



Written Testimony as Neutral before the

House Education Committee

on

HB- 2602

by

Lee Hanson, Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators

March 15, 2018

Madam Chairwoman, Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am writing to you as a parent of a child with a disability, as the Director of Special Services for Unified School District 232, and as the Secretary for the Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators.

I stand as neutral on HB- 2602 and feel the establishment of a legislative task force on dyslexia to be an appropriate initiative. Furthermore, I believe the recommendation to assemble a group of individuals with the purpose of researching evidence-based practices for both screening and instruction for children diagnosed with dyslexia to be a constructive movement for our students. My concern lies in the proposed assembly of the legislative task force.

- As currently stated, task force members, while representative of well-respected entities, would fail to adequately represent the very people who work with students on a daily basis, and who are familiar with practices being implemented for early identification and remediation of students identified as having a learning disability such as dyslexia.
- As outlined in both the *Individuals with Disabilities Act* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, educational teams making critical decisions regarding eligibility and programming should be made up of professionals familiar with the student, knowledgeable of educational practices and services, and able to commit necessary resources for student success. It seems logical to me that such a task force as outlined in HB-2602, should adhere to practices as defined in both of the above statutes.
- As the bill currently reads, of the nineteen members to be appointed, approximately four or twenty-one percent of the task force is made up of individuals who work within the school system, and of that, only one professional who works directly with students on a daily basis. Thus, my request would be to reconsider membership so to increase the

number of professionals who are currently working within school systems and directly with students.

- One final concern is the absence of members, representative of the Special Education Advisory Committee of Kansas (SEAC). The role of this federally and state mandated organization is to navigate concerns and advocate for best practices to support Kansas students receiving special education services. This team represents parents, educational professionals, and service providers across the state. Failure to include these individuals on this committee I believe to be a misstep in this initiative. Thus, my request would be to consider the involvement of SEAC within HB-2602.

In conclusion, thank you for your consideration of the above requests for the revision of HB-2602. Should you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee A. Hanson, M.Ed.

USD 232 Director of Special Services

913-667-6200

lhanson@usd232.org