

I am an Intervention Specialist. I am also trained to give Orton-Gillingham and The Barton System interventions that help dyslexic kids get caught up to their peers. I sought out getting this specific training myself and paid over \$5000 in expenses out of my own pocket in order to further help my struggling students. However, I am not able to use any of these skills at my school since MN schools are not required at this point to provide these necessary services to their dyslexic student population.

Every day I work with dyslexic students in the lowest 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade literacy blocks. They are **struggling** to spell and write and will absolutely hit a wall with their reading in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. We need to give these students the appropriate remediation IN SCHOOL. Otherwise, these students, will fall into a cycle of failure and come to believe that they simply can't learn anything!

It is VERY common for dyslexic students to develop secondary behavioral and emotional issues. They begin to think they are stupid and they are ashamed that they can't learn and do what comes so easily to the other kids in their class. Some of them act out in class out of frustration and get labeled as a trouble-maker. Often times they are bullied, teased and face a horrible school experience. Labels become associated with them such as being lazy, unmotivated, not trying, doesn't want to work hard. NOTHING could be farther from the truth! These are the hardest working kids in the school trying to do the work expected of them and ultimately failing despite their efforts.

Seven years ago I worked with students that I didn't know at the time were dyslexic. Now I know why they were struggling with their reading and I realize I didn't give them the help they needed. I think of those kids every DAY, who are now in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I could've made a difference 7 years ago if I had been given the tools and resources to help these students.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for me to do my job and essentially "sit on my hands" as I see these students struggle. The emotional burden of watching this has me considering leaving a job I love because of the inability to help kids as they deserve.

I want a better school experience for these dyslexic students. They have a right to a fair and appropriate education in ALL our schools.... And right now, they are NOT getting the education they need.

Amy Diez/ Intervention Teacher  
Legislative District 43