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LEGISLATIVE PRESS RELEASE:

EDUCATION BILL INCLUDES PROVISIONS TO SUPPORT STRUGGLING READERS

(May 28 2019, Twin Cities and Rochester MN)

Historic legislation to help dyslexic and other struggling readers was included in the 2019 Education Omnibus bill. The Governor is expected to sign the bill.

Working in bi-partisan fashion, the House and Senate Education Conference Committee members agreed on two provisions supported by literacy advocates across the state.

WHAT WILL THE PROVISIONS DO?

- Starting July 1, 2020, **all public schools in Minnesota must screen any student in grades K -2 - who are not reading at grade level - for signs of dyslexia.** Schools must screen students in grades 3 or higher that are not reading at grade level for signs of dyslexia if another reason for reading failure has not been identified.



L-R: Rep. Heather Edelson, Sen. Carla Nelson, Rep. Jim Davnie, Rep. Cheryl Youakim.

Photo credit: Rep. Heather Edelson (@heather_edelson) shared via Twitter May 17, 2019

- Starting June 1, 2020, **teacher preparation programs** in Minnesota **must explicitly teach to future elementary school teachers the signs of dyslexia AND provide them instruction in evidence-based reading instruction** methods to teach reading.

Cindy Russell, Executive Director of The Reading Center says, “Districts already have to identify the number of students not reading at grade level. Screening those students using existing screening tools to identify students with characteristics of dyslexia will **get those students into interventions sooner**, and help districts match appropriate interventions to the student.”

Rachel Berger, President of Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota says passage of these provisions, “will significantly impact reading proficiency rates for all Minnesota students and will begin to **ensure equity and accessibility** within our educational environments for both educators and their students.”

Alissa Henrickson, President of the Upper Midwest Branch of the International Dyslexia Association says, “This will make students feel as though this disability is only a ‘difference’ and not something that will ever hold them back because they are given the right tools to succeed!”

The coalition extends a sincere thank you to **Education Chairs Sen. Carla Nelson (R-Rochester) and Rep. Jim Davnie (DFL-Minneapolis)**, as well as **Sen. Roger Chamberlain (R-Lino Lakes), Sen. Greg Clausen (DFL – Apple Valley), Rep. Cheryl Youakim (DFL-Hopkins) and Rep. Heather Edelson (DFL-Edina)** for their leadership on these issues this session.

ABOUT THE DYSLEXIA COALITION

Since 2013 Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota (DDMN) has been advocating for dyslexia related policy to improve student literacy outcomes. In 2018, DDMN formed a coalition of like-minded organizations to work jointly on public policy decisions related to literacy and dyslexia at the state legislature. The partnership includes four nonprofits: **Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota, Groves Academy, International Dyslexia Association - Upper Midwest Branch, The Reading Center / Dyslexia Institute of Minnesota**

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