

Good afternoon Chairman Wagner and members of the committee. My name is Heather Matteri and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am a parent of two children with dyslexia and a former teacher who received my Master's in Teaching from the University of Portland in 2001. I am here today to ask for teacher training programs administered by Oregon universities to include course-work in evidence-based, structured reading instruction that at least matches the scope, depth, and breadth of the Oregon Department of Education's approved teacher trainings in dyslexia.

The fact is, more than 50% of all Oregon 3rd graders are failing to read at grade level. This is not a dyslexia or special education problem. This is a general education problem that requires systematic change in our state. Structured-language coursework for all new teachers at the university level is essential for system-wide change.

When my daughter was diagnosed with dyslexia, I set out to learn as much as I could about this learning difference. I was surprised to find that as many as one in five students have dyslexia, and wondered why my Masters in Teaching program never addressed this common reading disability in a meaningful way. With minimal research, I discovered that in 1998, the National Reading Panel developed very clear guidelines for effective reading instruction endorsing a multi-sensory, structured approach. Upon learning that this evidence-based methodology would most definitely help my daughter learn to read proficiently, I immediately sought a credentialed private tutor and began paying for twice-weekly lessons. In the meantime, I was baffled as to why Oregon schools were not following these guidelines and even more frustrated that my Master's in Teaching program did not prepare me to help my daughter, or the struggling 6th-grade students I used to teach.

This fall, I began the process of renewing my teaching license, which requires completing professional development units. Naturally, after witnessing the reading success of my once struggling daughter, I set out to find formal training in dyslexia and structured literacy. Unfortunately, the only programs I could find that included a practicum and matched the depth and breadth of a graduate course, were out of state. I'm currently enrolled in an online program accredited by the International Dyslexia Association with the goal of becoming a certified, multisensory structured language teacher. This course, offered by the Mayerson Academy in Cincinnati, Ohio, focuses on

the science of reading and includes coaching and supervision from a master teacher. The first part of the course includes 45 hours of lecture and a 16-hour practicum. The second half includes additional coaching support while documenting 60 hours of instruction with lesson plans and student work. Through this program, I have learned to design and implement structured language instruction that meets the guidelines of the National Reading Panel.

I now know that learning to read is a science and that structured language instruction is effective for all students, not just those with dyslexia. New teachers in Oregon should not have to go out of state to find course-work in evidence-based reading instruction. Systematic change in how we teach reading in our state must start at the university level.