

We are excited that a dyslexia bill has finally made it! As the parents of a child who was identified with Dyslexia we cannot express to you how much this bill is needed! We appreciate the time and work you have done on this bill.

In sharing our story we hope it provides information as to why this Dyslexia bill is needed. To share with you what our family and other families are going through with the schools and teachers.

If the teachers had the Dyslexia education, if the teachers had the resources, if the teachers were allowed to suggest Dyslexia testing. Maybe it wouldn't of taken 8 years for our son to be identified with Dyslexia.

Our story;

Our son started having difficulty in school in Kindergarten. He had some school testing and the school said he would benefit from speech therapy. We worked with the school for accommodations and goal setting and we write up the first IEP.

First grade, his teacher writes in a progress report "He needs to learn to read as the words are printed". He even attends summer school for reading between first and second grade. Between Kindergarten and 3rd grade he is still in speech therapy at school. He is obtaining small and steady growths with the school therapist but the therapist feels he should be further along so at the school's suggestion we seek a speech therapist after school as well.

Our son's 4th grade school year we are pushed by the school for a Neuropsychological evaluation. The school's special education teacher just returned from an Autism conference and tells us "I am 100% convinced your son is on the spectrum". The reason for her diagnosis is 'because after years of speech therapy he should be further along, SMART program hasn't advanced his reading, he can't copy from board to paper in class, and he struggles with vocabulary and spelling". We are outraged with the school and take our son to OHSU for the Neuropsychological Evaluation. The evaluation determines he is not on the Asperger's Spectrum and does not have Autism. It is recommended he has vision testing and auditory processing testing.

Between 4th grade and 6th grade our son has more speech therapy, auditory processing testing, occupational therapy, and vision therapy. We even change his eyeglass prescription to bifocals so he can see printed words easier.

Now brings 7th grade, his private speech therapist leaves the practice right before Christmas. Our son see's a new speech therapist who is in our local town of Newberg. I give Jamie all of the files, reports, testing, etc, she asks for a few days to read everything and

we make a follow up appointment. At the follow up appointment she does some testing of her own. At the first speech therapy appointment Jamie asks for us to come into her office. She gives us a paper that has no header, her verbal instructions are to check off what we see as our son. Simple enough until we are checking almost every box! With excitement, I asked Jamie "What is this?" I am teary eyed as I can not believe this paper is describing our son! And Jamie's reply was simple and heartfelt "Your son should to be tested for Dyslexia". She provided us information for testing and the different types of Dyslexia programs available so we can research the best one for our son.

During the summer of his ending 7th grade year, he receives Dyslexia testing from Better Learning Solutions. We meet with Mrs. Arnold two weeks later for the testing results and she tells us your son has been identified with Dyslexia. She said there were many "red flags" from the notes his teachers wrote in his progress reports and report cards. She said the special education teacher told us specific major signs that suggest to have Dyslexia testing and they are not the signs for Aspergers or Autism.

We were and still are excited that we had an answer and that it made sense. And at the same time are so very angry that we spent 8 years, countless therapy appointments as well as the expenses for all of those therapies. If the teachers from Kindergarten to 7th grade had any sort of Dyslexia awareness our son could of been identified years prior and it could of possibly changed his elementary years. Thankfully we are strong parent advocates and did not listen to the special education teacher during his 4th grade year.

Through Better Learning Solutions we found an amazing Dyslexia Specialist. Our son has Dyslexia tutoring appointments after school, twice a week with Tamera Boring. He has been in the Barton System since August 2013 and is currently on level 7 (there are 10 levels to complete).

Our son is now a freshman in high school. He has grown so much since August 2013 both academically and emotionally. It is amazing to see how much he has grown! He has more self confidence, better self esteem, more outgoing, has a bigger group of friends and he talks and shares so much more. He is succeeding and enjoying school. His favorite classes are Pre-Engineering and German. And one of the best things he has shared, "one of my favorite things to do is to read".

If you take anything away from our story please take note that not one teacher from Kindergarten to 7th grade even mentioned Dyslexia. The special education teacher in 4th grade said specific major Dyslexia signs but never mentioned Dyslexia. If teachers can attend Autism/Aspergers conference why not Dyslexia? We need to stop treating Dyslexia as an

incurable, contagious disease that we shouldn't talk about our acknowledge. Its a learning disability.

PLEASE this dyslexia bill MUST pass and MUST get funding! Please do not let another family go through what we have in identifying Dyslexia.

Thank you for taking the time to read our story.

Sincerely,
Troy and Jennifer Rossetti