

Dear House Committee on Education,

Regarding the proposed amendment to the Right to Read Act:

- I fully support the 2 year extension.
- I am concerned that by exempting educators from the training based on years of teaching or degrees, RI education will not fulfill the original purpose of the Right to Read Act and our students will continue to struggle with reading.
- Over 40 years of scientific research on reading can neither be taught meaningfully nor be carried over to classroom practice as a result of a 24 hour training.
- Most educator preparation programs do not teach the science of reading. As a result, most educators, even those with a master's degree or reading specialist certification, do not hold the knowledge needed to teach students how to read. The IDA has examined educator preparation programs throughout the United States, and have found the few listed on their site (<https://dyslexiaida.org/university-programs-accredited-by-ida/>) to meet the Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading.

The following quotes are from teachers at The Compass School in Kingston, RI, who are currently enrolled in evidence-based literacy training through a RI approved proficiency provider:

- "I hold all required degrees and certifications and have been teaching in RI public schools for 16 years. Although I have been teaching children how to read for the past 16 years I was not taught the science of reading in all my education and professional development. After taking the 2 year LETRS course in the science of reading I now know my training before this was woefully incomplete." -Karen O'Malley, K/1 Teacher, The Compass School, Kingston, RI
- "As a resource teacher in my twelfth year of teaching, my students and I have significantly benefited from my LETRS training and I do believe that everyone, including veteran teachers, should be required to participate in a science of reading training to teach reading more effectively. If we do not make this shift in our reading approach, we will continue to leave struggling readers behind." - Courtney SanGiovanni, Special Education
- I have been an Educator for over 20 years and hold a M. Ed. If I had not taken the Orton Gillingham Associate level course with Linda Atamian, I would NOT have been prepared to teach reading. Teachers need explicit instruction in the science of reading. Without it, they will not be prepared to provide systematic and explicit reading instruction to their students. - Nicole Zaloumis O'Reilly, Special Education

Respectfully submitted,

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