



## Comments on November 19, 2019 [Dyslexia Update](#)

Delivered by Kimberly Eng Lee, co-Chair Palo Alto CAC

We appreciate and acknowledge the teachers who screened all our 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders for dyslexia. And while we don't yet know if 3 OG-trained teachers per school is enough for all who will need specialized instruction, it is clear affirmation that *"our teachers want their students to master the skills that will allow them to enjoy reading books and writing their own texts."*

We look forward to the Working Group reconvening to review the Parent-Teacher Handbook, and to hear plans for secondary. We're glad that people are identified to help, and hope for continued good partnership. Our thanks to those who have gotten us this far.

If I've learned anything through this initiative, it is:

- **FIRST:** that direct, systematic, cumulative, multi-sensory, evidence-based instruction can change the life of a child with dyslexia dramatically. I know because it changed my child's life, her outlook and self-confidence as a learner and contributor. I know because it's **evidence-based instruction**, which by definition means that it is proven effective (like what the FDA requires before a drug is approved). Our 2018 Dyslexia plan included a Board policy. The working group has a draft, Here's a copy of [LA Unified's](#). We need one too, for practice guidelines to go with our [Board Resolution](#).
- **SECOND:** that dyslexia is **complex and impacts multiple tiers of instruction and support**. According to the [Southern Regional Education Board](#), those leading the implementation need to be passionate and knowledgeable about dyslexia to engage others and develop plans, and resourceful to leverage funds (like Title I and IDEA) to pay for teacher training. I expect that all our new leaders will attend [OG training](#) straight away (Dec 2nd in San Diego, Jan 6th in LA). This enables them to decide the right strategies, capacity and funding we need.

All students with dyslexia, **regardless of socio-economic status, should have ready access** to teachers who have mastered the principles and practices of Structured Literacy. Thankfully,

- investment in screening and instruction is proven to move the needle for a student with dyslexia, and therefore our district. We have an opportunity to be a model and inspiration.
- Specialized education is just GOOD EDUCATION. The tips and strategies that make a classroom or a lesson successful for a student with a disability, are the **SAME tips and strategies that will benefit all children universally**.
  - Will teachers need to get creative? YES
  - Will teachers need to put in the time to design lessons for diverse needs? YES
  - Will teachers need to know their students well to truly understand & accommodate them? YES
  - But this is the work that teachers must do for all children And it is work that all teachers CAN do.

We encourage you to continue prioritizing dyslexia. It is instruction proven to make a difference.