexiaMD@gmail.com