

March 24, 2026

Chairs Rep. Sydney Jordan and Rep. Peggy Bennett, and Members of the House Education Policy Committee:

My name is Sarah Bernhardt, and I am a nationally certified school psychologist with Groves Learning Organization, an elected board member of the Minnesota School Psychologists Association, and a Minnesota resident.

I am writing as both a constituent and a professional in support of the Dyslexia Coalition's work. I respectfully urge you to support HF60/SF1842, which would require educators to complete two hours of dyslexia professional development for licensure renewal.

When dyslexia is not recognized by educators, the cost to students extends well beyond reading performance. The effects are often emotional, behavioral, and cumulative. Children with dyslexia may experience anxiety, embarrassment, frustration, and a growing sense of failure when their struggles are misunderstood. Families may also see emotional meltdowns, homework resistance, and school avoidance develop in response to ongoing academic distress. These responses can be mistaken for a lack of effort, poor behavior, or parenting failure. In reality, they are often the predictable result of unaddressed difficulty in meeting grade-level reading expectations.

Students with dyslexia are also at increased risk for mental health concerns, including anxiety and depression. When dyslexia goes unidentified, students may disengage from school, lose confidence in their abilities, and internalize the belief that they are not capable. Reading avoidance may be interpreted as defiance. Emotional dysregulation rooted in shame, frustration, and exhaustion may lead to classroom disruptions and discipline referrals rather than effective support. By the time some students are referred for evaluation, they have often spent years struggling in the classroom.

This is the gap HF60/SF1842 begins to address. A teacher who understands dyslexia is better equipped to interpret student needs accurately and respond effectively. Teachers are in a powerful position to influence those outcomes, but only if they have sufficient foundational knowledge.

A one-time, two-hour training is a modest and reasonable requirement. It will strengthen education by giving every teacher a stronger foundation for recognizing dyslexia, responding more supportively, and reducing preventable harm.

I urge you to support this dyslexia professional development so educators can better understand and assist the many students affected by dyslexia. Please support HF60/SF1842.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bernhardt, PsyS, NCSP

(952).920.6377 Ext: 321

groveslearning.org

March 24, 2026

Chairs Rep. Sydney Jordan and Rep. Peggy Bennett, and Members of the House Education Policy Committee.

My name is Alaa Hour, and I am the Director of Diagnostics at Groves Learning Organization (GLO) and I live in Brooklyn Center, MN.

I am writing to you today as both a constituent and a concerned professional who works with students who have dyslexia. I am a licensed psychologist and nationally certified school psychologist. In my role at GLO, I complete psychoeducational evaluations with school-aged children to identify any learning challenges, including dyslexia. I also support a team of psychologists and trainees who also support students with learning challenges. I support the work of the Dyslexia Coalition and ask that you help us pass HF60/SF1842, which requires educators to receive two hours of dyslexia professional development for educator licensure renewal.

I work with families and their children who experience challenges with learning to read. I frequently hear from families that they are unable to receive appropriate support and interventions for their children at school, which is often related misinformation or misunderstanding of their child's profile. For example, students who appear to understand written text are often overlooked for interventions, even when they struggle with decoding and word recognition. This is harmful to students who require interventions and accommodations to truly demonstrate their knowledge and growth at school. **Teachers who are informed and have a thorough understanding of dyslexia are better able to successfully support children and their families by identifying areas of need early on and providing appropriate support.** Research demonstrates that early interventions are key to addressing reading challenges.

In addition, students who struggle with reading may demonstrate behaviors that mimic inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. When students struggle with reading, they may disengage from the lesson and may engage in distracting behaviors such as talking to their peers or frequently getting out of their seats. This oftentimes leads to inappropriate referrals for services or evaluations when students truly need help with reading. **By developing an understanding of how reading challenges can impact behaviors, teachers can be better prepared to support students in the classroom.**

Further, many students with dyslexia experience high levels of anxiety that is secondary to their reading challenges. This is because they observe their peers' development and are aware that they are falling behind compared to their peers. If left unaddressed, this can lead to students experiencing a lack of motivation for learning and a decrease in their confidence and self-efficacy, which can in turn lead to withdrawal from school. **When teachers are informed, they can identify these behaviors and provide appropriate interventions and accommodations to students, which reduces the risk of anxiety and withdrawal.**

I urge you to support this dyslexia professional development so educators can better understand and assist the 20% of students who have dyslexia. Please support bill HF60/SF1842.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alaa Houry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Alaa Houry, PhD LP NCSP
Licensed Psychologist
Nationally Certified School Psychologist



March 25, 2026
House File 60

Dear Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Business Partnership (MBP) and the companies we represent across the state, I write in support of HF60 (Clardy).

Ensuring that every Minnesota student has access to a high-quality education is foundational to both student success and the long-term strength of our state's workforce. HF60 advances that goal by equipping educators with practical, evidence-informed knowledge to better understand and support students with dyslexia.

When students with dyslexia are not properly identified or supported, they are at greater risk of falling behind academically and experiencing secondary challenges such as anxiety, school avoidance, and frustration-driven behaviors. These are well-documented outcomes that can be mitigated when educators have the tools and understanding to respond effectively.

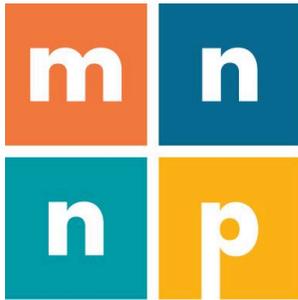
HF60 addresses a critical knowledge gap by providing a one-time, no-cost, two-hour professional development opportunity focused specifically on dyslexia. Importantly, this training ensures that identification is paired with meaningful support. Recognizing characteristics of dyslexia is only the first step; educators must also be equipped with strategies to help those students succeed in the classroom.

For Minnesota's business community, this is ultimately about strengthening the state's talent pipeline. When our education system is equipped to support all learners, including those with dyslexia, we are better positioned to develop future innovators, leaders, and problem-solvers.

HF60 is a practical, targeted step that supports educators, improves student outcomes, and reinforces Minnesota's commitment to educational excellence.

Sincerely,

Abby Loesch
Education and Workforce Policy Director
Minnesota Business Partnership



MINNESOTA NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

March 14, 2026

To Members of the Minnesota Legislature,

My name is Dr. Elizabeth Adams. I am a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist and the Founder and CEO of Minnesota Neuropsychology, a practice in the Twin Cities that specializes in comprehensive evaluations for children and adolescents with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, ADHD, and related conditions. I am writing to express my strong support for HF 60, particularly Subdivision 5a, which requires dyslexia-focused professional development for licensed teachers.

In my clinical work, I see firsthand the profound impact that early recognition and appropriate instruction for dyslexia can have on a child's educational trajectory and mental health. Dyslexia affects an estimated 15–20% of the population and is one of the most common reasons children struggle to learn to read. Yet many students go unidentified for years, often being mischaracterized as inattentive, unmotivated, or academically disengaged when in fact they have a **neurobiological reading disorder that requires specific instructional approaches**.

Requiring two hours of dyslexia-focused professional development for teacher license renewal is a thoughtful, practical step that will significantly improve outcomes for Minnesota students. Teachers are on the front lines of reading development, and equipping them with foundational knowledge about dyslexia can help them:

- Recognize early signs of reading difficulty
- Understand the role of phonological processing and structured literacy instruction
- Provide more effective classroom support
- Refer students for evaluation and intervention sooner

Importantly, the proposed training also includes **mental and behavioral health comorbidities**, which is critical. Children with undiagnosed dyslexia often experience secondary anxiety, school avoidance, low self-esteem, and behavioral challenges after repeated academic failure. Earlier identification and appropriate support can prevent these downstream impacts.

I also strongly support the provision that training resources be provided at no cost to teachers or districts, which helps ensure equitable access across Minnesota's diverse school systems.

This requirement is modest in time but substantial in impact. A small investment in teacher knowledge can lead to earlier intervention, improved literacy outcomes, and better mental health for thousands of Minnesota students.

As a neuropsychologist who evaluates many children after years of unnecessary struggle, I can say with confidence that increasing educator knowledge about dyslexia is one of the most effective ways we can improve reading outcomes statewide.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue and for your commitment to supporting Minnesota's students, families, and educators.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Adams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Elizabeth Adams, PhD, LP, ABPP
Pronouns: she/her/hers
Licensed Psychologist, MN LP4814
Board Certified Neuropsychologist
Minnesota Neuropsychology, LLC
651-964-2020 || www.mn-np.com



March 15, 2026

SUBJECT: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HF60

Dear Chairs Bennett, Jordan, and Education Policy Committee Members,

The Multicultural Autism Action Network is a non-profit organization which supports families of children with disabilities in multicultural communities. We are writing today to express our strong support for HF60/SF1842 authored by Representative Clardy which compliments the existing READ ACT. This bill creates a requirement for a one-time, 2-hour professional development for educators on dyslexia covering:

- the effects of dyslexia on the development of reading,
- effective instructional needs for students with dyslexia,
- the mental and behavioral comorbidities of dyslexia, and
- district and state resources to assist students who are identified.

Although our organization specifically focuses on autistic students, we have found many students with other disabilities also have dyslexia. Unfortunately we have seen many times where students with other diagnoses who also are dyslexic go unrecognized. In other cases, we have seen the student's need for literacy support acknowledged, but unsupported.

We are proud of our state for taking a pro-active approach to ensuring that our students learn to read, but we still have some gaps in recognizing which students need support and ensuring that they receive it.

We would like all educators to have the training to recognize signs of dyslexia, so that EVERY student learns to read.

Sincerely,

Multicultural Autism Action Network

Fatima Molas
Delia Samuel
Rufo Jiru
Maren Christenson Hofer

COALITION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Minnesota students who have disabilities continue to face barriers accessing their Minnesota constitutional right to education. This Coalition supports policies promoting student inclusion, parental accessibility, and sufficient numbers of appropriately trained staff.

Dear Chair and Members of the House Education Finance Committee,

On behalf of the Coalition for Children with Disabilities (CCD), we write to express our support for HF60 and to thank the committee for scheduling a hearing on this important proposal.

Families across Minnesota continue to report that dyslexia is often misunderstood in school settings. Even when students are working hard and receiving support at home, progress can be limited when educators have not received training on how dyslexia presents or which instructional supports are most effective.

Minnesota's READ Act has strengthened literacy instruction statewide, but many educators still receive little or no training specific to dyslexia. Because dyslexia is not consistently included in teacher preparation programs and is not a standard component of ongoing professional development, knowledge and capacity vary widely across schools and classrooms.

HF60 addresses this gap by requiring a one-time, two-hour professional development training for educators. The training would provide foundational knowledge on the effects of dyslexia on reading development, effective instructional supports, related mental and behavioral considerations, and available district and state resources.

This is a limited, practical investment that can improve early recognition and ensure students receive appropriate support sooner. When educators understand dyslexia, students are more likely to receive instruction that meets their needs rather than being misidentified or falling behind.

We appreciate the committee's attention to this issue and look forward to the discussion on how HF60 can strengthen literacy outcomes for students across Minnesota.

Thank you for your leadership and for your continued work on behalf of Minnesota students.

With the littlest Minnesotans in mind,
the Coalition for Children with Disabilities

Working together so every Minnesota child can learn, participate, and be safe.

Coalition for Children with Disabilities Autism Society of Minnesota – The Arc Minnesota – Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota – Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota – Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid/Minnesota Disability Law Center – Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance Minnesota Council on Disability – Multicultural Autism Action Network – PACER Center – Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of Minnesota Proof Alliance

Chairs Jordan, Bennett, Members of the committee,

My name is Ross Baker, and I am here to voice my support for bill HF60 (Dyslexia Professional Development) I was diagnosed with dyslexia in 1st grade thanks to the recommendation of two amazing teachers. I am lucky enough to have gone to a fantastic school with supportive teachers, tutors, and coaches as well as to have a loving and supportive family. Even with this incredible support system, I found myself struggling with my mental health and self-worth during the years of my childhood and even beyond. When the ability to read and write is fundamental to be successful in our society, how could dyslexia not have a huge impact on mental health and the trajectory of a young person's life. I remember feeling ashamed and embarrassed sneaking down the halls to tutoring, explaining to peers why I got extra time on tests, or showing another failed quiz or test to my parents. I found myself internalizing the failures and constantly felt dumb, worthless, and like a disappointment. I truly believe that if athletics, a lot of tutoring and a loving family had not been a part of my dyslexic experience, I'm confident my life trajectory would have been very different or over. I went on to graduate from a 4-year college and then received a Masters of Architecture degree. I share this with you today to shed light on just one story, but my story, to explain dyslexia is more than just the struggle with reading and writing, it's about ensuring every dyslexic is supported and has access to the right resources, so they can be successful.

Thank you all for your time and I urge you to support Dyslexics in your state and sign HF60 (Dyslexia Professional Development)

Thank you

Chairs Jordan, Bennett, Members of the Committee.

My name is Jennifer Polman, I am a constituent, mother, Minnesota teacher and business owner. I support House File 60, and request your professional development support.

In my first year of teaching, I had a student with a medically diagnosed case of dyslexia. I remember thinking, *I have no idea what to do to help this child*. There were no accommodations in place, and no guidance for teachers. As an upper elementary teacher, I had little preparation, few tools, and no curriculum support.

Over the years, I have seen the real impact this has on students. Many students with dyslexia work incredibly hard to mask their struggles during the school day. Families report meltdowns, anxiety around homework, and growing frustration with school. **These students are not lacking intelligence or effort—they are struggling with reading in environments that are not designed to support how they learn.**

When academic demands feel overwhelming, some students disengage from school entirely. Others avoid class by leaving the room and wander the halls, rather than face impossible reading tasks. What looks like defiance or a behavior problem is often frustration, shame, or anxiety tied directly to reading difficulties.

Typical classroom expectations such as note-taking, becomes a barrier. Students with spelling challenges devote mental energy to writing words, and do not fully process instructional content. Later, they often cannot even read their own notes.

When dyslexia goes unrecognized or misunderstood, students fall further behind academically, and battle co-occurring mental health challenges. These patterns contribute to absenteeism, and negative behaviors that are often misinterpreted rather than understood.

Professional development for educators is so critical. Teachers need continued training to recognize characteristics of dyslexia, understand processing challenges and the frequent occurring co-morbid challenges, and how to remediate instructional methods for students with dyslexia.

On behalf of students, parents and educators I ask your support for dyslexia professional development.

Jasman Myers

Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota

Special Education Teacher, North St. Paul Maplewood Oakdale School District

952-649-8643

JasmanM@decodingdyslexiamn.org

My name is Jasman Myers, and I am a Tier 4 special education teacher with 12 years of classroom experience, a master's degree, and now the privilege of serving on the Board of Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota.

I am speaking as an educator to urge your support for the **Dyslexia Professional Development bill HF60**. Despite my training, I remain deeply concerned that most educators across our state do not receive adequate preparation to teach students with dyslexia effectively.

HF60 will require a one-time, two-hour dyslexia professional development aligned with the READ Act. This training would give educators a basic understanding of how dyslexia affects reading, what effective instruction looks like, and what resources exist to support students.

In my field, Specific Learning Disability (SLD) is the most common special education category. In 2019, nearly 34,000 students qualified for services under SLD according to the Minnesota Collective for Educational Equity (MNCEE). Behind that number are real children who struggle every day to read and write at grade level.

In my 4th and 5th-grade resource room, I see the same patterns again and again:
Students are straining to recall letter sounds.
Students stretching out every word, guessing, skipping lines.
Phonetic spelling.
Students are reading at half the rate of their peers—and losing confidence with every page.

No educator wants to see a child give up on themselves. Yet that is exactly what happens when we are not given the tools to help.

When I first entered the field as an Emotional Behavioral Disorder teacher, I was not trained in dyslexia instruction. In Minnesota, a K–12 SpEd license requires educators to instruct students across all 13 disability categories.

After eight years in public education and persistent parent advocacy, I was provided with a district-funded dyslexia training! This opportunity was limited. I was the only educator trained in Soudy System PD, which unintentionally created inequities between our reading service providers. Since then, I have sought out additional training and resources on my own.

In June 2025, phase one of the Minnesota READ Act started. My district provided us with the CORE Learning Online Language & Literacy Academy, a paid 18-week, asynchronous Science of Reading (SOR) training. The modules covered spoken language, phonics, multisyllabic words, vocabulary, syntax, comprehension, and assessments. OL&LA targets a broad range of language-diverse learners, while not fully addressing the specific, specialized needs of students with SLD or dyslexia.

I am thankful for all that educators and districts have done to become trained in SOR through the Read Act. The Read Act PD is broad and great for all students, but it does not purposefully address dyslexia or the needs of this population of at-risk students.

The **Dyslexia PD bill HF60** will require a one-time, two-hour dyslexia training aligned with the READ Act. Providing educators with an understanding of how dyslexia affects reading fluency and processing time, which affects instruction, and what resources and assistive technologies exist to support students.

Struggling readers do not lack intelligence; they lack access to educators who have been trained to meet their needs. Imagine being removed from your general education class for SOR reading intervention or special education services. The hope of the student, family, intervention team, or service provider is to eliminate the achievement gap. The gap is the reality for so many children in Minnesota.

HF60 is a simple, cost-effective step to filling the gap by ensuring that every Minnesota educator understands dyslexia well enough to support our most vulnerable learners.

Please support the **Dyslexia Professional Development bill HF60**. Minnesota's children with dyslexia deserve trained educators so that every child can read at or above grade level!