



Dear IDA-GA friends,

This past weekend, the AJC ran an article about the efforts of the Senate Study Committee on Dyslexia: <https://www.ajc.com/news/local-education/georgia-senate-committee-hopes-help-students-with-dyslexia/pCbVPUF7jG4MZJWsN6HWG>

Numerous people have asked what they can do to support these efforts. Here's some information I've gathered that may be helpful:

- Email Donna Nealey at donna.nealey@senate.ga.gov with thoughts and suggestions. She will distribute to the Senate Study Committee on Dyslexia. The next committee meeting is on Dec. 12 at which time the committee will be drafting the legislation -- so time is of the essence.
- Look for and follow the International Dyslexia Association Georgia Branch Facebook and Decoding Dyslexia Georgia pages; find the AJC article posted near the top, and then “like” and “share” the posts. Click on it to read as well. (The more times the article is read, commented on, liked and shared the more people will see it and the more likely the AJC will write additional articles about the legislation.)
- Email your local legislators asking for their support of the bill once it has been finalized (before end of year... we'll try to keep you posted on our Facebook pages and the IDA-GA website: ga.DyslexiaIDA.org). You can find your local legislators by going to: <https://www.mvp.sos.ga.gov/MVP/mvp.do>

With Fran Millar losing his reelection bid, we're not sure who will carry the legislation forward, but Senators Gloria Butler and Matt Brass are also on the committee. Our own former IDA-GA board member, Leslie Stuart, has been doing a phenomenal job as part of the committee and is in agreement with the following.

Things you can ask for when you email the committee and legislators (our IDA-GA wish list):

1. Universal screening for dyslexia for all students in Pre-K, Kindergarten and 1st grade
2. Dyslexia screening for at-risk students who are underperforming in grades 2 - 5. (Realistically, they need to do this for all underperforming students in all grades at this point.)
3. Comprehensive dyslexia testing for all students screened that show potential for dyslexia
4. Require all elementary schools have at minimum one SpecEd teacher trained and certified in a form of Structured Literacy that meets the Knowledge and Practice Standards of the IDA

5. Require all elementary school K-3 classroom teachers to take a 25-30 hour training course in Structured Literacy (within 2-3 years of passed legislation)
6. Provide adequate funding for schools to help meet these requirements
7. Require university system to require all early-elementary education majors to take a semester-long course in identifying dyslexia and Structured Literacy instruction
8. Require all university courses leading to a reading specialist degree to include extensive course work in identification of dyslexia and Structured Literacy instruction (See IDA's Center for Effective Reading Instruction for university guidelines)

Odds are we won't get anything this extensive in a first-round bill, but we can hope!

Of course, making your email personal is helpful, but not necessary.

Feel free to share this email with your friends, parents, and colleagues, and thank you again so much for helping move Georgia forward!

Until everyone can read,

Karen Huppertz
Georgia Branch President
The International Dyslexia Association

