



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Testimony of the NYC Department of Education on
Supports for Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based Learning Disabilities
Before the NYC Council Committees on Education and Mental Health, Developmental
Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services**

April 19, 2016

Good afternoon Chairs Dromm and Cohen and Members of the Committees on Education and Mental Health. My name is Phil Weinberg, and I am the Deputy Chancellor for the Division of Teaching and Learning (DTL) at the NYC Department of Education (DOE). I am joined by Esther Friedman, Executive Director of the Office of Literacy and Academic Intervention Services within DTL, and Jason Borges, Senior Director of Literacy and Intervention within DOE's Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support (DSISS). Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the DOE's work to support students with dyslexia and related language-based disorders.

The DOE is committed to ensuring that all students have access to strong comprehensive core literacy programs and a multi-tiered system of interventions designed to meet their needs, including students who struggle with literacy acquisition. While our focus on literacy and literacy interventions addresses kindergarten through grade 12, we recognize there's more work to do. That's why Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña announced the Equity and Excellence agenda earlier this school year, introducing our new Universal Literacy initiative that will boost literacy in the early grades by ensuring every elementary school receives support from a dedicated reading coach.

Universal Literacy will ensure all students are reading on grade level by the end of grade 2. Our goal is that by 2022, at least two-thirds of students will be able to read with fluency by the end of second grade, and ultimately 100 percent literacy by 2026. We want all City students to have the strongest possible academic foundation to prepare them to succeed in college and careers.

Currently, all students benefit from explicit and systematic instruction in the foundational skills of reading acquisition. Students who struggle with print-based disabilities experience primary difficulties in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness and manipulation, single word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. It is important that these students receive targeted instruction in these areas in order to prevent academic failure, and that they gain access to the curriculum and ultimately learn to enjoy reading. This requires professional learning opportunities that continually develop instructional expertise in evidence-based methodologies.

When teachers are provided with professional development opportunities, it improves their ability to help students with language-based disabilities learn to read and write successfully. Structured intensive multisensory reading instruction is the most widely recognized evidence-based approach to supporting students who present with dyslexia. This model of support occurs within the student's school where all children, regardless of differences, have the opportunity to learn with and from each other. Removal from one's school to a school where every child



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presents with a disability provides limited opportunity for students to engage with, and learn within, the natural diversity of their school. Students who exhibit difficulties with reading should be afforded the opportunity to remain with their peers and receive additional support, when needed, to accelerate their development towards reading and writing proficiency.

DTL and DSISS spearhead the DOE's work to support students with language-based disabilities, with DTL primarily focusing on general education and DSISS on special education. I will now ask Esther Friedman, followed by Jason Borges, to discuss their work to ensure that schools are providing all students with literacy supports and interventions. We will be happy to answer your questions after our testimony.

**Testimony of Esther Friedman, Executive Director
Office of Literacy and Academic Intervention Services**

Good afternoon Chairs Dromm and Cohen and Members of the Committees on Education and Mental Health. I am Esther Friedman, the Executive Director of the Office of Literacy and Academic Intervention Services within DTL. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

As Deputy Chancellor Weinberg mentioned, for NYC students with dyslexia and related learning disorders, there are practices within our core literacy instruction and literacy interventions that are designed to benefit students who struggle in achieving fluent, grade-level reading. We know from a large body of research in teaching reading to students with dyslexia that a comprehensive program in literacy, particularly the foundational skills most tied to print – phonemic awareness and phonics – is critical. We believe this instruction must utilize a specific methodology, one that is influenced by Orton-Gillingham, offer a sequential, multi-sensory, explicit approach, and must come as early as possible in a child's school life, ideally starting in pre-k or even earlier. For this reason, we offer a large number of training options in various phonics programs targeting elementary- and secondary-level students. We offer options so that students have programs that are matched to their individual needs and teachers who are appropriately trained.

The Office of Literacy and Academic Intervention Services provides not only Citywide professional development opportunities designed to build the capacity of educators to use innovative and research-based instructional practices, but also high-quality resources on these practices. Our aim is to equip educators with the tools, training, and skills necessary to provide all students with high-quality instruction.

This school year alone, we will have delivered a total of 188 professional training events in reading and writing supports for all readers, 93 in academic intervention and 95 in core literacy, serving approximately 10,571 participants. Educators who attend these events develop their classroom practices in very specific areas, including assessment, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension – referred to as the five pillars of reading – as well as writing. We also provide extensive professional development in ways to enhance and enrich the core curriculum. Participants also learn methods to support students with executive function



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challenges, which can include difficulty with starting and completing tasks, memory, organization, and time management.

Typically, 20-30 percent of the participants in our professional development events serve students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), largely representing students with a learning disability. However, the majority of workshop participants serve students who are struggling with various aspects of reading acquisition, especially print challenges, with or without an IEP. Our events are offered in three major strands – developing classroom practice, exposing educators to key speakers in the field of literacy, and introducing teachers and administrators to hands-on tools for assessment and instruction in targeted areas.

In addition to these intensive professional development opportunities, we have developed a popular vocabulary instruction manual, *Word Work and Word Play*, and other resource tools for educators. The vocabulary manual addresses a critical issue in literacy. We know from research in this area that high poverty students come to school with a significant gap in the number of words heard in the home. This is a critical area of need for all students who struggle. The vocabulary manual provides research-based strategies to address this need. All of our resources are disseminated to all schools.

New York State regulations and practices for delivering support in academic and literacy interventions stress a multi-tiered approach to intervention. Referred to as *response to intervention*, or RtI, it seeks to ensure that all students who struggle receive targeted, research-based interventions, especially in the early grades. Most researchers in RtI stress the importance of early intervention and consider it prevention at those early stages.

We believe the strongest RtI model is one that ensures that all students receive strong instruction in all five pillars in the core literacy program and that the foundational skills are robustly addressed. For students who struggle, more intensive supports and instruction are offered. For example, a strong core program provides fluency instruction through various delivery models, including use of shared reading of big books, readers' theater, and other methods of repeated readings, including one-to-one instruction using fluency-building programs such as the Great Leaps Reading program. Our office provides ongoing training for this program to ensure that as many schools as possible can utilize this methodology.

Furthermore, our Universal Literacy initiative is being designed to fit the RtI mandate, especially in ensuring that the core program contains all components of a comprehensive reading program. This includes components, phonemic awareness, explicit instruction in phonics, and fluency building, which we believe to be critical to all readers, especially those challenged in reading acquisition, including students with dyslexia.

Our focus will be on high-quality training for our reading coaches, who will deliver this content to second grade teachers initially, and, ultimately, to teachers in kindergarten and first grade. The Universal Literacy initiative is rolling out in three cohorts, starting with four high-needs districts



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initially and impacting an additional 14 districts in year two and the remaining 14 districts in year three.

Our office works to ensure that we address both the provision of a strong core program and strong interventions for all students. In fact, starting with several staff members a few months ago, and recently expanding to include the whole team, my entire office has completed an institute on dyslexia offered through Everyone Reading, an organization that promotes staff development in literacy for individuals with dyslexia and related learning disorders. This will better inform our creation of the training syllabus for the Universal Literacy three-week kick-off institute this summer. In addition to the work of my office, other literacy initiatives within DTL include NYC Reads 365 and the Middle School Quality Initiative (MSQI), a program funded by the City Council.

Last November, we launched NYC Reads 365, which annually provides age-appropriate reading lists of new books from pre-K to 12th grade, as well as support and trainings for school staff and parents focused on strengthening students' reading skills and encouraging a love of reading.

MSQI is a key part of our strategy to support all students in literacy by helping teachers develop their craft and creating robust assessments and tools to improve students' literacy skills. There are currently 108 middle schools that have joined MSQI and are receiving additional supports such as literacy based coaching, workshops for school staff, and interschool visits.

Over 400 teachers and all MSQI principals received literacy-based professional development throughout the year, and all participating MSQI schools receive frequent, site-based literacy coaching support. MSQI students who are identified as dyslexic, or in need of foundational reading skills, receive the Wilson Reading System (WRS). Each school year, MSQI offers initial WRS professional development, materials and curriculum, on-going training, and site-based coaching to teachers and administrators. In addition to basic training, MSQI allows returning, successful Wilson teachers the opportunity to become WRS Level I certified. We are pleased with the results we are seeing from students at these participating schools, particularly struggling students.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here today. My colleague, Jason Borges will now discuss our work to support students with IEPs.

**Jason Borges, Senior Director of Literacy and Intervention
Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support**

Good afternoon Chairs Dromm and Cohen and Members of the Committees on Education and Mental Health. I am Jason Borges, Senior Director of Literacy and Intervention within DOE's Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support (DSISS). Aligned to the Division of Teaching and Learning, our work is rooted in the Chancellor's vision to ensure that all students are reading on grade level by the end of second grade. DSISS's stance on print based disabilities are in alignment with the International Dyslexia Associations definition of dyslexia:



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Dyslexia is a neurologically-based disorder which interferes with the acquisition and processing of language. Varying in degrees of severity, it is manifested by difficulties in receptive and expressive language, including phonological processing in reading, writing, spelling, handwriting, and sometimes in arithmetic.

We know that some students require more intensive reading intervention. Some of these readers may live with a print- or language-based disability or a combination of both. Some students struggle in the early grades, while others may not struggle until the later grades.

DSISS has developed partnerships with nationally recognized professional organizations to offer training to teachers and instructional support staff throughout the DOE. We partner with three Orton-Gillingham based organizations that offer structured literacy intervention trainings for teachers in kindergarten through high school.

We also partner with Reading Reform and Manhattanville College in the training of grades K-2 teachers in seven schools throughout the five boroughs in the Spalding method. The Spalding method is a whole class, research-based approach to teaching phonics. Each teacher received coursework in the content and methodology of Spalding coupled with on-site coaching from a mentor. As the schools reach full capacity in the Spalding method next year, each school will serve as a lab site in the 2016-17 school year to showcase their learning to other schools who want to expand their development of this approach to teaching phonics in their own schools.

We recognize the value that the Wilson Reading System (WRS) can provide for teachers with students in grades 2-12 who struggle with word recognition and reading fluency. To parallel our colleagues' work in MSQI, we have continued to sponsor 3-day WRS overview sessions this school year so that special educators can begin implementation of WRS in their classrooms. Because we understand that schools may need expertise to implement and deepen WRS, we hired a central staff member to oversee the completion of the district-level training requirements for this program, which would include supporting teachers in level 1 training in WRS.

So far this school year, we have provided 59 Orton-Gillingham-based trainings with 903 teachers and other school-based staff in attendance. There are another 38 Orton-Gillingham-based trainings remaining this school year. We work with Superintendents and Borough Field Support Centers (BFSCs) to communicate with schools and share opportunities. By the end of this school year, at least 91 percent of schools in Staten Island will have a teacher trained in Orton-Gillingham. We also offer trainings for paraprofessionals on a research proven fluency intervention, the Great Leaps Reading Program. This intervention is organized, easy to implement, and yields immediate data on a student's growth in reading fluency. In collaboration with DTL, we are currently training 50 classroom paraprofessionals who work with teachers who received training from the DTL. These classrooms will have double the capacity to support students in becoming fluent readers.



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We are currently researching assessment practices for students with print-based disabilities in other school districts, and are working with an outside expert on assessments of phonological processing and rapid naming skills for the purposes of screening, intervention, planning based on students' skills, and progress monitoring. These assessments will be used to help schools identify reading deficits and plan systematic interventions to support these readers.

We know that every K-2 teacher is a teacher of reading. Many teachers are using an informal assessment, such as running records, as part of routine practice. These quick and efficient 'check-ins' allow a teacher to observe and record a student's oral reading behaviors and flag any concerns related to word recognition. Sometimes, a classroom teacher will need more specific information to best plan instruction. At this point, the classroom teacher should administer a normed reading assessment to provide data to support appropriate interventions. An example of a widely used normed assessment is the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test. The results of this assessment, in conjunction with a teacher's observations, should inform more targeted intervention and skill-based instruction. If, over a period of time, the teacher has evidence that a student is not making progress, the student could be initially referred for special education, which includes an evaluation by a school psychologist. This evaluation will be used to determine if a student presents a print-based disability. Then, the team can determine what level of supports are needed for a student to achieve the targeted annual goals for her/his IEP.

Next year, we will enter our third year of work in the evidence-based practice of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) in writing. We will also focus our training on a model that provides each BFSC with a pilot school and a field-based staff member trained in this highly effective approach in explicit writing instruction. Over a three-year trajectory, all teachers in this grade 3-5 pilot will be trained and their classrooms will become lab-sites to showcase their SRSD practice for other schools.

As part of our collective work to better understand print-based disabilities, District 75 (D75), which services students with a wide range of academic and intellectual abilities, has also been engaged in professional development to better understand the complexity of print-based disabilities in the population they serve. Since a reading disability can often be a co-existing condition to other cognitive challenges, D75 is recognizing the need for better diagnostics based on neuro-psychological factors to inform appropriate intervention practices that can address all students' learning processing needs.

D75 has been implementing Structured Methods in Language Education (SMiLE), a beginning reading program developed specifically for students with the most significant language-learning, communication, and literacy needs, including students with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, hearing impairments, and traumatic brain injuries. Any student who is able to attend to instruction and who has mastered fewer than ten phonemes is a candidate for SMiLE's methodology. SMiLE was first piloted with students with autism and limited verbal skills in ten D75 schools during the 2008-09 school year. Currently there are over 1,000 D75 staff members trained in and implementing SMiLE with K-12 students across various populations, including non-verbal students.



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It is our goal that staff at all DOE schools receive training to deepen their literacy knowledge to better support our students in their development. All of our students deserve high quality literacy instruction. While we know we have more work to do, we are confident that we are heading in the right direction.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have.



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT- Res. 1027-2016

Resolution calling upon the NYS Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign A. 4330/S.5439, legislation regarding the certification or training of teachers, administrators and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.

April 19, 2016

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The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), which represents some 16,000 members in NYC, strongly supports this critical bill which impacts so many of our students.

Dyslexia is considered the most prevalent learning disability according to the National Center for Learning Disabilities. It is estimated that between 150,000 and 200,000 students in NYC have dyslexia. This means that this legislation would impact between 15% and 20% of the student population.

While approximately 25% of these students have been identified, it is believed that as many as three-fourths of students with dyslexia are struggling because they have not yet been identified.

Failure to address the needs of these students and others who have related language-based learning disorders can lead not only to poor performance in school, but also to social and emotional problems. Too many of our students who are struggling with reading may have undiagnosed language-based learning disabilities like dyslexia. Early intervention, prior to grade 3, makes all the difference to future school performance and life outcomes.

Clearly, the key to overcoming dyslexia is early intervention. This bill will go a long way in creating the necessary resources to train teachers and administrators in the area of dyslexia and related disorders so that the needs of these students can be adequately addressed at an early age. Most importantly, this legislation would require a school district to provide a specially trained teacher to any student with one of these disabilities.

CSA strongly supports this legislation. It will go a long way towards leveling the playing field by improving conditions so that children with dyslexia and related learning disabilities can have an equal opportunity to learn and become college and career ready.



Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, New York City
Local 1: American Federation of School Administrators, AFL-CIO

**MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT- RES. NO. 375
RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE NYS DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION TO INCLUDE LESSONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE
IN K-12 SCHOOLS' CURRICULUM.**

APRIL 19, 2016

The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), which represents some 16,000 members strongly support this common sense legislation.

According to the National Center for Science Education (NCSE), "it is important for the science of climate change to be taught, both in formal and informal educational environments, in order for future citizens to be able to make scientifically informed decisions about the consequences of climate change."

CSA believes that climate change should not be politicized. Rather, we accept the irrefutable evidence that indeed we are being impacted by man-made events that continue to negatively impact our climate. Fortunately, we can take steps to ameliorate the situation.

According to the EPA, the magnitude of future climate change will depend on many factors including the rate at which levels of greenhouse gas concentrations in our atmosphere continue to increase, how strongly features of the climate respond to the expected increase in greenhouse gas concentrations, and natural influences on and natural resources within the climate.

Climate change is a scientifically- based phenomenon that impacts agriculture, infrastructure, economies, national security, and international relations.

In 2013, a consortium of 26 state governments and groups representing scientists and teachers developed new guidelines that call for sweeping changes in the way science is taught in the United States. For the first time, a recommendation that climate change be taught as early as middle school was proposed. Unfortunately, as of now, NYS is not among the states doing this. Over two years ago (June 10, 2014), students from high schools throughout NYC rallied on the steps of City hall to call for comprehensive climate change education as a basic tenet of the curriculum.

CSA stands proudly with those students and the supporters of this bill to finally take proactive action by calling on the NYS Department of Education to include lessons on climate change in K-12 schools' curriculum.

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Testimony of the
United Federation of Teachers

By Carmen Alvarez, Vice President for Special Education

Before the City Council Committees on Education and Mental Health, Developmental Disability,
Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services
Regarding Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based Learning
Disabilities and Res. No. 1027

April 19, 2016

Good afternoon. My name is Carmen Alvarez, and I am the United Federation of Teachers vice president for special education. On behalf of the union's 200,000 members, including over 50,000 special education teachers, paraprofessionals and therapists who serve our children with special needs, I would like to thank the Committee on Education and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services and Chairs Danny Dromm and Andy Cohn, respectively, for holding this hearing. Your oversight over and scrutiny of the services and resources applied to students with learning disabilities are critical.

Further, we appreciate the opportunity to share our views on both addressing the needs of students with dyslexia and related language-based learning disabilities and on Council Res. No. 1027 regarding the certification or training of teachers, administrators and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.

A child's ability to learn is significantly compromised when disabilities that impede his or her learning are not properly identified and addressed in the child's Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and when teachers and administrations are not appropriately certified and trained to meet the child's special needs. The UFT, together with parents and advocates, firmly believes that the core of many students' learning problems fall within the realm of literacy and language-based disabilities. We are pleased that the Department of Education made a greater priority of addressing literacy-centered issues and pleased, in particular, that there's a plan to strengthen literacy for early learners. We wholeheartedly support this focus. In testimony before this body on a number of occasions and across a range of issues, our union has emphasized that cognitive, social and emotional development in the early years are critical to success in school and life.

We know our system can serve these children better and help dismantle the barriers to their success.

We seek the City Council's support to implement the following:

- a) Align the city's categorization of dyslexia and language-based disabilities on its IEPs with that of the U.S. Education Department's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services;
- b) Deliver the explicit, sequential, intensive and sustained interventions that students with dyslexia need;
- c) Provide training in evidence-based, foundational literacy skills instruction and dyslexia interventions to special education teachers; and
- d) Pass Council Resolution No. 1027 addressing the need for professional training and certification in dyslexia.

We stand ready to work in partnership with the DOE and the New York City Council as both entities place a greater emphasis on improving outcomes for children struggling with dyslexia and related language-based learning disabilities.

Defining dyslexia, and the disconnect between city and federal criteria

What is dyslexia? Individuals with dyslexia have difficulties with decoding and spelling. They do not recognize words accurately or fluently. These difficulties, which are unexpected in relation to the individual's cognitive abilities and unresponsive to effective classroom instruction, result from a deficit in the phonological component of language. While estimates as to the number of people affected by developmental dyslexia vary, some experts say it affects from 17 to 21 percent of the school-age population. In New York City, that could be as many as tens of thousands of students.ⁱ

Dyslexic readers have lower rates of high school graduation, higher levels of unemployment and lower earnings because of lowered college attainment.ⁱⁱ Significant numbers of homeless youths, adolescent suicide victims and juvenile offenders are dyslexics. Here in New York City, the consistently poor performance of students with disabilities on the English language arts (ELA) assessments compared with their non-disabled peers ⁱⁱⁱ provides dramatic evidence that the problem is both serious and persistent.

What challenges our members and consequently the students and families we serve is that dyslexia currently does not appear to be recognized as a disability by the New York City public schools. We say this because assessment professionals are told not to test for dyslexia or write dyslexia in the present levels of performance on students' IEPs. This is peculiar in that dyslexia is specifically listed as one of the conditions in the category of specific learning disabilities in federal law and regulations. Apparently, New York City is not alone in its reluctance to recognize dyslexia in the assessment and IEP development process. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services recently took the unusual step of issuing a "Dear Colleague" letter calling on states and school districts to use the term, when appropriate, "to describe and address the child's unique, identified needs through evaluation, eligibility, and IEP documents."^{iv}

The basics of literacy instructional needs

We can't begin to tackle dyslexia until a well-supported, evidence-based core reading program is in place. The good news is that the DOE has a solid plan and implementation is set to begin in four districts in September. The mayor's Reading for All Initiative will place highly trained reading coaches in every school with a K-2 program over a period of three years. Since today's hearing focuses on students with dyslexia, it's my intention to offer recommendations on how the DOE can address the needs of students with dyslexia by, first, extending the use of this K-2 reading plan and, second, supporting our organization's call for relief from the destructive effects of "mandate relief" in New York City approved by the state Legislature over 21 years ago.

Injecting urgency in our efforts to serve dyslexic students

The time to act is now. With New York City poised to implement sound, evidence-based literacy instruction and support in early grades, it's time to take the next step and provide interventions and support for students with dyslexia who are unable to learn to read even when provided "appropriate instruction." "Appropriate instruction" means "scientific research-based reading programs that include explicit instruction in 1) phonemic awareness, 2) phonics, 3) vocabulary development, 4) reading fluency and 5) reading comprehension strategies," commonly referred to as the "five pillars" of literacy.^v "Appropriate instruction" is the core of the DOE's Reading for All initiative. It is imperative for the DOE to move now because early intervention is crucial.

The achievement gap between dyslexic readers and typical readers appears as early as first grade and, without intervention, persists into adolescence. For many students, this gap can be narrowed or closed. But for this to happen, children with dyslexia must be identified and interventions must be implemented as early as possible.^{vi} This means, not second or third grade, but beginning in kindergarten or first grade. Now is the perfect time to put in place structures to home in on students with dyslexia at the time we are best able to help them.

More than Reading for All, students need trained specialists

How can the implementation of the Reading for All initiative inform what the DOE needs to do to support students with dyslexia and other reading challenges?

First, Reading for All tells us that to get the job done, we have to change the conversation in schools. It can't be about doing what we're already doing or enhancing whatever supports and services are already in the building. We know that institutions of higher education are not preparing special education teachers in evidence-based methods to help students with dyslexia become fluent and confident readers. The DOE will need to provide extensive professional development and support to the teachers in evidence-based instructional strategies. This means no 3-hour or 3-day workshops; no turn-key training; no webinars. Like the Reading for All coaches, special educators who provide interventions and services for students with dyslexia should receive direct training over the summer and regularly scheduled training every month during the school year. The training curriculum should be designed and delivered by central staff under the guidance of experts in the field of dyslexia.

Second, like the Reading for All coaches, there must be dedicated staff in each school. We believe this staff of dyslexia specialists should be special educators, although we would not insist that they work exclusively with students who have been evaluated and determined to be eligible for special education. These staff members must be funded centrally and not through the regular school funding mechanism. We have an idea as to how to address the staffing issue and we are currently in discussion with the DOE to see how we can make it happen. We'd like your support to make sure the funds are available for the training that will be needed for these staff to become dyslexia experts.

Third, as in the Reading for All initiative, there must be a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and services on an ongoing basis. The evaluation must be geared to support and improve the program and the personnel who work in it and not used as a teacher evaluation tool.

To be effective, interventions must be intensive and sustained

Appropriately trained and supported educators are essential, but overcoming dyslexia requires intensive and sustained interventions. Reduced group size is key to increasing intensity, and the continuation of services over the summer is essential to sustained progress.

In an ideal world, services would be provided individually. In New York City, the most intensive instructional service available for students with learning disabilities is Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS). As a result of mandate relief passed by the state Legislature in 1995, the group size for SETSS services and provider caseloads in New York City were increased by 50 percent. In New York City, SETSS services are provided in groups of eight and SETSS teachers have a caseload of 30 students at the elementary level and 38 students in middle and high schools. In the rest of New York State, the maximum group size is five students and caseloads are capped at 20 and 25 students respectively.

We will not be successful in addressing the needs of our students with disabilities who have dyslexia unless the group size and caseloads of SETSS providers are brought in line with those in the rest of the state. We ask you to join with us in urging the state Legislature to reverse 21 years of second-class citizenship for students who need this service.

Students with dyslexia have no time to waste, even when they are identified and begin receiving services in kindergarten or first grade. That is why we believe that summer programs for these students should be structured to continue the interventions students receive during the school year.

Res. No. 1027: Regarding teacher and administrator certification or training in dyslexia and related disorders

We want to thank Council Member Fernando Cabrera for sponsoring Res. 1027 calling for the training and certification of teachers, administrators and instructors to create specific expertise in serving children diagnosed with dyslexia and related language-based disorders. Pressing the state Legislature to pass Assembly bill 4330 and Senate bill 5439 won't solve the immediate problem, but it will begin to lay a foundation for the future. We strongly support the call for training of teachers and administrators in evidence-based, effective programs for instructing students with dyslexia. We also concur that the training should include successful completion of sufficient coursework hours and supervised clinical experience. We agree, too, that children suspected of having dyslexia should be evaluated in accordance with current standards and the committees on special education must have expertise in dyslexia to make appropriate recommendations. Finally and most importantly, we believe that children with dyslexia are entitled to services to help them overcome the challenges presented by this condition.

In Summary

We need an infrastructure to support literacy instruction and interventions and behavior support in our schools. Building an infrastructure involves a lot of pieces — leadership, resources, professional development and accountability mechanisms, to name a few. But the most important piece is dedicated, well-trained educators in every school to guide and assist school staff as they learn and implement new methods of reading instruction and new positive and proactive ways of supporting appropriate behavior. I think many of our Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) teachers, IEP teachers, and paraprofessionals would be ready for this challenge if they received the time and professional development. The UFT stands ready to work with the Department of Education and the New York City Council to make this happen.

ⁱ <http://eida.org/frequently-asked-questions-2/>

ⁱⁱ Ferrer, Shaywitz, Holahan, Marchione, Michaels and Shaywitz, "Early intervention in dyslexia can narrow achievement gap," *Science Daily*, Nov. 2015

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>

^{iv} <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-dyslexia-10-2015.pdf>

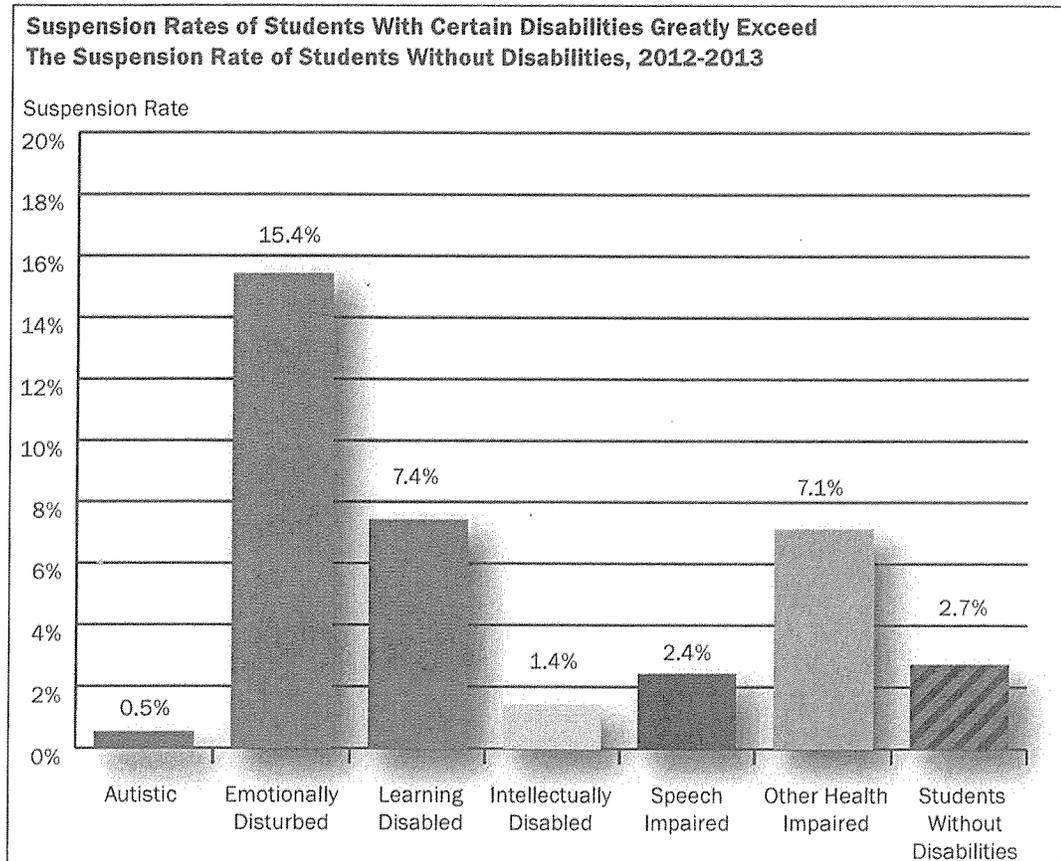
^v <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/RTI/guidance/appa.htm>

^{vi} Ferrer, Shaywitz, Holahan, Marchione, Michaels and Shaywitz, "Achievement Gap in Reading Is Present as Early as First Grade and Persists through Adolescence," *Journal of Pediatrics*, 2015; 167:1121-5

Are Students With Disabilities Suspended at a Higher Rate Than Other Students?

Although students with disabilities comprised about 18 percent of the overall student body in school year 2012-2013, they made up about 30 percent of the suspended student population (defined as the population of students who have been suspended at least one time).

Approximately 95 percent of students with disabilities fall into one of six disability classifications: autistic, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, intellectually disabled, speech impaired, and other health impaired. There are wide variations in suspension rates across these categories (suspension rates were calculated by dividing the number of suspended students in each category by the number of all students in that category: for example, the number of learning disabled students with at least one suspension by the total number of learning disabled students).



- Students without disabilities had a 2.7 percent suspension rate in school year 2012-2013.
- Overall, students with disabilities had an average suspension rate of 7.4 percent.
- Students classified as emotionally disturbed had a suspension rate of 15.4 percent, which is more than five times higher than the suspension rate of students without disabilities and about twice as high as the overall suspension rate for students with disabilities.
- Students classified as learning disabled and other health impaired were suspended at rates almost three times as high as students without disabilities (7.4 percent and 7.1 percent, respectively).
- Students with autism and students with intellectual disabilities were suspended at lower rates than students without disabilities, and were suspended far less frequently than students with other types of disabilities.

Prepared by Katie Mosher
New York City Independent Budget Office

SOURCE: IBO analysis of Department of Education data

NOTE: 2012-2013 was the most recent year of data available at the time of analysis. Excludes schools in the citywide special education district (District 75). For more information on students with disabilities, see <http://schools.nyc.gov/academics/specialeducation/default.htm>

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COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

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District 3 Community Superintendent

**New York City Council
Committee on Education &
Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and
Disability Services
Joint Hearing on addressing the needs of students with dyslexia and related language-
based learning disabilities and Res.1027
Testimony by Kristen Berger, Community Education Council 3
Tuesday April 19, 2016**

Good afternoon. I am Kristen Berger, a member of Community Education Council 3 on Manhattan’s Upper West Side and West Harlem. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on resolution 1027.

Community Education Council 3 (CEC3) thanks the committees for proactively writing a resolution to call upon the New York State Legislature to pass A 4330.

The current practice of the NYC Department of Education does not provide specific training for teachers nor intervention for students with language- based learning disabilities. This is unacceptable treatment for the estimated 200,000 NYC public school students struggling with language based learning disabilities. With no standardized evidence based teaching methods for students with these disabilities the system is unfairly burdening students. Language based learning disabilities require appropriate evaluation and interventions that are tailored to the child.

It is a system that relies largely on luck and parental intervention. There is no clear plan within the DOE for students with language based learning disabilities. It is ludicrous that educators are still afraid to use the term dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia on students’ Individualized Education Plans (IEP). The state can provide guidance by providing a clear definition.

Presently the onus is on parents to identify the problem, advocate for appropriate evaluation and sort through reading and writing programs to find the best one for their child. The Department of Education is shirking the responsibility to adequately educate these students. This burdens all families; many of whom find the only way to get appropriate services for their child is to pay for expensive private tutoring or go to the lengths of suing the city for access to the few private schools specializing in dyslexia. This is not right for any family, and is especially troubling for

families that may lack awareness of the disability or the resources to pay for access to the private systems.

The state legislation within A 4330/ S.5439 provides a solid starting point to address the needs of students with language based learning disabilities. By properly identifying student's disabilities, acknowledging the diagnosis on their IEPs and providing teachers who are adequately trained to instruct such students we can provide a light and a way up for our struggling students. It is the responsibility of the education department to provide the best possible education for all of our students. We look forward to a time when we can have confidence that this is being done.

School of Education

The City College
of New York

Good afternoon.

My name is Mary Erina Driscoll and I am the Dean and Harold Kobliner Chair in Education at the School of Education of the City College of New York, located in Hamilton Heights. City College was founded in 1847 to educate what Townsend Harris termed “the children of the whole people.” Entwined with its rich history is a deep and continuing commitment to provide both excellence in, and access to, a superb education. For nearly a century, the CCNY School of Education has shared in that mission by preparing teachers and leaders who bring their many talents to our city’s schools. At present, we have approximately 1800 students enrolled in preparation programs at the graduate and undergraduate level. Our school still serves an urban, first-generation and highly diverse population of students. Many of them come from city schools and most want to return to teach and lead in those settings, and our commitment to improving urban education is central to our core work.

This hearing today demonstrates the importance of meeting the needs of dyslexic children and youth, especially those who are seeking to be served by public school system of New York City. You have noted as well that preparing teachers to serve these students throughout their professional careers is a central component to successfully addressing the issues under study. CUNY institutions prepare a large proportion of the city’s teachers through programs that prepare teachers for initial (or their first) and professional certification. At present, all students earning initial certification must demonstrate their understanding of the needs of all learners, and do through by passing rigorous

coursework on inclusive education as well as through their performance on certification examinations, particularly the Educating All Students Assessment recently instituted by New York State.

We believe that we should start first by equipping experienced teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to serve these students. Teachers must be life long learners, and many educators certified to teach in 'regular' elementary or secondary classrooms already continue to seek additional knowledge through Advanced Certificates (and certification 'extensions') that provide specialized preparation in an additional field, (such as bilingual education, Teaching English as a Second Language, or Education Students with Disabilities, aka 'Special Education.')

At present, however, there is no approved program leading to a NYS approved certification extension in the area of dyslexia or similar learning disabilities. Customarily, such extensions are 15 to 24 credit programs usually taken by professionally certified teachers who already hold a Masters' degree. They can offer intense, focused work (delivered through multiple modalities and not limited to traditional classes only) that help these experienced teachers gain expertise required to meet particular needs in children. We believe it would be beneficial to explore developing such a program as soon as possible, as it could build and develop the existing workforce of experienced urban teachers in ways that would benefit the diverse students of New York quickly and effectively. An advanced certificate could be developed even while interested parties and institutions worked with NYS to outline potential state certification extensions in this area.

I want to join with Ms. Garcia in reiterating our commitment at CCNY to bring together resources from across CUNY in a task force to study, recommend, and develop the kinds of professional

development experiences and coursework needed to address this knowledge gap in our profession. In providing services we would be happy to partner with other CUNY faculty and administrators; we have had interest in such a project voiced by administrators at Lehman College as well as faculty present here from Hunter. And we would be happy to join with other public and private partners as well. It is our hope that such a project could potentially lead to something along the lines of a CUNY Dyslexia Institute. Modeled after the Institute of Literacy Studies at Lehman, this could become a center for applied research, professional development, and direct services (i.e., a multidisciplinary clinic that offers consultation, diagnostic and instructional after-school and summer offerings).

We see the Department of Education and the state as critical players in this effort as well. We look forward to the continued interest and support of the Council and stand ready to move ahead with these exciting initiatives in service of NYC's children.

Robert Jackson
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New York, NY 10033
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917-733-0439

When I walked 150 miles to Albany to build support for the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) lawsuit to fix a broken New York State school funding formula that cheated our children, I did it on behalf of all our students, so that every student has the opportunity to learn and reach their full potential.

However, there are too many children - children affected by dyslexia - that by no fault of their own, do not have a chance to reach this important goal. They work twice as hard as their peers that read more naturally, but accomplish only half as much. Their frustration mounts and it affects all parts of their lives.

We have seen great progress in many areas of our public schools, and also significant advancement around the country in the identification of and support for dyslexic children. That said, not nearly enough is being done for dyslexic children in NYC public schools. As the Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity said, "In dyslexia, there's not a knowledge gap but rather an action gap."

Despite the fact that one in five children in our schools are dyslexic, our school system lacks a coherent plan or commitment to support dyslexic students and schools aren't providing access to early identification of dyslexia and related language-based learning differentiations. Therefore, a majority of students with dyslexia are not identified and struggle silently with a plundered self-esteem and anxiety about school. The problem is particularly severe among children whose parents lack the awareness, knowledge, understanding of outcomes, and resources to seek outside help. Even if they are able to afford getting a diagnosis, our public schools don't have the ability to support these children. This leaves parents only with the option of either keeping their child in an under-resourced school or going private for often unaffordable specialized tutoring. (A select few can find a seat in a private school specializing in dyslexia). Furthermore, in most cases, the schools follow a misguided policy of having these students repeat the grade or they are referred for services that lack a true understanding of how to address dyslexia, further hindering and stigmatizing the child.

The good news is there are proven methods to educate children with dyslexia and other language based learning differences. NYC can and should become a national leader in making room in our public schools for students with dyslexia by empowering the teachers, parents and students. We need to bring the teacher preparation techniques that has been successful in specialized schools to our public schools and create a new paradigm for literacy instruction.

We need to create a new culture for dyslexia, or what leading NYC advocates call Dyslexia (Plus). More specifically, this means: first, increasing dyslexia awareness and training on dyslexia, its warning signs and appropriate intervention strategies; second, providing students access to proven teaching methodologies and help dyslexics learn to use their learning differentiation to their advantage for success; third, providing social-emotional support in public schools; fourth, providing support for all parents in the form of advocacy, resources and knowledge; fifth, developing partnership between the Department of Education and the city's public higher education university (CUNY) to prepare teachers going into our public schools; and sixth, supporting legislation now in Albany (A.4330A/S.5439) which requires the certification or training of teachers, administrators and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.

Let's teach every child to read and make sure each has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

New York City Council

Joint Hearing - Committee on Education and Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Delay, Alcoholism, and Disability Services

Testimony- Johanna Garcia, Executive Director, City College Partnership

April 19th, 2016

Thank you Chairs Dromm and Cohen and council members for holding this very important hearing. My name is Johanna Garcia and I sit before you today wearing several hats. I am the Executive Director of the City College Partnership at City College of New York and as such serve as a founding member of the Dyslexia Plus Taskforce. I am also the mother of a second grader with dyslexia enrolled in his neighborhood public school, as well as a parent leader in school district 6.

The time is right for NYC to lead in making a systemic change in our schools. With legislation pending on the federal, state and local level, and together with an administration keen on improving literacy rates among our youngest and closing the achievement gap, we are in a strong position to change the tide for dyslexic students in our public schools.

I proudly share that the City College of New York, through working collaboratively with the Department of Education, is excited to take the lead in ensuring New York City public schools become a place where students with dyslexia and other language-based learning difficulties can learn and thrive in their neighborhood schools. Of course, preparing a cadre of highly skilled teachers serves as a centerpiece of our goal and implementing a successful program involves leveraging public and private partners.

Fortunately, the work in supporting students with dyslexia has been started by many other advocates, practitioners, educators and psychologists. We plan and have already begun conversations to work with individuals and institutions who have long standing experience in this field. We hope to count on the City Council as one of our partners.

As a result of a positive meeting between the Dyslexia Plus Taskforce and Chair Danny Dromm late last fall, and later with the DoE, City College submitted a discretionary funding expense application for a new City Council Initiative titled: Dyslexia Plus in Public Schools.

The initiative will address **four key factors** that, through our research, will help dyslexic students be successful: 1. parent

advocacy and understanding of available services; 2. affordable and accessible evaluations and early diagnosis leading to appropriate interventions; 3. academic support provided by highly skilled teachers trained in understanding and addressing dyslexia using multi-sensory language approaches and; 4. mental health support for difficulties often associated with learning differences.

Getting the right education and services should not be limited to students whose families can afford it, are educated about options, and have the resources and time necessary to navigate to get their child the proper services and setting. Even for parents who are savvy, the process is incredibly difficult, emotionally taxing and frustrating.

Take me for example. I have been involved in education advocacy for a while and in fact sat on the other side of this table when I worked for then Chair Robert Jackson. Yet, there isn't a day that goes by that I don't worry about getting my son, Aries, the help he needs before it's too late.

When he was in kindergarten, I suspected Aries had dyslexia much like his father and my brother, but instead I was dismissed by his well meaning teachers and it was recommended he repeat the grade. When he finally entered first grade, he was still reading below grade level. After DoE evaluations didn't bear out what I suspected, I was lucky enough to find affordable private evaluations. I still had to advocate to make sure he didn't repeat the first grade. Frustrated by his teachers and therapists who didn't understand dyslexia or have the training to help him, I sought specialized tutoring that is far too expensive for a single mother of three. He is making progress but so are his peers. Today, my son is in second grade faced with another promotion in doubt. His school is finally admitting that repeating the grade is not the answer and that they lack the resources to adequately teach my child. Sadly, I hear my story echoed over and over when I talk to other parents and children struggling to get by in school.

This hearing is the beginning of bringing this issue into the public discourse. I hope the City Council will continue to support legislation, efforts and initiatives that will address a crisis affecting thousands of dyslexic students who wish they could thrive in their neighborhood schools. I'm proud that CCNY is taking the important step in preparing teachers and joining with other CUNY institutions to build a consortium. Together we can take this even further. Let's help make NYC a national leader in making room in our public schools for students with dyslexia. Please support the Dyslexia Plus in Public Schools Initiative.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Hon. Daniel Dromm, Chair

**COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY,
ALCOHOLISM, SUBSTANCE ABUSE & DISABILITY SERVICES**

Hon. Andrew Cohen, Chair

**Oversight: Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based
Learning Disabilities**

April 19, 2016

Dear NYC Council Members,

Background – We are a dyslexic family.

*My family represents over 60 years of dyslexics in the NYC public school
systems*

I am Laura Cavalleri, I am a dyslexic person, and I have the right to say that because my family background gives me that right. My mother and her identical twin sister were screened for their dyslexia and seen by the then BOE at Scheremhorn Street, Brooklyn, back in 1950–51. They attended Bay Ridge Girls HS and graduated with summer school. My mother, aunt and I all have the nature gift of drawing and arts. I was socially promoted in the 1970's, was dropping out by HS and took the GED as a super senior. I then tried some college at Kingsborough but dropped out because I did not have documentation

of my dyslexia for accommodations for the remedial reading and math classes I needed. My two sons born 2000, and 2002, now ages 15 and 13, have been officially diagnosed last year with “Classic Dyslexia” mild and “Dyslexia–Dysgraphia” mild. My oldest had Lindamood–Bell reading instructions in the second grade and is now a sophomore and honor student in McKee CTE HS, and is *no longer* on an IEP, but his personal classification of “Classic Dyslexic” is still his to own all his life. His brother just diagnosed with “Dysgraphia Dyslexia” and got Lindamood–Bell reading instructions in the seventh grade and is currently catching up to gain the two grade levels of reading needed to be on grade. He will be a Freshmen High School this coming September at McKee CTE HS, and still on a IEP.

I have been an advocate for dyslexia awareness these past ten years, and have been helpful with the awareness and progress on Staten Island. (Google my name for these references)

Issues and Recommendations

I am here to oversee that what we do for dyslexics is reflected of the future for all dyslexics, the youth and adults.

It is these last three points from the committee briefing paper I wish to particularly address for the reasons that the truths about dyslexics needs to be transparent and honestly respected.

- Build literacy expertise in every school, including elementary, middle, and high schools, District 75 schools, and District 79 programs, via dedicated, highly trained expert teachers of reading who can both provide coaching and instructional support for classroom teachers and deliver individualized, evidence-based interventions to struggling readers.
- Use technology to support instruction, including Assistive Technology (AT), instructional technology, and Accessible Educational Materials (AEM).
- Improve communication with families so that they are able to support their children's literacy development and obtain assistance when they need it.¹

1. Dyslexics have an averagely higher IQ and most can be naturally gifted and are creative in abstract thinking.
2. Dyslexics are dyslexic for life, you don't grow out of it but you learn to work through it.
3. Dyslexia is heredity; it is passed on from generation to generation, from parents to children.

It is because of these truths that dyslexia must be addressed in every school!

Addressing dyslexia in every school, done with engagement with all, and in all manners of supports and positive recognitions will generate the need for more G&T honor classes that will be accommodating in ICT classrooms.

¹ Advocates for Children of New York, *A is for All: Meeting the Literacy Needs of Students with and without Disabilities in the New York City Public Schools*, March 2016, at 7, accessed at http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/a_is_for_all.pdf?pt=1.

And there is No better place and that is more equipped to provide the dyslexic students all the accesses to the greater academic or career opportunities than in our Public Elementary, Middle and High Schools many specialized specialty programs in the Arts, Sciences, Sports, Trades, Businesses and Humanities.

A non-profit private or charter schools will not have the many educational networking opportunities and school resources that are already available in our public schools. Our dyslexics students can find more of their strengths in the public schools, but more could be done to make Arts a true subject curriculum as advocated for these last nine years by NYS Assemblymen Matthew Titone, of Staten Island. Arts, STEM and sports are dyslexics other strengths benefitting all our schools. I hope there will be competitions between our schools seeking the strengths of all students for specialty subjects.

The reason why the private dyslexic schools works is because everyone is "In". The whole school is participating in the whole wellness of the dyslexic students. These schools also use the specialized reading methods of Orton Gillingham to teach the students to read and comprehend.

Once we create in our Public Schools the learning environment that these private schools possess, our Public Schools will benefits from sharing and strengthen in learning, with all different types individuals in all our social behavior and activities.

RECOMMENDATION TO City Council
DYSLEXIC FRIENDLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I was voted off McKee CTE HS SLT March 7, 2016, because I spoke asked publicly (at the Chancellor Staten Island DOE Town Hall meeting March 1, 2016), for help for the “mostly” struggling students at McKee HS reading at a fourth grade reading level (school enrollment 641 students—a small school to pilot dyslexia screening and tutoring☺). I sited that McKee trades and skills is what draws dyslexics to that school. Our UFT chapter leader did a Teachers PD in February about dyslexics (in accordance with the school’s CEP) about what can be done to make their classrooms more dyslexic friendly. And that these students are very bright they just need our help to indentify if they are dyslexics then we can help them and others with what we know about teaching to read and think outside the box creativity thinking.

But at the SLT meeting on March 7, 2016 was to vote me off the team because I asked for dyslexia help, the teams responses were upsetting because they all acted like dyslexia was a curse and the school reputation would be badly damaged if it was known that McKee HS has dyslexic students. (That would only be truer because McKee isn’t helping its dyslexic students be the great students in many strengths that they could be!)

My middle school son's school has audio books in the school's library, when I asked how my dyslexic son with an IEP could get audio books the school librarian said its through teacher recommendations, then I asked how many students at our school uses audio books (3) students now use audio books, two came with their own personal accounts and now my son has a school library account.

The school also had a library night of Read a Book, I only wished that the school would have made the event more inclusive bringing awareness to those that use audio books and dyslexic friendly font printed material.

Bottom line I wish to see all our schools being Dyslexic Friendly and have events celebrating and engaging so we can all have the very best education can offer us.

Someday, I hope to be a proud grandmother of dyslexic grandchildren and I know that their whole life will have the respect, acceptance and appreciation of and for dyslexic individuals.

Sincerely,



Laura Cavalleri

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Staten Island, NY 10304

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P.S. GOOGLE: STARBUCKS - U.K. - DYSLEXIC
AND READ THE MANY STORIES THAT
WENT AROUND THE WORLD

Before the City Council Committees on Education and Mental Health, Developmental Disability,
Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services
Regarding Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based
Learning Disabilities and Res. No. 1027

April 19, 2016

Good afternoon. I would like to thank the Committee on Education and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services and Chairs Danny Dromm and Andy Cohn for holding this hearing.

My name is Noelle Turtur. I am not here as policy or educational expert, but I am here as an illustration of the life-changing difference an effective and early intervention can have for a person with dyslexia.

Most of us take literacy for granted, and barely realize how often we are reading text and using that information to guide our daily lives – from larger questions of identity to everyday practical needs. Imagine you never were able to escape into the magical world of a book. Imagine you were never able to read the book that changed your life. Imagine you had trouble moving around the city because you can barely read street signs and the names of subway stops. Imagine you couldn't take inventory in a shop or read to your children. Imagine who you would be today if you couldn't read.

Every day, I think about how often I am reading and what information I receive through text because, if circumstances had been only slightly different, I likely would have never read, and certainly not like I do.

As a child, I would avoid any activity involving reading. I began to pretend like I was reading during class time, turning the pages with appropriate timing and gathering enough information from the illustrations to pretend like I had read the text. Pretending like this comes

naturally and most kids do it without even realizing that they are falling behind. Luckily, my first grade teacher noticed I was not, in fact, reading. That year, I was diagnosed with dyslexia.

Between first and third grade, I spent part of the school day in a small class – no more than five students – receiving intensive instruction on phonics and reading. At times, I received individual instruction. I went to my tutor's house over the summers to continue to study.

But, then, after three years, I went back to a regular class, stopped receiving any additional instruction, and became a regular student. In fact, I felt like I had missed so much, I thought I needed to read everything my classmates had read over the proceeding years. I read everything I could get my hands on – for years. The fact that I had dyslexia simply became more or less irrelevant.

After graduating high school, I studied history at the University of Chicago. In 2014, I graduated Phi Beta Kappa, with general and departmental honors. ~~In college, I interned at Advocates for Children and saw first hand how our public school system fails many students with dyslexia.~~ After graduation, I worked as the Project Associate in the Criminal Defense Practice at the ~~Bronx Defenders~~ ^{an immigrant services provider in New York City}, and some of you may have even read written testimony that I ^{submitted to NYC Council} helped research and draft while employed there.

Today, I am a first year doctoral student in the History Department at Columbia University, where I study Modern European history. I read fluently in Italian and Spanish. I have been studying German irregularly since college, and I was awarded a grant to study German this summer in Leipzig, Germany. Accepted wisdom says that dyslexics shouldn't be able to read in more than one language – I didn't know that until I learning to read my fourth language.

Dyslexia is not an incurable disease. It is not a life-sentence. A diagnosis of dyslexia should in no way limit any of the opportunities a child has in life. The “treatment” for dyslexia is well known and has been for quite some time. It’s simple: early identification and early intervention in the form of intensive small-group or individual instruction in the five pillars of reading. If the intervention is done correctly, a student only receives additional instruction for a relatively short period and, dyslexia becomes irrelevant. While I am certainly no expert, it certainly seems more cost-effective to provide a powerful, early intervention than to delay the intervention, decreasing its efficacy and lengthening its duration.

The failure to provide effective interventions is such a waste of human resources. We have countless children with dyslexia in this city who dream of becoming firemen, doctors, journalists, and teachers. And, unless they receive effective interventions, they will likely never be able to achieve those dreams. That can be a tragedy for these students personally, and for us, as a society, it is a loss.

Thank you.

Dr. John J. Russell, Head of Windward School, Testimony Before Education Committee April 19, 2016

- On the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA 2014), United States Students performed:
 - 24th out of 65 nations in Reading
- On National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP 2015):
 - 64% below proficient Fourth Grade Reading - all students
 - 66% below proficient Eighth Grade Reading - all students
 - 88% below proficient Fourth Grade Reading – **disabled students**
 - 92% below proficient Eighth Grade Reading – **disabled students**
- New York State English Language Arts (ELA 2015)
 - 68% below proficient Grades 3 – 8 - all students
 - 94% below proficient Grades 3 – 8 – **disabled students**
- New York Four Year High School Graduation Rate (2013)
 - 74.9% - all students
 - 48.7% - **disabled students**
- High School Graduates College and Career Ready (NYSED Office of Information and Reporting Services)
 - 37.2% - all students
 - 5.4% - **disabled students**
- General Education Statistics:
 - 75% of students who drop out of school having reading problems (Joshi, et. al., 2009)
- When students are identified early and receive research-based instruction, the results are consistently positive. (Blackman, et. al, 1999; Foorman, et. al., 1998)
- The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) evaluated 687 pre-service education programs and found 75% of them did not meet the basic standards set by NCTQ.
- Professional Development at Windward:
 - Professional Development is never complete.
 - Professional Development is research-based.
 - Windward teachers retake core reading, writing and language courses at least every five years. Teachers new to Windward serve as Assistant Teachers for up to 3 years and participate in exhaustive professional development programs while serving in the classroom of mentor teachers.

FOR THE RECORD

The Windward School Standardized Test Results 2005-2015 (1,303 language-disabled students)

Reading Comprehension

Entrance Scores

Below Average 33%
Average 57%
Above Average 10%

Exit Scores

Below Average 2%
Average 63%
Above Average 35%

Vocabulary

Entrance Scores

Below Average 34%
Average 58%
Above Average 8%

Exit Scores

Below Average 4%
Average 63%
Above Average 33%

Testimony Notes, April 19, 2016, 1pm at City Hall, New York, New York

Meeting of the Council of the City of New York

Oversight: Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based Learning Disabilities

Katherine Garnett, Ed.D., Professor, Program in Learning Disabilities, Special Ed, Hunter College, CUNY

Background, in brief:

- Founding teacher, The Churchill School – 1972
- Adjunct faculty member: TC Columbia, NYU, U. of Waterloo, SUNY New Paltz
- Doctoral degree in Learning Disabilities/Reading Disorders, TC Columbia, 1979
- Founder & architect, HC Program in Learning Disabilities and HC Learning Lab – 1980-present
- Author, monographs, articles, chapters, curricula, video – *recent*:
Fluency in Learning to Read: Conceptions, Misconceptions, Learning Disabilities, & Instructional Moves. In Birsh, J. (Ed.), **Multisensory teaching of basic language skills**, Third Edition. Baltimore, MD: Paul. H. Brookes (2011)
- Editor, consultant, presenter – national and international
Full vita and copies of writings available on request: kgarnett@hunter.cuny.edu.

- 1) Dyslexia is real, neurologically, psychologically, educationally – throughout life.
 - It is not “just....”
 - Requires not simply “good teaching”
 - Is not “on/off”, but presents a range of intensities, from milder to extreme/severe
 - Manifests differently at different ages, as the individual interacts with increasing school challenges
 - Is frequently “not believed”, commonly going “unseen” year upon year
 - Is commonly mistaken for laziness, home problems, slowness, or lack of motivation
- 2) Dyslexia has effects – causing:
 - Reading/writing problems, related language dilemmas, serious underachievement
 - Misunderstandings that lead to compounded, often severe, problems,
 - Along with* compensatory strengths, related (and unrelated) talents, and tremendous potential for high achievement in school and life
- 3) Teacher preparation programs do not address clear understanding of dyslexia, often:
 - Denying its existence
 - Not teaching effective ways to address the reading, writing, and related problems
 - Blame the kid (and/or family)
- 4) “Literacy” preparation programs:
 - Do not consider the remediation of dyslexic reading/writing problems to be in their “domain”
 - Nationwide have over-arching “philosophies” that run counter to the needs of dyslexic students
- 5) “Special Education” preparation programs often:
 - Focus on larger arrangements (and philosophies), like “inclusion
 - Rarely consider reading and math disorders as their realm of “specialty”
- 6) Schools do not commonly convey clear understanding of dyslexia to students, parents, or incoming staff. Frequently, they:
 - Focus on “standards”, prevailing curriculum, grade-level expectations, “behaviors”
 - Misconstrue signs of dyslexia and, inadvertently, convey distorted information
 - Miss the most overt signs of dyslexia, hesitant about seeking consultation or early evaluation



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3.19.16 Testimony

City Council's Committee on Education, and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, and Disability Services

We would like to thank the Committee on Education, and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, and Disability Services, together with Legislative Counsel Gary Altman and the rest of the members of this committee, for holding this important hearing on Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based Learning Disabilities.

As INCLUDEnyc (formerly Resources for Children with Special Needs), we are testifying today to ask that the New York State Legislature pass, and the Governor sign, A.4330/S.5439, legislation regarding the certification or training of teachers, administrators, and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.

INCLUDEnyc is a parent resource center for families who have a child, from birth through 26, with a disability. We directly serve over 5,000 parents annually through our Resource Line and workshops in New York City's five boroughs. All of our services are free to our families.

Our Resource Line statistics mirror those of the International Dyslexia Association, which estimates that 15-20% of the population has symptoms of dyslexia. Approximately 18% of our Resource Line calls are from families who state that they have a child with dyslexia or a related disability issue. In our parent workshops, 30% of attendees indicate dyslexia or related disabilities as the primary concern for their child.

As indicated in the A.4330 Memo, school districts "are reluctant to reference or use dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in evaluations, eligibility determinations or in developing the individualized education program (IEP) under the IDEA." In spite of the significant number of inquiries we already receive about dyslexia and related disabilities, many more parents may not know the exact nature of their child's disability, or even that such a disability exists.

The reluctance to identify these disabilities can lead to a classification that does not reflect a student's actual disability and, therefore, to inappropriate methods of remediation. In our experience working with parents, we often find that dyslexia is misidentified as another disability that fits with the currently approved classifications. For example, a child may be classified as having an emotional or intellectual disability -- one of the 13 approved classifications -- when in fact the root of his behavioral or intellectual issue is dyslexia.

Since current Department of Education evaluations do not identify dyslexia, parents who suspect this type of learning disability feel compelled to seek costly private evaluations. Once a proper diagnosis is obtained, parents then have to find appropriate supports for their child's learning. In our conversations with parents, we find that they frequently encounter significant hurdles when trying to obtain these services from their public schools.

We receive many calls from parents asking how we can help them obtain access to private schools, or help with finding other services that can only be accessed at high financial or logistical cost. A lag in funding reimbursement causes the need for parents to pay for these services out of pocket. The vast majority of the parents with whom we speak do not have the financial means to do so.

As a child ages, the consequences of the failure to address dyslexia and related learning disabilities at a young age become greater. Undiagnosed or unaddressed dyslexia has a long-term effect on a child's education. As your research indicates, students who are not reading on grade level by the third grade are unlikely to catch up to their peers. Our experience corroborates these findings.

About one-third of the transition-aged students in our Project Possibility program have a learning disability. Many of these students are over-aged, under-credited high school youth, some of whom have fallen behind in school primarily because they are dyslexic. These students, for example, are 17 years old and in 9th grade because they have only a quarter of the credits needed to graduate from high school. They are in jeopardy of not receiving a high school diploma.

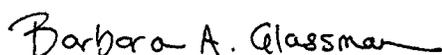
For non-English speaking families, we have also seen how dyslexia and related learning disabilities present another layer of complexity and difficulty. Non-English speaking children can be misclassified because they have neither the English language skills to test their actual level nor an English-speaking parent to advocate on their behalf for testing in their primary language.

We agree with and emphasize the need for many more professionals who are certified and trained to teach students with dyslexia and related disorders. In our work, we see firsthand that classroom environments which employ a multisensory approach can "break the code" for students with dyslexia and related learning disabilities, and thus enable them to stay on track and succeed in their academic careers.

We believe this legislation will lead to support services that are highly cost-effective, and represent a sound investment by taxpayers. We urge you to pass and sign this legislation regarding the certification or training of teachers, administrators, and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.

Thank you for your time and for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to partnering with you to improve equity and access for all young people with dyslexia and related disabilities and their families in New York City.

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara A. Glassman
Executive Director

T2016-428 Oversight: Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based Learning Disabilities

April 19, 2016

As a clinical neuropsychologist I evaluate children's cognitive, learning, and social-emotional/psychological needs. Evaluations target educational planning, as the primary focus and vehicle for change and hope for children is our educational system. I am confident from the materials you have reviewed and testimonies presented that this committee is well versed on the statistics related to dyslexia. I was invited here today to speak about my perspective from these last 22 years of practice evaluating thousands of students.

There is overwhelming scientific data on dyslexia; on its existence as a diagnostic entity, the negative consequences if not remediated, and most importantly on the methods of evaluation, monitoring progress and interventions. Yet a lack of understanding and resources for intervening exists at every step along the way. I have had many experiences with all level of educators who not only missed subtle or glaring signs of the disorder, but have argued whether a child has it when presented with clear evidence. The evaluation methods and tools used in our schools are not sensitive enough, and there is a clear lack of understanding of the signs and presentation of dyslexia.

It is refreshing and hopeful to be testifying in support of proactive plans to help identify and treat children with dyslexia, as opposed to my more typical testimony on what has failed or what is not an appropriate plan. The cost related to those times that I am forced

to testify is all too often forcing the DOE to pay upwards of \$50,000/year tuition at an appropriate private school, as well as for the costs of protracted litigation. The monetary costs of not intervening are much greater as failing to master reading sets forward so many negative trajectories that could have been preventable. Certainly from a numbers perspective this initiative makes good fiscal sense. The most significant cost that is not measured monetarily is of course the mental health needs of a child with dyslexia.

These children will meet with failure as a student at different points. All too often I have seen devastating, and harder to remediate anxiety, depression, social difficulties and plummeting self-esteem due to dyslexia not having been appropriately identified or treated.

Clearly more needs to be done immediately and at the earliest periods of time.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.



Pediatric Assessment Learning & Support

DR. DAVID SALSBERG BIO:

Dr. David Salsberg is a licensed clinical neuropsychologist in Manhattan, an Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor of Neuropsychology at Weill Cornell Medical College in the Department of Neurological Surgery, and a Clinical Instructor at The NYU School of Medicine in the Departments of Pediatrics. Dr. Salsberg is the Director of Pediatric Assessment, Learning, and Support, a multidisciplinary group practice in Manhattan. He is the former Associate Director of Pediatric Psychology and Neuropsychology at NYU Langone Medical Center's Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation, Department of Neonatology, and The Center for Children, as well as Coordinator of Psychosocial Services and Pediatric Psychology at The Stephen D. Hassenfeld Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. In addition to therapy and treatment, his practice specializes in conducting neuropsychological and educational evaluations for children; as well as school consultation and advocacy. Over the past 20 plus years Dr. Salsberg has worked with children of all ages and their families with various physical, developmental, neurological, psychological and learning disabilities. In teaching and clinical work his primary focus is always on the proper assessment, diagnosis and appropriate educational and treatment recommendations for each child. Dr. Salsberg conducts therapy with children, families and runs support groups for fathers of children with special needs.

Dr. Salsberg has published numerous articles and chapters, led research initiatives, and has presented at grand rounds and conferences at numerous hospitals, schools and institutions around the country. Dr. Salsberg has served as an expert reviewer for numerous professional journals, including The Journal of Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine. Dr. Salsberg has also served as an expert witness in civil, federal and criminal court cases, in addition to many educational law hearings. He has been interviewed on topics such as child development, neuropsychological evaluations, autism and trauma on radio and in various periodicals including The NY Times: Science Times, and New York Magazine; and has been featured on Keeping Kids Healthy on PBS channel thirteen. Dr. Salsberg consults and reviews for numerous organizations including Understood.org, runs support groups

In addition to clinical work, Dr. Salsberg helped develop and serves on the board of a number of not-for-profit organizations. Daniel's Music Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides free music programs for people with disabilities in the New York City area. Dr. Salsberg also serves on numerous professional advisory boards, including two special education schools in Manhattan, namely The Gateway School and the Reece School; as well as The IDEAL School, which is a private school in Manhattan committed to an inclusion model of education. Dr. Salsberg also serves on the professional advisory board of The Meeting House, an after-school program for children with special needs; as well as on the Professional Advisory Boards of Ramapo for Children, The New York Center for Child Development (NYCCD) and The New York Center for Infants and Toddlers (NYCIT).

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STEPHEN GAYNOR SCHOOL

Testimony before New York City Council
Hearing on the identification and treatment of students with dyslexia
April 19, 2016

Dear City Council members,

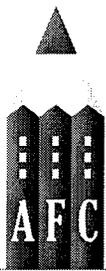
Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on behalf of New York City's struggling young readers. I have been working with children with language-based learning disabilities for over twenty-two years. As a teacher, administrator and head of school at Stephen Gaynor School, I have had the opportunity to see students who entered Gaynor with limited and no reading skills become proficient readers. While I could easily state that it was our gifted faculty that enabled these children to unlock the code to reading, it would not be telling the entire story.

The teachers at Gaynor are trained to use a multisensory phonics based instruction more commonly known as the Orton-Gillingham or O-G approach. My school has been using this approach since our founding by my grandmother back in 1962. The O-G approach has been around since the 1930's and in 2000 the National Reading Panel reviewed hundreds of studies and concluded that programs that utilize direct, systematic phonics based approaches such as Orton-Gillingham to address dyslexia present the most effective method of providing students with an accurate foundation of phonological decoding for higher level reading skills.

While this methodology has been successful at Stephen Gaynor, you might be thinking how this would work within the larger and more complex New York City Department of Education. For the past ten years my school has run an after school reading program called the Community Learning Center or CLC. The CLC is a partnership with two neighboring public schools PS 166 and PS 84. Every fall, we evaluate the bottom quartile readers in each of their first grade classrooms. Based on the results of our evaluation, we invite twenty-five of the lowest readers to attend our program at no charge to the school or family. These students work with our teachers in small groups for one-hour sessions twice a week. With this limited exposure to O-G, I am pleased to announce that we have been able to get the vast majority of the CLC students reading on grade level by the end of second grade. Imagine if all of New York City's young learners could have access to that type of instruction five days a week.

Thank you,

Dr. Scott Gaynor
Head of School



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

Testimony to be submitted to the New York City Council Committees on Education and Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services

RE: Oversight: Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based Learning Disabilities

Advocates for Children of New York
April 19, 2016

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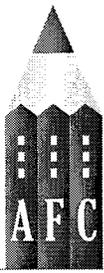
Deputy Director

Matthew Lenaghan

Good afternoon. My name is Maggie Moroff. I am the Special Education Policy Coordinator at Advocates for Children of New York (AFC) and am testifying today on AFC's behalf. I also work as the Coordinator of the ARISE Coalition. I'd like to speak with you this afternoon on the need to make certain that our public schools are prepared to provide all students, including those with dyslexia and other disabilities, with appropriate, evidence-based literacy instruction.

AFC is a not-for-profit organization that works to protect the rights of New York City's most vulnerable students, including students with dyslexia and other disabilities. We have been doing that work for over 40 years. For decades, parents have come to us desperate for help because their child needs more support in learning to read. Typically, these parents are frustrated and scared, having hit wall after wall in advocating for their child. As the mother of a 13-year-old daughter with a learning disability explained to us:

"I've done everything. I've done everything a parent is supposed to do. I had her in Early Intervention. I worked with her after school. I made sure that she did the work. And she doesn't have a behavior issue, she doesn't have attendance issues. So, like now she's 13 years old, I want her to be able to go to college. How can she ever go to college if she's not at grade level? How can she ever have a future without higher education?"



Undoubtedly, it should be an educational priority to teach this young girl, and others like her who have dyslexia and other disabilities, to read. But we know from speaking with families day after day that far too many of these students have not had access to the targeted, research-based literacy instruction they so desperately need to advance in school and function in society when they leave school. Test data confirms the problem, with less than 7% of students with IEPs in grades 3-8 who take the State's ELA exams achieving proficient scores.

Recently, AFC released a report, *A is for All: Meeting the Literacy Needs of Students with and without Disabilities in the New York City Public Schools* (http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/a_is_for_all.pdf?pt=1) where we reviewed research on literacy instruction and highlighted several promising programs in the City. In the report, we made a number of recommendations relevant to today's topic. Specifically we urged that the DOE:

- Develop a comprehensive, multi-year plan to meet the literacy needs of all students, including those with dyslexia and other disabilities.
- Prepare and support classroom teachers by building literacy expertise in every school, including elementary, middle, and high schools, District 75 schools and District 79 programs. The Mayor's Reading for All initiative, which will train on-site reading coaches to support literacy instruction in grades K-2, is a great start. Teaching colleges need to step up to the plate as well and produce graduates who are prepared to deliver evidence-based instruction to struggling readers.
- Use technology – Assistive Technology and Accessible Educational Materials - to support instruction; and
- Improve communication with families, making families true partners in the work ahead to improve literacy rates. Families need to know how to support their children's literacy development and how to get help when current strategies don't seem to be working.

Of course, it should go without saying that all these reading supports and literacy instruction must be provided to students who are English Language Learners with language supports as necessary.



There is no more time to waste. Students who don't learn to read in grade school are in danger of increased behavioral and mental health challenges as they get older. They are far less likely to graduate from high school, which, not surprisingly, corresponds to an increased likelihood they'll live their adult lives below the poverty line. We can't blame the students or their disabilities for the dismal outcomes. Rather, the system has repeatedly failed to provide necessary and appropriate supports. It's not too late to turn this around. With adequate resources, dedicated teacher preparation, and a strong commitment from everyone involved, school staff won't have to struggle to teach reading, students won't have to struggle to read, and parents won't have to fear that their children, regardless of whether or not they have dyslexia or another disability, won't leave school as readers.

In keeping with our testimony, we would like to add our support to the resolution before the Council calling for the State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign A 4330 and S 5439 regarding the certification or training of teachers, administrators and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

DYSLEXIA

Wendy Ramos, Founder and Executive Director, Wishes of Literacy, Inc.
Testimony 4/19/16 Oversight Hearing

Good Afternoon:

I feel privileged to be able to address you on the topic of Dyslexia and the struggles our NYC students and their families face on a daily basis because of the lack of awareness, understanding and services.

My son, Luis, struggled in school from the very beginning and no one in his school could figure out why this intelligent, creative boy couldn't learn. Well intentioned teachers moved him from ICT classes to Special Ed classes and suggested private tutoring. Around the age of 7, it was suggested by his tutor that he see a neurologist, and he was finally diagnosed with dyslexia. The doctors explained it was common, it had nothing to do with his intelligence and told me to get him out of the DOE right away, that they would not help him.

I was excited to have an answer to his struggles, but overwhelmed by the thought of sending him on a bus 4 hours a day to private school. I thought I would speak to his teachers and principal, this is an educational issue, now that I had a reason, they would be the ones who could help him. I was wrong. As soon as I mentioned dyslexia the walls went up and I heard all kinds of excuses. We don't recognize dyslexia, it cannot be put on his IEP, we do not have anyone trained who can help him. I educated myself on my child's rights, Orton-Gillingham and what helps children with dyslexia and fought for services for him. It was a never ending battle and in 5th grade when he still could not read, write or do math I was told by his Vice Principal some kids are not meant to be successful! I knew in that moment, I had to get him out of the DOE and into a private school for kids with dyslexia and similar learning disabilities. We were the lucky ones, our request for private school funding was approved in days, the DOE had no chance, they failed him for 6 years and the gap was too big. For the past four years my son has traveled like a grown man commuting to work. Four hours a day to Teaneck, NJ. They had him reading in 6 months! 6 months using pure authentic Orton-Gillingham every day. Now he is a freshman in the high school and is honor roll math and computer science. My only regret is that I waited and did not listen to that doctor who told me to get him out.

Because of our struggle and all I learned, I decided I wanted to help other families in the same situation and I founded Wishes of Literacy. We just opened a literacy center that offers an array of affordable services that include, evaluations, advocacy, one to one Orton-Gillingham tutoring, as well as Associate Level Orton-Gillingham certification classes on Staten Island. We are the only ones helping the over 9000 students struggling with dyslexia on SI, so, on a daily basis I get numerous calls from parents desperate for help and from teachers frustrated because they do not know how to help their own students. Our stories are all so similar, still so many years later the stories have not changed. The stories need to change now.

Dyslexia is not new, it is the most common learning disability, yet the most misunderstood and most underserved. We know what works and how to help these kids. Yet principals and educators feed so much misinformation, and much of it intentional, that parents don't know what to do or what to believe. Every step of the way is a fight for acceptance and services and more time wasted before these kids get the help that they need and deserve.

You've heard the testimonies, Kindergarten screenings for phonological and phonemic awareness and teachers trained in authentic, full-fledged Orton-Gillingham methodologies. For the older students, one to one or very small group Orton-Gillingham instruction. If not the struggle progresses and can become unbearable. They will struggle with college entrance exams and job applications and to teach their own children to read, that's if they make it that far... because you have also heard the statistics of the juvenile justice population. We as a city, state, as a nation should be ashamed of ourselves when we say we look at fourth grade reading scores to determine how many beds our prisons will need. We have condemned our dyslexic children to failure without even giving them a chance.

What needs to change? We need future teachers trained at the college level in authentic Orton-Gillingham. Dyslexia needs to be a course, not a paragraph in a book. Every DOE employee should have a training on dyslexia. To learn what it is and what it is not. All our current Kindergarten through 2nd graders should be screened for dyslexia and all our Kindergarten through 2nd grade teachers need authentic Orton-Gillingham training to be administered to every child in class as the method to teach reading, writing and spelling and we need select individuals also trained to help the older children whose gap is too big. Lastly, and specific to Staten Island, we need a school just for our dyslexic and LD kids. Enough with our children having to go to the other boroughs and NJ for their education!

As I said, these children are our future, and it is our responsibility to do everything we can to make sure that future is a bright one.

Wendy Ramos, Founder and Executive Director, Wishes of Literacy, Inc.
Testimony 4/19/16 Oversight Hearing

April 19, 2016

Good Afternoon, my name is Elizabeth Hendrix; I have a Masters in Reading and am a Certified Academic Language Therapist. In order to become a CALT I had to attend 2 additional years of training with continuing education required in order to maintain my certification.

My granddaughter is dyslexic. She attended public school until it was apparent the teachers did not know how to instruct a dyslexic child. Since NY does not recognize the word "dyslexia" my son had her tested privately. At the expense of the NY people she went to a private school at a cost of about \$30,000.00 a year. Unfortunately, the private school teachers were only trained in PAF for 5 days at Churchill, with no follow up. When I observed in my granddaughter's class it was very obvious that the teachers were ill trained. They were doing the program incorrectly, mispronouncing the phonemes, and telling the students wrong information. Five days is not enough training, especially when there is no follow-up or further training.

My granddaughter had to come to me 4 days a week to learn how to read, write, and spell. Obviously there is something wrong with this picture. Why is NY paying private schools millions upon millions of dollars that ARE NOT doing their job

correctly? This money could be spent instructing public school teachers how to teach not only dyslexic students but any student that has difficulty learning to read. Instead of reaching only a few students', public school teachers could reach thousands of children. Both special and general education teachers do not know the early signs and what to do. Dyslexia can be identified as early as kindergarten.

A student DOES NOT have to fail before intervention takes place. We are letting our future down by letting our children fall through the cracks.

It WILL NOT cost an extra dime if we take all that money the state is giving to private schools and put it to more productive use by properly training public school teachers. After training there MUST be follow up!

I could make many more comments, examples, and quote research but I am limited to only 3 minutes

Thank you,

Elizabeth Hendrix, CALT

www.dyslexiatutornyc.com

eahendrixnyc@gmail.com

347-882-1074

**TESTIMONY OF CHRISTINA REUTERSKIÖLD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND CHAIR, NEW YORK
UNIVERSITY STEINHARDT DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE SCIENCES AND DISORDERS****BEFORE****THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION HEARING ON ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF
STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA AND RELATED LANGUAGE-BASED DISABILITIES**

April 19, 2016

Chairperson Dromm, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today on a topic that I care deeply about.

My name is Christina Reuterskiöld, and I am an Associate Professor and Chair of the NYU Steinhardt Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders, where we educate future Speech-Language Pathologists. My research focuses on developmental language disorders in children, with a special interest in the reciprocal development of oral and written language.

Literacy skills are part of an individual's language skills. There is a reciprocal relationship between the development of reading and writing and the development of oral language skills throughout the school-years.

Children we think of as dyslexic are challenged by the decoding phase of reading in an orthographic system, like English. Children with dyslexia struggle with decoding and encoding of the alphabetic system - with difficulties sounding out words, decoding words, and spelling words. These children will come from two groups:

- A. Children who have had an earlier oral language learning disability, or language disorder, without any apparent reason - such as autism, intellectual handicaps, or social deprivation. This group represents approximately 7% of all kindergarteners, and many of these children continue to struggle with literacy learning.
- B. The second group are children, who have not been identified with an oral language disorder, but who struggle when their language system is taxed with the challenge to learn to read and write, which requires them to actively think about language as a system, and represent spoken words and sounds in writing.

A third group of children do not show significant problems with decoding, and they would therefore not be included under the diagnosis of dyslexia. These children have oral reading skills that sound fine, but they have poor reading comprehension and are talked about as "poor comprehenders." They typically also have weaker general language skills, including a lower level of oral language comprehension. When the oral and written language they have to process in the classroom gets increasingly complex, they struggle.

Poor comprehenders can go undetected, and fall behind in all academic areas, if we do not have structured identification and screening systems in place. Language skills (oral and written) are used in every single subject in school, not just in ELA.

So what can we do to help children with these different problems? Early identification and screening is central. Letter-identification, and tasks that test if children have the awareness that words are made of sounds and can be represented by letters, are good screening tasks. We also have to make sure that comprehension is tested, not just reading fluency. Finally, it is important to raise awareness of different types of oral language and literacy difficulties, to make sure that all children who need help get help.

I am pleased to see that proposed legislation would provide continuing education for teachers and school administrators in the area of dyslexia and language-learning disabilities. Early identification and support is important, but it is also important to continuously screen students, since language processing vulnerabilities change over time and may look different at different points in development.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and for taking the time to have a hearing on a topic that affects so many children in New York City and New York State. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Testimony to NYC Council's Joint Hearing on Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia to be delivered on Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony today on behalf of the Staten Island Borough President, James S. Oddo. My name is Rose Kerr; I serve as the Director of Education for the Borough President.

Improving access to special education services for our Staten Island students is a priority of the Borough President. As a result, in order to ascertain the scope of the issue of obtaining adequate services for our dyslexic students, he began meeting with parents, advocates and students. He also visited specialized schools in order to become familiar with educational environments where dyslexic students feel hope and the relief that comes with understanding that they can do it, and a belief that they will do it.

However, it has become apparent that although the DOE has recently taken steps in training classroom teachers in intervention strategies for dyslexic students, they are not willing at this time to entertain the notion of opening a stand-alone school for our children who struggle with reading.

As a result, we are working hard to bring our borough a specialized school built around the model of the Community School in Teaneck, NJ, be it a private non-profit, a charter, or a regular DOE school dedicated to the large population of students who are not obtaining the needed, specialized instruction in their district schools.

We applaud the City Council's efforts to address the needs of students with Dyslexia and related language-based learning challenges, and agree, in large measure with the statements written by Daniel Dromm, New York City Council member for the 25th district and Chairman of the NYC Council's Committee on Education, and Robert Jackson, former Council member and chairman of the Committee on Education, in the recent article "*How to better serve dyslexic students in our public schools*". We concur that public schools should:

Over...

- “increase dyslexia awareness and training on dyslexia and appropriate intervention strategies for teachers....”
- give students entry points into lesson that will allow them to have “access to proven teaching methodologies and helping dyslexics learn to use their learning differentiation to their advantage...”
- “provide social-emotional support and access... to student evaluations” and provide “support for all parents” and families “in the form of advocacy, resources, and knowledge”
- develop “partnerships between the DOE and CUNY to prepare teachers going into public schools” and
- “support policies and legislationthat require the certification or training of teachers ...in the area of dyslexia....”

Thank you very much, and please know this: whether you are a struggling reader, a family member, a teacher or school administrator, advocate, or governmental body, such as the one convened today, you have a strong partner sitting in the Office of the Staten Island Borough President.

Ximena Ibarra -City Council Testimony

Hello, my name is Ximena Ibarra and I live in Queens New York. I knew my daughter Melanie had an issue early on but I didn't know what it was. My husband and I are so dedicated to our children. We didn't know what to do and felt alone because we didn't know any other families who were going through the same thing. I tried to tell Melanie's public school teachers that there was something wrong. Year after year they kept telling me that Melanie was ok, but even when she was younger, I knew that having a 4th grader that could not read or write was an issue.

I couldn't believe it, but the school told us to lower our standards. They told me that the only thing Melanie could be was a hairdresser. They stuck her in a Special Ed class to fail or eventually drop out. My daughter is a responsible, outgoing, wonderful kid, but she cried every day because no one in her old school wanted to have her in their group.

I was finally referred to Advocates for Children. Our attorney was wonderful and a big help. After we had Melanie evaluated, we learned that she has dyslexia and we found out that she was reading on a third grade level even though she was headed into the ninth grade. With the help of our lawyer, my husband and I fought to get Melanie the help she needs. It was a long and hard process, but we stayed with it and won the case to get her in the Lowell private school where they believe in our daughter and they are finally teaching her how to read.

My daughter is doing really well now. She stopped crying and she has made friends at her new school. She is getting the help and support she needs there and she is feeling like she can do more on her own. I'm not saying that she doesn't still need help, but with the help of teachers who know what they're doing, things keep getting better. Melanie is telling me, "Mommy I understand". I also think that Melanie is a child who could benefit a lot from Assistive

Technology, which we've been told could bring her to a reading level two grades above where she's working now.

Melanie is in the honors class now at Lowell. She is going to go to college! She wants to be a veterinarian. By giving Melanie the help she needs, we are helping all of us because now she can grow up to be a contributing member of society. Maybe she'll even take care of your pets one day.

Now my son is having trouble too, but because I went down this road with my daughter we anticipate less obstacles getting him what he needs in the public school. They know I know what I'm doing and I will advocate to be sure he gets help with his reading.

I know there are so many children struggling with Dyslexia who need help. More of them need to get the help from their teachers in their schools no matter where they go to school. There aren't enough placements in private schools for all the kids that need the help. Our public schools need to be better, teachers need to know where to turn when their children aren't learning, and family members need to know what they can do to be a successful advocate.

Thank you for a chance to speak today. I want all students to get the help Melanie's had.

Ptahra Jeppe's City Council Testimony

Good Afternoon, my name is Ptahra Jeppe. Thank you for allowing me to speak with you today. According to Current studies, in a classroom of 35 students, at least 5 of them have deficits in reading associated with dyslexia, whether anyone knows it or not. The numbers could be even higher. the problem is that many people may not be diagnosed or a lot of people do not disclose that they have it, which is why I felt so alone as a child and at every step of my life feeling like I am reinventing the wheel.

I am now very open about my disability because I believe that it is a part of who I am. I was diagnosed in the third grade with dyslexia. I was recently re-tested and I now read on about the 4th or 5th grade reading level, which does not include fluency or decoding. If those things were factored in, I would read significantly lower. I am sharing this with you because as an African American Female from Bedford Stuyvesant Brooklyn, I was told I was the student that was not even going to be able to even graduate high school, let alone be a productive member of society.

My family and I did not give up. I experienced almost every academic environment. However, I had to go to schools outside of my neighborhood. In fact, the DOE did not have the ability to properly handle my dyslexia at all and in the seventh grade, they paid for me to attend a private school for children with language based learning disabilities. It was there, that I began receiving methods of teaching reading that actually help students with dyslexia. This was an opportunity that many students do not get because it is a hard and expensive process. The tuition alone is approximately \$50,000, which is crazy because if all teachers were trained in their teacher preparation courses in methods of teaching reading, it would have saved the city so much money.

I am often shocked when new and seasoned teachers share with me that they don't really know what dyslexia is, which maybe why I was not tested until the third grade even though I could

not physically read any of the words on the page, or they don't know what can help students that have it.

Thanks to my family, teachers, accommodations, multi-sensory techniques, and assistive technology, I defied the odds! I not only graduated high school, but I received a New York State regents diploma. I then went on to attend Adelphi University where I graduated Magna Cum Laude along with other honors. At the age of 24, I was asked to come on board as Chief of Staff to NYS Assemblymember Simon, where I served until I resigned to attend law school.

My journey is proof that with the right amount of opportunity, resources, and support students with dyslexia can become successful. That is why we need Early identification, to use the terms dyslexia on students IEP, and adequate teacher training in methods that help students with dyslexia and related learning disabilities. To insure that students no longer linger in the back of the classroom without the help they need. It is our duty as New Yorker's to make sure that all children are given the opportunity and tools to become successful!

Dyslexia (Plus) in Public Schools

Debbie Meyer, Task Force Member, Testimony 4/19/2016 Oversight Hearing

Chairman Dromm, Chairman Cohen:

Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Debbie Meyer (but of course I am not the famous education reformer Deborah Meier). I am, though, a founding member of the Dyslexia (Plus) Task Force. This is why.

I am the mother, wife, sister-in-law and aunt to dyslexic people - yes, it runs in families. My son began public school here in NYC at PreK. Before 2nd grade, the school noted that he seemed to be struggling with reading, and placed him in an ICT class with an IEP. The 2nd grade psycho educational evaluation noted his cognitive abilities far above the norm, his reading slightly above norm despite not being able to sound out a single word, and writing far below the norm. We explained how dyslexia runs in our family, but when we discovered the school wouldn't test for this, we took our son for a private neuro-psychological evaluation. Dyslexia was confirmed and an Orton Gillingham-based literacy curriculum was recommended. However, at school he continued to be taught language arts with a method that does not address dyslexia- his teachers and school staff had not received the proper preparation to support his learning needs. He continued to struggle. His frustration impacted his self-esteem. Exhausted each day, he could not focus during the additional tutoring designed for dyslexic students that we arranged for him. His anxiety escalated and he began to write on his arms and legs and tell us how he wanted to die. He needed help. He started therapy, and for 5th Grade, we pulled our son from public education and were fortunate to get him a seat at the Windward School. He is doing well now, but has not yet regained the full degree of empathy he used to have for others who struggle.

My son's story is rather typical. Max Brooks, the son of the famous movie director, Mel Brooks, testified last year in Congress about his own experience with dyslexia. Let me share a few of his words:

"...The most important thing to discuss here is the psychological and emotional damage. More [devastating] than the learning disability dyslexia causes is the blow to your self-esteem. Because once you are in that hole it can take you the rest of your life to climb out. There is nothing more frustrating for a child to work twice as hard as the other kids and do half as well. Eventually the kids just buy into the narrative as I did- maybe I'm just dumb. I'm clearly not lazy; I'm not undisciplined...."

Dyslexia can be diagnosed early. If teachers and pediatricians would screen for dyslexia in pre-k, kindergarten or first grade, a child can be set on the right path

for literacy. Had his pre-K teacher been more prepared, she would have noted that my son could not identify rhymes and screened for phonological and phonemic awareness. She would have asked if reading problems ran in our family and she could have suggested we place our son in a classroom that uses a multisensory language literacy curriculum taught with fidelity, and she would have directed us to a myriad of vetted resources.

While my son's story of struggle is typical, our family's story of eventually finding the right resources is not. When I realized what an effort it was for me - an older, educated mother of one with a flexible schedule and a supportive husband - I could not imagine how a parent of four kids with no spousal support and two jobs might do the same. The amount of mis-information that takes time to sift through simply astounds me. The number of phone calls and appointments that need to be made during working hours practically requires an administrative assistant. I thought - isn't it the job of our schools and pediatricians to help in a substantive way?

Also, I am involved in re-entry (from incarceration) and education. As you mentioned in your report, the dyslexia rate in the prison system is more than twice as high - just like the rate reported among NASA scientists. The list of successful dyslexics spans the career spectrum including lawyers, doctors, artists, entrepreneurs and more. Clearly, dyslexia does not have to be a prison sentence if students are properly supported.

I first considered founding a new public, possibly charter school for dyslexia, but realized how little this would help the large number of students that require it. Then I thought about a teacher training program, but there are many of those also not having a great effect. I did a survey on why that is, and found that the teachers who were trained did not have the support of their principals, and that there was so little knowledge that they could not build support among other staff either. Our task force wants to take the components of treating dyslexic students out of silos and create a school wide culture where students will thrive in their neighborhood schools.

The lack of training and implementation of programs for dyslexia (plus) is not unique to New York. This is a national issue. With the right investment NYC could be a national leader in educating cadres of teachers and school leaders who can and do reach dyslexic kids. It costs \$167,000 to jail a person at Rikers; it costs \$60,000 to incarcerate somebody in state prison - about the same as it is costing to educate my son and provide for his mental health. We should, instead, train our teachers and create a culture from principal through teachers, staff and parents to support dyslexic students.



FOR THE RECORD

DOMINICK AUCIELLO, PSYD
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April 18, 2016

Re: Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign A.4330/S.5439, legislation regarding the certification or training of teachers, administrators and instructors in the area of dyslexia and related disorders.

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dr. Dominick Auciello and I am a neuropsychologist who has been evaluating children with learning disabilities, including dyslexia, for the past 16 years. Dyslexia is not a matter of seeing letters or words backwards. It stems from a core difficulty processing and manipulating the individual sounds of our language, as well as difficulty being able to see something and quickly say what it is. These skills, called phonological awareness and speeded naming, are at the heart of dyslexia. It is possible to identify children at risk for developing dyslexia even in the preschool years, before they may be expected to read, such as when young children cannot identify or produce rhymes, tell what the first sound of a word is, or otherwise play with the sounds of our language.

I am a supporter of the public school system and have largely been pleased with the education my own children have received in New York City public schools. I feel fortunate that they do not struggle with reading, as do the hundreds of children I have evaluated, as well as families I have come to know personally through my own children. I have been dismayed over the years regarding the number of children attending public schools who are not properly identified as having dyslexia or are not provided with the appropriate instruction to remediate this disorder of reading.

The solution for dyslexia is not mysterious. The ingredients are (1) properly trained teachers who follow empirically supported multisensory interventions with fidelity, and (2) ample time spent in intervention for students at risk or already identified as dyslexic, which means daily instruction.

Even in Kindergarten, at risk children can be identified by assessing their phonological awareness and speeded naming skills. The wait and see approach is inadequate. Schools need to know how to assess these skills, identify at risk children, and begin the intervention early. Once children are past second grade, it takes considerably longer to remediate dyslexia and so intensive earlier intervention is essential.

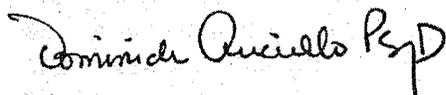
The consequences of dyslexia when not properly addressed go far beyond a child growing into an adult who cannot adequately read. There is a social-emotional cost as well, as

these otherwise bright children with many other strong thinking and learning skills come to see themselves in a negative light as compared to their peers, often feeling different and incompetent, anxious and depressed, frustrated and discouraged. They grow up feeling like their successes are not their own, that they have gotten lucky when things go their way.

Intervention science and neuroscience have paved a clear path for the identification and remediation of dyslexia. Children in public schools should not need to seek intervention outside of school or in many cases require placement in non-public schools. They deserve to have their free and public education support their needs appropriately, which includes proper and early identification, clear acknowledgement of dyslexia as a diagnosis within the student's individualized education plan, teachers and administrators trained in identification and intervention, and ample time spent with remedial efforts using empirically supported interventions.

For these reasons, I urge you to support this resolution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dominick Auciello PsyD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Dominick Auciello, PsyD
Neuropsychologist
Envisage Neuropsychology PC
License #015116

FOR THE RECORD

To whom it may concern,

I am a parent of a 10 year girl who is dyslexic. When my daughter was in second grade, I had her tested privately for a small fortune because the DOE does not test or provide services for dyslexic children. I went for a simple course and paid out of pocket of course to learn about Orton Gillingham. From this experience, I made a contact and had my daughter tutored through Skype from Texas for \$500 a month. And of course I paid because the DOE does not. My daughter has struggled with the traditional learning ways because the DOE refuses to recognize that this disability exists yet it has been known about longer than other disabilities. But it is not recognized through the eye therefore these children get less than those who have a visible disability. My daughters school caused more problems than solutions for her learning disability. They have not provided services for years and I had many arguments with the staff and incompetent principal. I emailed the chancellors and superintendent several times and we still have nothing in place other than new ways of pushing paper back and forth to one another. So disgusted with this system.

I would like to know who is available today at this meeting to tell my daughter that she is not worthy to receive a fair education because those sitting/ hiding behind a desk don't believe that her disability is worthy of an education.

It is very unfortunate that we have ignorant people calling the shots to help provide children and education and it is more unfortunate that I found out about this meeting very late and was unable to attend.

This testimony is a plea for help. I have done my job as a parent and will continue but those who are in the DOE have failed my daughter and all others who are dyslexic.

MAKE A CHANGE AND HELP THESE CHILDREN.

Thank you

Karen Esposito

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony of the Children's Defense Fund – New York
Before the Committee on Education and Committee on Mental
Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse
and Disability Services

“Oversight - Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and
Related Language-Based Learning Disabilities.”

New York City Council
April 19, 2016

Charlotte Pope
Policy Research Consultant



Children's Defense Fund – New York
15 Maiden Lane, Suite 1200 New York, NY 10038
(212) 697-2323 www.cdfny.org

The Children's Defense Fund's (CDF) Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a healthy start, a head start, a fair start, a safe start and a moral start in life, and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. CDF-New York's unique approach to improving conditions for children combines research, public education, policy development, community organizing and statewide advocacy activities, making us an innovating leader for New York's children, particularly in the areas of health, education, early childhood and juvenile justice. Through CDF's Cradle to Prison Pipeline® Campaign – a national initiative to stop the funneling of thousands of children, especially poor children and children of color down life paths that often lead to arrest, conviction and incarceration – CDF-NY works to replace punitive school discipline and safety policies in New York City schools with social and emotional supports that encourage a positive school climate.

Thank you to Chair Dromm, Chair Cohen, and the members and staff of the City Council Committees on Education and Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services for this opportunity to testify before the joint oversight hearing on "Addressing the Needs of Students with Dyslexia and Related Language-Based Learning Disabilities."

Overview

For the past year, CDF-NY has participated in the School Safety Working Group of the Mayor's Taskforce on School Climate and Discipline alongside other advocates, students, teachers, school staff and administrators, and representatives of City government. Recommendations released from Phase 1 of deliberations in July of 2015 included an initiative to improve training of staff in high-priority schools on how to identify and meet the needs of students with special needs. This effort was in part motivated by data revealing that from SY2012 to SY2014, suspension disparities between students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and general education students *increased*, where students with disabilities were suspended 2.6 times as frequently. Further, although the city's average suspension rate is 4.8 per 100 students, the top 10 schools with the highest suspension rates of students with disabilities issued 98 suspensions per 100 students with IEPs.¹ Our testimony today will speak to restorative responses to the behavior and academic performance of students with specific learning disabilities that allow for divestment from exclusionary discipline.

Research demonstrates that the majority of students with dyslexia encounter harmful experiences at school and, more specifically, are disproportionately susceptible to school pushout, incidents of bullying², and anxiety and depression³. Students who experience frustration with reading frequently report embarrassment and discouragement that may manifest in negative feelings about school, low self-esteem, and strategic classroom disruption or school avoidance.⁴ As the committee report recognizes, teachers' lack of dyslexia awareness can have a significant impact on students' classroom experience and sense of belonging in school. Because over 75,000 students in New York City public schools are classified as having a learning disability - around 40 percent of all students with IEPs⁵ - it is crucial that New York City schools come up with comprehensive structures, procedures, and policies to meet students' specialized learning needs in a way that both respects them and keeps them engaged in the classroom. This includes doing more to prepare and encourage teachers to better understand and support the unique needs of students with dyslexia and related language-based learning disabilities.

¹ Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline. (2015). Safety with Dignity: Policy Recommendations from the Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline. Retrieved from <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/sclt/downloads/pdf/Safety%20with%20Dignity%20-%20FINAL%20Complete%20Report%207.23.2.pdf>.

² Dahle, A., Knivsberg, A., and Andreassen, A. (2011). Coexisting problem behavior in severe dyslexia. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 11(30): 162-170.

³ Alexander-Passe, N. (2006). How dyslexic teenager cope: An investigation of self-esteem, coping and depression. *Dyslexia*, 12(4): 256-275.

⁴ Advocates for Children of New York. (2016). A is for All: Meeting the Literacy Needs of Students with and without Disabilities in the New York City Public Schools. New York, NY: Author. Available at http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/a_is_for_all.pdf?pt=1.

⁵ New York City Department of Education. (2016). Local Law 27 of 2015 Annual Report on Special Education: School Year 2014-2015. Retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6035782C-F95D-4224-8372-F2B1F7E9A226/0/LocalLaw27of20152292016FINAL.pdf>.

Discriminatory Reliance on Exclusionary Discipline

During the 2014-2015 school year, 44,636 total suspensions were issued in New York City Public Schools. Black students received 53.1% of all suspensions, and students with an IEP received 36.1%, while representing 26% and 13% of the total student population respectively.⁶ Literature on suspension continues to find that students with disabilities are suspended more often⁷ and more harshly⁸ than their peers who are not identified as students with disabilities. Moreover, racial disparities persist within suspension rates of the total population of students with disabilities. A study examining national data from the Office of Civil Rights found that Black students with disabilities were disproportionately targeted for out-of-school suspension as compared to other students with disabilities.⁹ Another study discovered that among the tens of thousands of schools, those schools that identified more Black students as having emotional disturbance or specific learning disabilities were also found to suspend Black students with disabilities at higher rates.¹⁰ This becomes increasingly inequitable as students with emotional or behavioral disorders or learning disabilities are arrested, incarcerated, and criminalized at a higher rate than their peers not identified as students with disabilities.¹¹

Several school-related factors make exclusionary discipline more likely for behaviors that are often manifestations of a student's disability: inadequate training for educators, zero-tolerance discipline policies, and a lack of school-wide positive behavior interventions, counseling, and harm prevention services.¹² Qualitative researchers have documented how the same student can behave differently in different classrooms,¹³ and how instances of harm and suspensions tend to go down when engagement in school goes up.¹⁴ The ability of teachers to organize classrooms and manage the behavior of their students is critical to positive educational outcomes, as many disciplinary actions begin with teachers trying to address routine classroom behavior.¹⁵ Schools may rely on exclusionary discipline like classroom removals and suspensions when they do not have the tools or capacity to remediate disruptive behaviors quickly.¹⁶ Helping teachers improve their classroom management skills in combination with their knowledge of specific learning disabilities would mean that many cases of distracting or harmful behavior could be stopped or prevented before they escalate to where the teacher writes a disciplinary referral.

Need for Restorative Practices

Recent research from the Research Alliance for New York City Schools found that schools with supportive environments maximize teachers' and students' learning opportunities, and that students' beliefs about their potential for academic success are shaped by the academic expectations schools set for them.¹⁷ Expanding the scope of educational possibilities available to students requires a fundamental

⁶ New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU). (2015). Suspension Data Fact Sheets: Student Safety Act Reporting on Suspensions. Retrieved from http://www.nyclu.org/files/SSA_Suspension_FactSheet_2014-2015.pdf.

⁷ Losen, D. (2012). Opportunities Suspended: The disparate impact of disciplinary exclusion from school. Los Angeles, CA: The Civil Rights Project, Center for Civil Rights Remedies.

⁸ Losen, D.J., Ee, J., Hodson, C., and Martinez, T.E. (2015). Disturbing Inequities: Exploring the Relationship Between Racial Disparities in Special Education Identification and Discipline. In D.J. Losen (Ed.), *Closing the School Discipline Gap: Equitable Remedies for Excessive Exclusion* (pp. 89-106). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

⁹ Karega Rausch, M., and Skiba, R. (2006). Discipline, Disability, and Race: Disproportionately in Indiana Schools. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation & Education Policy, Indiana University. Retrieved from http://www.indiana.edu/~equity/docs/discipline_disability_race_indiana.pdf.

¹⁰ Losen, D.J., Hodson, C., & Martinez, T.E. (2015).

¹¹ Linares-Orama, N. (2005). Language-learning disorders and youth incarceration. *Journal of Communication Disorders* 38: 311-9.

¹² Goldberg, P., and Garfinkel, L. (2013). *Students with Disabilities & the Juvenile Justice System: What Parents Need to Know*. Minneapolis, MN: Pacer Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pacer.org/ji/pdf/JJ-8.pdf>.

¹³ Harry, B., and Klingner, J. (2006). *Why are so many minority students in special education? Understanding race and disability in schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

¹⁴ Osher, D., Bear, G.G., Sprague, J.R., and Doyle, W. (2010). How can we improve school discipline? *Educational Researcher*, 39(1), 48-58.

¹⁵ Baker, P.H. (2005). Managing student behavior: How ready are teachers to meet the challenge? *American Secondary Education*, 33(3), 51-64.

¹⁶ Gregory, A., and Thompson, A. (2010). African American high school students and variability in behavior across classrooms. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 38: 386-402.

¹⁷ Kraft, M., Marinell, W.H., and Yee, D. (2016). Schools as Organizations: Examining School Climate, Teacher Turnover, and Student Achievement in NYC. New York, NY: The Research Alliance for New York City Schools. Retrieved from http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/research_alliance/publications/schools_as_organizations.

shift in how success in school is perceived, where opportunities are offered to all students and a shift in mindset about ability helps foster interactions that are supportive rather than punitive.¹⁸ Restorative practices have the capacity to transform the culture of discipline in NYC schools from one of exclusion to one focused on valuing learning diversity and meeting the needs of youth.

Restorative practices are especially important in situations, as research lays out, where teachers misinterpret student distractions or avoidance behaviors as defiance or disrespect.¹⁹ Although school staff across the city regularly utilize suspension to maintain a safe learning environment and to deter future misbehavior, there is no systematic evidence that suspension accomplishes these goals. In such situations, lost instruction time brought on by classroom removals and suspensions can accumulate, making it harder for students to keep up with their peers in coursework and contributing to students' disengagement from schooling. Factors noted as helpful for students with dyslexia include having strong connections with community, effective teachers, support from other individuals, and early remediation and intervention²⁰ - all factors supporting and supported by restorative justice practices. Encouraging schools to view the ideas associated with restorative justice as integral parts of the development and enactment of student IEPs has the potential to help support the behavior of students identified with disabilities.²¹ Any legislation to make schools a more just and respectful place, including legislation regarding the training of teachers to better care for student populations disproportionately impacted by exclusionary school policies, should take into account the need for restorative justice education and other positive school climate supports.

Conclusion

Schools may be able to reduce the exclusion of students with specific learning disabilities by collaborating with school stakeholders to build a whole-school restorative support system, ensure teachers have the needed resources and knowledge to support students who receive special education services, and support teachers' enactment of responsive and engaging curricula that shows respect for all students.²² Meeting the academic and behavioral resource needs of teachers through consistent, high-quality, ongoing professional development that is responsive to needs can lower exclusion rates for all students, as exclusion rates are lower in schools where teachers employ varied instruction to create engaging curricula and high academic expectations.²³

It is our hope that the Council continue dialogue with the DOE on the value of sustainable investment in restorative justice in schools and ending disparities in school pushout. At this time, we look forward to an Executive Budget that makes the investments needed that focus on the moral, social, and academic development of youth rather than punishment and exclusion. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.

¹⁸ Baines, A.D. (2014). *(Un)Learning Disability: Recognizing and Changing Restrictive Views of Student Ability*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

¹⁹ Alexander-Passe (2006) *see 4*

²⁰ Spafford, C., and Grosser, G. (2005). *Dyslexia research and resource guide*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

²¹ Wilson, M.G. (2013). Disrupting the Pipeline: The Role of School Leadership in Mitigating Exclusion and Criminalization of Students. *Journal of Special Education Leadership*, 26(2): 61-70.

²² Wilson (2013) *see 24*

²³ Skiba, R.J., and Sprague, J. (2008). Safety without suspensions. *Educational Leadership*, 66(1), 38-43.

**The NYC Special Education Collaborative & New York City Charter School Center
Dixon Deutsch, Vice President, Special Populations
Testimony Presented to the New York City Council Education Committee and the Committee
on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability
Services**

**Oversight Hearing on Ensuring Teachers are Properly Trained in Working with Students
with Dyslexia and Other Related Disorders
Tuesday, April 19, 2016**

Good afternoon, Chairperson Dromm and members of the New York City Council Committee on Education and the Committee on Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Disability Services. My name is Dixon Deutsch and I am the Vice President for Special Populations at the New York City Charter School Center (Charter Center).¹ I support both our NYC Special Education Collaborative² and ELL Supports teams. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today.

Dyslexia is a disability that can be supported; with proper teaching and high-quality instruction students with dyslexia can and should be expected to read and learn.

Here are a few facts from the National Center for Learning Disabilities for context:³

- 2.4 million children across the country are diagnosed as having learning disabilities (“LD”)
- 42% of students with disabilities are diagnosed as having a learning disability
- 2/3 of students identified as having a learning disability are male
- Students who are black or Hispanic are overrepresented in many categories of learning disabilities, while students who are white or Asian are underrepresented
- While dyslexia comprises a large percentage of students with learning disabilities, other areas include: dyscalculia, auditory processing deficit, visual processing deficit, and dysgraphia
- Since 2002, there has been an 18% decline of students in the LD category; the National Center for Learning Disabilities cites early childhood education, changes in LD classification, and teacher preparation as possible reasons for the decline

Having been a classroom teacher in both district and charter schools in New York City, I have experienced firsthand the challenges and successes of working with students with learning disabilities, and dyslexia specifically, I received no professional development my first two years as a teacher in how to reach the largest groups of students that have special needs. I found many of the methods used in integrated classrooms to be flawed. My experience has shown that proven methodology such as direct instruction is not used across the board with students who need it. I can even speak to receiving what I knew to be flawed coaching once I was offered courses on reading instruction. There was no sustained way to ensure that teachers who work with students with

¹ The New York City Charter School Center is an independent not-for-profit organization established in 2004 to help new charter schools get started, support existing schools, build community support, and train new leaders so that highly effective public charter schools can flourish.

² The NYC Special Education Collaborative is a program initiative of the Charter Center that empowers NYC schools with developing world-class, inclusive educational environments.

³ See: <https://www.nclld.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2014-State-of-LD.pdf>

special needs had the tools necessary to address those needs

My third and fourth year as a teacher I moved the City's charter school sector and experienced a huge difference in the way my school approached reading instruction. These tools, not crafted specifically for dyslexia but with a more comprehensive aim in mind, helped close the reading gap in my students with dyslexia, and they are easily replicable in any school:

- For over a week prior to the start of the school year, I was given professional development on how the alphabetic principle impacts learning,
- I was taught how to write lesson plans that taught reading,
- I was shown how to utilize student data in ensuring individualized student supports,
- I honed my skills within the direct instruction approach--all practices that can have a major impact on the learning of students with dyslexia.

Charter schools, by design, have the flexibility to implement a range of proven methods of instruction to address various levels of student need. As the VP of the New York City Charter School Center, and as a former teacher in both district and charter schools, I believe strongly that teachers should be given the tools to address the range of needs that they are likely to encounter in a classroom.

Thank you again.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Chin-a Panaccione

Address: 1 Stogies Court

I represent: Sands Pt, NY 11050

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1027

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/17

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Barbara Glassman

Address: 451 West End Ave 9E NY 10024

I represent: INCWUDEMJC

Address: 116 E 16th St, NYC NY 10003

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Susan Crawford

Address: 501 W. 110th St.

I represent: The Right to Read Project

Address: SAMZ

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1027

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hon. JoAnne Simon

Address: 341 Smith St, Brooklyn, NY

I represent: 52d AD

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Desiree Jones

Address: 387 Bradford St Brooklyn NY 11207

I represent: Faith Bowie Jones (My daughter)

Address: SI/IA

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1027

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: VICTORIA R. TACO

Address: 2422 UNIVERSITY AVE BX NY 10468 #57

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1027

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kristen Berger

Address: 219 W 81st ST NY NY 10024

I represent: Community Education Council 3

Address: 154 W 94th ST NY NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/2016

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Katherine Earnest

Address: Hunter College

I represent: Hunter College

Address: NYC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1027

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christina Reuterskiöld

Address: NYU

I represent: NYU Steinhart

Address: 70 Washington Sq South

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-19-16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ROBERT JACKSON
Address: 499 7th. Washington Ave 3A NYC 10033
I represent: Self + Dyslexia (Plus) Taskforce
Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr David Saksby
Address: 60 Madison Ave
I represent: Pediatric Assessment, Learning & Support
Address: 60 Madison Ave #1004 NYC 10010

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/06

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Wendy Ramos
Address: 408 O'Gorman Ave SI NY 10308
I represent: Wishes of Literacy Dyslexia Advocate
Address: 3274 Amboy Rd SI NY 10308

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/12/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rose Kerr

Address: S.I. Borough Hall

I represent: S.I. Borough President, James Oddo

Address: Richmond Terrace, S.I. NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brianna Johnson

Address: _____

I represent: Global Kids

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/2016

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Angela Gaudioso-Klein

Address: 308 Brighton St., S.I. NY 10307

I represent: Parent of Dyslexic child and

Address: Orton Gillingham tutor

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Digna Rosales-cvz

Address: _____

I represent: Global Kids Inc.

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karoline Polanco

Address: _____

I represent: Global kids

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aissaton Diabla

Address: Global Kids

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Samson Balagun

Address: Global Kids

I represent: Global Kids

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1027 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: James Wesley

Address: 110 W. 74th St NYC

I represent: the children of NYC w/dyslexia

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1027 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth A. Andrews NYC

Address: 4975 Broadway #12 NYC, NY 10034

I represent: the children of NYC w/dyslexia

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kazi Ateea

Address: 4207 13th Ave Bklyn NY 11219

I represent: Global Kids

Address: 37 E 25 St NY NY 10010

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375
 in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: UNANIMOUS

Address: 250 A CAME AV

I represent: Global Kids

Address: 137 E 25th Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Victoria Barro

Address: ~~137 E 25 St~~ 137 E 25 St NY NY 10010

I represent: Global Kids

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ximena Ibarra

Address: _____

I represent: SELF

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maggie Moroff

Address: _____

I represent: Advocates for Children

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Patricia Jeppe

Address: 96 Hancock St Brooklyn, NY 11216

I represent: _____

Address: _____

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maria Semchuk

Address: 2022 Palmetto St.

I represent: Global Kids

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Annie Willis

Address: 3210 Wallace Ave, Apt 12B

I represent: Global Kids

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kate Scherer

Address: _____

I represent: Global Kids

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0375

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yasmine Hussein

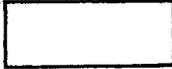
Address: 20-61-20th St

I represent: Global kids

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARY ERINA DRISCOLL (Dean of Education)

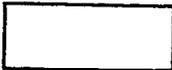
Address: 165 E 118 St 7E NY NY 10035

I represent: City College of New York

Address: 160 Convent Ave NY NY 10031

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1027

in favor in opposition

Date: 4.19.16 ^{1:00pm}

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Laura Cavalleri

Address: 842 VAN DUZER STREET SI NY 10304

I represent: DYSLEXICS FRIENDLY SCHOOL "PUBLIC"

Address: ENVIRONMENTAL

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1027 Res. No. 1027

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/2016

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Barbara Vivolo

Address: 12 Valley Rd Kings Park

I represent: Decoding Dyslexia NYS

Address: organization
Non for Profit grassroots movement

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carmen Alvarez

Address: Vice President,

I represent: United Federation

Address: of Teachers

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr. Randi Herman, 1st V.P. CSA

Address: 40 Rector St.

I represent: Council of School Supervisors & Admin

Address: 40 Rector St. NYC.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr John J Russell

Address: 212 E 93rd St

I represent: The Windward School

Address: 212 E 93rd St

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Phil Weinberg

Address: 52 Chambers St, NY, NY 10007

I represent: NYC DOE

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. T2016-4281 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Scott Gaynor

Address: 148 West 90th Street

I represent: Stephen Gaynor School

Address: 148 West 90th Street, NY, NY 10024

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Esther Friedman

Address: NYC DOE - 92 Chambers St. NY, NY 10007

I represent: NYC DOE

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jason Borges

Address: 52 Chambers St. NY, NY 10007

I represent: NYC DOE

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 375 Res. No. 1027
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PAULA HEITMAN

Address: 60 Tiffany Place #4A Brooklyn NY 11231

I represent: parent of a child with dyslexia

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-19-16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carolyn Strom, PhD

Address: 26 Wyckoff St #2

I represent: Children (advocate)

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Johanna Garcia

Address: City College

I represent: City College / Dystonia

Address: Madison

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/19/2016

Name: Debbie Meyer (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 217 West 136th Street

I represent: Dyslexia Plus Task Force

Address: 217 W 136th Street

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 18 April 2016

Name: Noelle Turtur (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 523 W. 112th St, NY NY

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms