

ALWAYS Be a Dyslexia Advocate!

Find your **Legislator** here: <https://openstates.org/ga/> In Georgia, the Legislature is in session for 40 days. It's a full-time, "part-time" job for legislators. When Session is done, do you stop communicating with your legislators? **NO**. FULL STOP. That's often when the work leading up to the next session takes place! (E.g., The Senate Study Committee on Dyslexia) If you have concerns that you want to share with your legislator about an issue, they are often better positioned to hear you/meet you/discuss in the off-season. Are your legislators going to be at local events? The local Labor Day Parade? That's another opportunity to reach out to them and take a minute to give them your one-minute elevator pitch. Here's where you **follow laws**: <https://legiscan.com/> Georgia's legislature works on a two year cycle, so if SB48 doesn't pass this session, we still have 2020 to keep the bill alive.

Have you been to your **Board of Education Meetings**? This is the first point of contact for many advocates. We need to be holding our BOE's accountable. Speak up! Here's an article about School Boards <https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/school-board-candidates/>

Do you know how to find the **State Education Code**? This is one of sticking points for parents. There's IDEA, the Federal Law, but there's also State Code that's supposed to "do more" than what the baseline is with the Federal Law. It's also IMPERATIVE that you know the Procedural Safeguards <https://adayinourshoes.com/procedural-safeguards/>

<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Documents/Sp%20Ed%20Rules/Revised%20160-4-7-%2009%20FINAL.pdf>

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Do you know where to find **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**? The Wrightslaw book Special Education Law has the law, but it's also available here: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/chapter-33/subchapter-I>

Are you engaged online? **Decoding Dyslexia** has chapters in every state and several Canadian provinces. Join a local group like Dyslexia Forsyth, Atlanta Dyslexia Parent Network or Cobb Dyslexia Network on Facebook. Or, better yet, join forces with other parents of Dyslexic kids you know and start your own if one doesn't exist in your area. You create the "closed group" and conversations can take place in that space. Developing outreach events can promote change in your area!

Ask your **PTA/PTO/Foundation/School Council** what they're doing to support getting **Structured Literacy** into your school. Your PTA/PTO needs to be aware of this issue. It goes beyond a week for Exceptional Students (though that's always an avenue to #saydyslexia in your school). **Georgia's reading scores for the 3rd Grade Milestones are dismal. 63% of GA 3rd Graders scored a 1 or 2 on the 2018 Milestones for ELA. That means that only 37% of GA 3rd graders are reading at grade level or above (3 or 4).** It's time to ask your school district leaders what their plan is to improve reading scores in your district. Here's where you look up your district's **Milestones scores**: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/Georgia-Milestones-2017-2018-Statewide-Scores.aspx>

