

June 4, 2024

Michigan House of Representatives
Anderson House Office Building
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

RE: House Education Committee – literacy legislation (SB 567- SB 568)

Dear Representatives:

I am writing to express my individual support of the bills SB 567-568 aimed to improve literacy for students across the State of Michigan.

My experience with this issue relates as a former elementary classroom teacher, as the parent of a child enrolled in our local public school who is struggling with fundamental literacy & language acquisition, and as a professional who works alongside and on behalf of families experiencing challenges with navigating the special education system – many of which have concerns related to literacy and language across our state.

What I appreciate most about this legislation –

- SB 567 focuses on early, universal screening with a validated assessment tool for reading difficulties;
- SB 568: ensures greater support for teacher training related to characteristics of dyslexia and evidenced-based intervention;

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this legislation.

Please support the bills.

Sincerely,



Heather Eckner
Ann Arbor, MI

Legan Rose

From: Fred Stella <stelthom@juno.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 9:45 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Senate Bills 567 & 568

Good Morning,

I am writing to express my support for this legislation. Every child in Michigan deserves an appropriate education. I believe these will aid in that mission.

Thank you,

Fred Stella

234 Baynton

Grand Rapids 49503

Legan Rose

From: Vazquez, Gerald <vazquezg@aaps.k12.mi.us>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 8:47 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Support for SB567 & 568

I will be sharing brief comments in support of the legislation.

Thanks,

Mr. Vazquez

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Gerald Vazquez, Principal
Scarlett Middle School
(734)997-1220
vazquezg@aaps.k12.mi.us

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can. - John Wesley

Legan Rose

From: Adrienne Haggins <ahaggins84@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 8:21 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Card of Support - SB 567-568 House Education Committee

Dear House Education Committee,

I am writing in support of the literacy bills 567 and 568. I have a son headed to 1st grade in the Ann Arbor Public School and serve as an educator at the University of Michigan Medical School. I hope these bills will equip future generation of students and teachers with the skills they need to thrive.

Sincerely, Adrienne Haggins

Legan Rose

From: Danielle Lena <dlena2349@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 11:49 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Senate Bill

Danielle Lena
I support Senate bills 567 & 568
Please help our children!
Thank you

Sent from my iPhone

Legan Rose

From: Kristen Metzger <kristenelena@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 9:46 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Support for Subject: Card of Support for SB 567-568 House Education Committee

Dear Legan Rose,

Please record a card of support for **SB 567-568** in the House Education Committee Meeting for Tuesday, June 5, 2024.

Thank you,
Kristen Metzger
1401 Beechwood Dr.
Arbor, MI 48103

Legan Rose

From: Lorna Bogertman <lorna.bogertman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 9:25 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Support of SB 567 & 568

From: Lorna Bogertman

I support Senate bills 567 & 568.

I have a 3rd grade grandson who is struggling to read. There is no option for testing him for Dyslexia without paying over \$1,000.

Michigan one of only a few states that does not provide testing for dyslexia . This is a very Common disorder and we need to provide the necessary screening for this problem .

These kids need to be provided with all the tools needed for a successful life.

Please pass this bill.

Lorna Bogertman

Legan Rose

From: Michelle Bellino <michelle.bellino@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 9:00 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Card of Support - SB 567-568 House Education Committee

Hello,

Please record a card of support for **SB 567-568** in the House Education Committee Meeting for Tuesday, June 5, 2024. Please also note that I support the science of reading along with a balanced literacy approach.

With thanks for your work,
Michelle Bellino

Sent from my iPhone

Legan Rose

From: loren Smalley jr <lsmalley6872@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 7:44 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Card of Support - SB 567-568 House Education Committee

- Loren Smalley jr
- Elected official in Potterville
- "I support Senate bills 567 & 568"

Hello,
Please record a card of support for **SB 567-568** in the House Education Committee Meeting for Tuesday, June 5, 2024.

Legan Rose

From: Dr. Jacek Debiec <contact@greatlakespsychiatryandpsychotherapy.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 4:33 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Child psychiatrist supporting Senate bills 567 & 568

Dear Madam/ Sir,

As a child and adolescent psychiatrist and a Michigan voter, I strongly support Senate bills 567 & 568.

In my practice, I have seen too many children - who were not given the needed education support - develop serious behavioral problems, school avoidance, anxiety, and even depression and thoughts of suicide.

Educational support is an important measure in preventing mental health problems in youth.

Please give these bills a thorough consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacek Debiec

Jacek Debiec, M.D., Ph.D., M.Phil., D.Phil., F.A.P.A.
Child, Adolescent, and Adult Psychiatrist
Director, Great Lakes Psychiatry and Psychotherapy PLLC
P.O. Box 130314, 3000 Green Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48113
Phone: (734) 492 0200
Website: greatlakespsychiatryandpsychotherapy.com

Legan Rose

From: Emily Roberge <jeroberge14@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 10:41 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Card of Support - SB 567-568 House Education Committee

Hello,

Please record a card of support for **SB 567-568** in the House Education Committee Meeting for Tuesday, June 5, 2024.

My name is Emily Roberge. I live in Marquette, MI with my husband and two young children, ages 4 and 6. These education bills are incredibly important to me not only for my own children, but for the growth of our state. To attract talented professionals and companies we need an education system that supports a solid education for their children.

Thank you for your time in reading this card of support.

Kind regards,
Emily Roberge
906-201-2903

Legan Rose

From: Friedman, Jenna <jenna.friedman@aaomi.org>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 10:31 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Card of Support - SB 567-568 House Education Committee

Hello,

*Please record a card of support for **SB 567-568** in the House Education Committee Meeting for Tuesday, June 5, 2024.*

My name is Jenna Friedman and I am from West Bloomfield, currently living in Detroit, Michigan as a student at Wayne State University. Additionally, I am an intern at the Autism Alliance of Michigan in the education department.

Through my academic and professional experiences, I have become invested in education and literacy. I have seen firsthand how they profoundly impact individuals and communities, serving both as a fundamental skill for academic success, and a bridge to opportunities and empowerment in all aspects of life beyond school.

However, many students in Michigan are not afforded these necessary opportunities due to the state's literacy crisis. This is why the passage of these bills is crucial to helping students who need support with reading, particularly for those exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia. These bills will require schools to use valid and reliable screening assessments at least 3 times per year to identify children with decoding and word recognition difficulties, ensuring they receive support. The legislation will also provide teacher training in structured literacy based on the science of reading, empowering educators to effectively assist students.

We need movement on SB 567-568 to pass them into law and guarantee that ALL students in Michigan receive the support necessary to succeed academically and beyond.

Thank you,

Jenna Friedman, BSW

Education Intern

(she/her/hers, they/them/theirs)

<https://autismallianceofmichigan.org/education/>



Legan Rose

From: Jennifer lafrate <jliafrate77@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 10:25 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: House education

Hello,
Please record a card of support for SB 567-568 in the House Education
Thank you

Legan Rose

From: Guy Suter <gsuter@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 10:19 AM
To: Legan Rose
Cc: Rep. Joe Tate (District 10); Rep. Matt Koleszar (District 22); Rep. Jaime Churches (District 27); Rep. Nate Shannon (District 58); Rep. Regina Weiss (District 6); Rep. Carol Glanville (District 84); Rep. Jennifer A. Conlin (District 48); Rep. Kimberly Edwards (District 12); Rep. Dylan Wegela (District 26); Rep. Jaime Greene (District 65); Rep. Greg Markkanen (District 110); Rep. Brad Paquette (District 37); Rep. Pauline Wendzel (District 39); Rep. Gina Johnsen (District 78)
Subject: Support for SB567-568

Hello, my name is Guy Suter and I live in Ann Arbor, MI.

I wanted to share with you my support for bills 567 and 568.

I have two children that Michigan schools failed to identify as having difficulties learning to read. Beyond temporary reading support groups, there was no coordinated screening or evaluation efforts by the school. Both of my children were diagnosed with development Dyslexia outside of the school system. We also provided intensive structured literacy intervention to them both outside of school. Our Michigan schools are not identifying these students and getting them the support they need. Our teachers are also not properly trained in identify reading challenges and the science of reading instruction for all children.

My family was lucky to have the resources and find the help my children needed. These bills will help many other families who may not be so fortunate. We know this issue impacts 10-20% of our students and without intervention, there can be life long consequences that lead to higher incarceration and even suicide levels. The stakes are high and import — please act now!

Guy Suter

Legan Rose

From: Lauren Katz <katz.laurenashley@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 2, 2024 10:07 PM
To: Rep. Joe Tate (District 10); Rep. Matt Koleszar (District 22); Rep. Jaime Churches (District 27); Rep. Nate Shannon (District 58); Rep. Regina Weiss (District 6); Rep. Carol Glanville (District 84); Rep. Jennifer A. Conlin (District 48); Rep. Kimberly Edwards (District 12); Rep. Dylan Wegela (District 26); Rep. Jaime Greene (District 65); Rep. Greg Markkanen (District 110); Rep. Brad Paquette (District 37); Rep. Pauline Wendzel (District 39); Rep. Gina Johnsen (District 78); Legan Rose
Subject: Support for SBs 567 and 568

Dear Committee Members,

I am emailing to voice my support for Senate Bill 567 and Senate Bill 568. These bills have the potential to positively change the lives of countless students in the state.

Many thanks --

Lauren Katz

--

Lauren A. Katz, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Co-Founder, Literacy, Language, and Learning Institute

2010 Hogback Rd., Suite 1

Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Phone : (734)973-6001

Fax: (734)973-0750

Email: katz.laurenashley@gmail.com

Website: www.3-li.org

Legan Rose

From: April McHale-Strickler <AprilMcStrick@outlook.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 2, 2024 3:03 PM
To: Rep. Joe Tate (District 10); Rep. Matt Koleszar (District 22); Rep. Jaime Churches (District 27); Rep. Nate Shannon (District 58); Rep. Regina Weiss (District 6); Rep. Carol Glanville (District 84); Rep. Jennifer A. Conlin (District 48); Rep. Kimberly Edwards (District 12); Rep. Dylan Wegela (District 26); Rep. Jaime Greene (District 65); Rep. Greg Markkanen (District 110); Rep. Brad Paquette (District 37); Rep. Pauline Wendzel (District 39); Rep. Gina Johnsen (District 78); Legan Rose
Subject: Senate Bills 567 & 568

Dear Committee Members & House Speaker:

I SUPPORT SENATE BILLS 567 & 568!

Sincerely,
April McHale-Strickler

Legan Rose

From: Gina Kolarchick <gina.kolarchick@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 2, 2024 2:40 PM
To: Gina Kolarchick; Legan Rose
Cc: Rep. Joe Tate (District 10); Rep. Matt Koleszar (District 22); Rep. Jaime Churches (District 27); Rep. Nate Shannon (District 58); Rep. Regina Weiss (District 6); Rep. Carol Glanville (District 84); Rep. Jennifer A. Conlin (District 48); Rep. Kimberly Edwards (District 12); Rep. Dylan Wegela (District 26); Rep. Jaime Greene (District 65); Rep. Greg Markkanen (District 110); Rep. Brad Paquette (District 37); Rep. Pauline Wendzel (District 39); Rep. Gina Johnsen (District 78)
Subject: I Support SB 567 & 568

Dear House Education Committee Members,

I am writing to you in full support of Senate Bills 567 & 568 that will help children in the State of Michigan.

I am a parent who understands:

1 - The struggle of being told in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade that your child has received Reading Recovery as an intervention, but your child has not retained the information from the intervention; that is the only intervention Troy School District has.

2 - What it is like to spend thousands of dollars out of pocket for a private education evaluation to be told your child has dyslexia and that if there was a proper screener in place at your school district, they could have had proper intervention to help them read earlier.

3 - Teachers want to help your children but when they do not have the appropriate tools for intervention they can't. They questioned themselves, their teaching techniques, and tried to figure out what they are doing wrong, when in actuality, they just need to be trained properly.

I am a proud parent of a 16-year-old son and a 14-year-old daughter who have been both diagnosed with dyslexia through private education evaluations. I have spent probably close to \$80,000 out of my personal money for Orton Gillingham and private schools. My children are fortunate that I am a strong advocate for them and their education. They are lucky, BUT what happens to the children who cannot afford private education evaluations? Parents who can't afford private tutoring? Parents who don't understand why their 3rd grade child can still not read. What happens to these children and their self-esteem? All of this could change, with your support and your vote.

Michigan is #43 out of 50 states in literacy. It is time to make a change and get Michigan schools back on top to help students thrive and learn how to read. I have been advocating for laws in this state for a long time (please see the email below from 2021) and **parents in Troy School District still want change.**

You have the power to make the decision to help a child learn how to read with these bills. Michigan children **NEED** your vote!

I will be attending the Education Committee meeting on Tuesday, June 4th, at 9am. If you have any questions for me at that time, please feel free to pull me aside and I will answer any and all questions.

Thank you for your support,

Regina Kolarchick
2535 Tarragona Way

Legan Rose

From: Marie Havens <marie@3clearning.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 1, 2024 6:31 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: House Education Committee Meeting- 6/4/2024- SB567-568

To Legan Rose and committee members:

I am writing to encourage you to support bills SB567-568 as passed by the Senate. These bills address teacher pre-service and in-service education to increase educator knowledge of dyslexia and related learning disorders. They also require that teachers become educated on Structured Literacy methods for teaching the basic pre-reading and reading skills of phonological awareness, single word decoding, spelling, and reading fluency, and how they relate to vocabulary, syntax, and text level comprehension. They also provide for screening early elementary students for dyslexia and ensuring that schools adopt methods of teaching reading at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 that are consistent with the current science of reading.

The ability to read is a civil rights issue. When students do not learn how to read proficiently by 3rd grade, the negative consequences begin to stack up, resulting in increased rates of juvenile delinquency, drug use, dropping out of high school, and failure in the job market and other adult life skills. We need to identify and address barriers to learning to read in the K-2 years that may include dyslexia and oral language weaknesses, as well as social and economic barriers that can be addressed or mitigated using highly effective instructional methods. These methods have been in use with dyslexic children for about 100 years and have been refined in recent years as we've learned more about how the brain processes information. These methods are effective for all learners, but essential for those with traits consistent with dyslexia.

I am the parent of two dyslexic adults who I taught to read using phonics based methods. They had their struggles, but both became very proficient readers and are living successful adult lives. I have now completed education and training in special education and educational therapy and have a thriving practice where I teach other students reading, writing, and math using Structured, systematic, multi-sensory methods. My students consistently make significant gains, narrowing or closing the gap between their initial performance and that of their peers. All students should have the benefit of classroom teachers and special education teachers who have the skills needed to help all students become proficient readers.

Sincerely,

Marie Havens

*J. Marie Havens, M.Ed., PCET, C-SLDS
NILD: Professionally Certified Educational Therapist*

Legan Rose

From: Constance Crump <concrump@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 1, 2024 2:43 PM
To: Constance Crump
Subject: Help all Michigan children learn to read better - Support Senate bills 567 & 568

You have a unique opportunity to raise Michigan's education standards for all time. Dyslexia can be overcome. With your help, through your support of Senate bills 567 and 568, we can end this barrier to essential reading skills.

My family and I wholeheartedly support this legislation.

We know firsthand how poor reading -- and conversely, good reading skills -- can affect one's entire life. These bills are an excellent way to set all of Michigan's children on the road to better reading and an outstanding education.

Please lead our state to give our kids an educational tool set that will last their entire lives. They will thank you and your actions will bring Michigan better schools and a stronger workforce.

Thank you in advance,
Constance Crump
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Legan Rose

From: Autumn S <otonobo@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 1, 2024 11:38 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Fwd: I support Senate bills 567 & 568

My name is Autumn Schneider. I am a lifelong Michigan resident, a former high school teacher (current mental health therapist), and the mother of a child with dyslexia. I taught high school literature and I did not know how to recognize dyslexia in my own child. It was not until halfway through kindergarten before we realized that our son was not learning to read. We switched school districts in hopes of ensuring better services and had to fight tooth and nail to get special education services for our son who was not even reading at the 5 percentile. We got a dyslexia diagnosis from an independent neuropsychologist (the cost of which is another thousand dollars or more for those without necessary insurance coverage) and were told that Michigan does not acknowledge dyslexia as a learning disability even though it is specifically listed as such under the federal IDEA. We ended up having to spend thousands of our precious savings to hire a special education advocate to get special education services so our son could get the reading instruction that he desperately needed...and even the special education instructors were not properly trained to teach a child with dyslexia. Studies show that 5-10% of the population are dyslexic or show dyslexic tendencies. All of our children should be screened for this. All of our teachers should be trained in how to teach kids with dyslexic tendencies. Our son got every step of the Read by Grade Three provisions and it did not give him what he needed. He is now entering the 6th grade and can not read at grade level. I ask that you consider supporting Senate Bills 567 and 568.

--
Autumn Schneider
989-213-5618

--
Autumn Schneider

Legan Rose

From: Jennifer Caron Oldham <jennifer.caron@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 11:24 AM
To: Legan Rose; Rep. Joe Tate (District 10); Rep. Matt Koleszar (District 22); Rep. Jaime Churches (District 27); Rep. Nate Shannon (District 58); Rep. Regina Weiss (District 6); Rep. Carol Glanville (District 84); Rep. Jennifer A. Conlin (District 48); Rep. Kimberly Edwards (District 12); Rep. Dylan Wegela (District 26); Rep. Jaime Greene (District 65); Rep. Greg Markkanen (District 110); Rep. Brad Paquette (District 37); Rep. Pauline Wendzel (District 39); Rep. Gina Johnsen (District 78)
Subject: I support Senate bills 567 & 568

Dear legislators,

I support Senate bills 567 & 568.

I have three children and three different experiences of them learning to read. The first received balanced literacy instruction in her AAPS classrooms. Like about half of kids in balanced literacy classrooms, she struggled to read and required intensive Orton Gillingham tutoring to the tune of \$7,000 for us and many hours of special ed support at school. Being delayed in learning to read delayed her learning to write and, even with extensive efforts on my part, we still struggle with handwriting and spelling in 6th grade. I wouldn't wish this experience on any family, especially families that must rely on school to teach their kids and can't afford outside tutoring, which is most families.

My second was enrolled in a private school for K because it was the virtual year here. He received a phonics based reading curriculum and decodable books through his class experience. Learning to read was a stepwise and joyful experience because he was taught skills, given books that used only what he'd been taught and experienced success at every step. Structured literacy curriculum work for 95% of learners. This is how I hope every child can learn to read, in class, with scaffolded Science of Reading based curriculum.

My third child I taught to read using a Science of Reading based curriculum designed for parents because AAPS still uses balanced literacy as it's main curriculum, thankfully supplemented by a SOR decoding program called UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Institute). While he was reading well before K began, he's very proudly coming home telling me everything he's learning from UFLI including digraphs and compound words.

Michigan's reading scores are poor, as are the nation's. 2/3 of kids can't read with proficiency. Yet everyone needs to read to "make it" in the modern economy. Michigan Works tells us that lack of literacy is a major barrier to employment in Michigan.

Please support Michigan's future by supporting our kids now with reading curriculum that are proven effective. Our kids can't wait.

Thank you!

Jennifer Oldham
Ann Arbor, MI

--
Jennifer Caron Oldham

Legan Rose

From: Hayley Grobbel <hayleycasongrobbel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 10:58 AM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Card of Support - SB 567-568 House Education Committee

Hello,

Please record a card of support for **SB 567-568** in the House Education Committee Meeting for Tuesday, June 5, 2024.

I am submitting this card of support as a parent of two children with learning disabilities, and a partner of someone with dyslexia. Supporting students with their needs is vital and mandated in IDEA. These bills would further improve learning outcomes for students across the state.

Thank you,

Hayley Cason Grobbel
7347878278
hayleycasongrobbel@gmail.com
17435 Mount Vernon Street
Southfield, MI 48075
Oakland County, MI

Legan Rose

From: Shannon Koenen <shannonkoenen@tutoringbrightminds.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 1:20 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Senate Bills 567 and 568

Dear Ms. Rose

I am writing to implore you to do everything in your power to help pass Senate bills 567 and 568. Both bills will help students across Michigan have access to highly trained teachers who use evidence-based instruction to teach every child to read. Michigan is currently ranked 43rd in the U.S. with third-grade reading scores.

As a reading specialist practicing in Southeast Michigan, I regularly meet kids of all ages who have literacy skills that are well below grade level. They are not just behind in school. They lack the skills necessary to fully participate in society, they have low self-esteem, and they will not be able to access higher education. This is because most Michigan schools are using reading curricula that are not proven by research to support literacy for all students. Michigan must do better!

You can follow this [link](#) to learn more about the current bills. Generally speaking, they mirror the intent of the original bills introduced in 2020. Requirements would include:

- Using valid and reliable screening assessments to look for basic reading foundational skills (sound-symbol correspondence, phonemic awareness, oral passage reading fluency, rapid automatized naming, single word reading, nonsense word reading and depending on the grade level: comprehension - retelling, answering questions about reading passage, close reading procedure...)
- Using a structured literacy approach to address decoding issues
- Empowering teachers with the knowledge of a structured literacy approach grounded in the science of reading research both with current teachers and in university education programs
- Supporting teachers with information about dyslexia
- Including a list of instructional strategies that are detrimental to early readers as they develop their decoding and word recognition skills (3-cueing aspects)

Gratefully,

Shannon Koenen, M.Ed
President, MI Branch of the International Dyslexia Association
503-819-4076
Until Everyone Can Read



Legan Rose

From: Nicole Haley <nicole.m.haley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 3:12 PM
To: Legan Rose
Subject: Card of Support - SB 567-568 House Education Committee

Hello,

Please record a card of support for SB 567-568 in the House Education Committee Meeting for Tuesday, June 5, 2024.

Thank you,
Nicole Haley
312 Brierwood St, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734-634-8352

www.nicolehaley.com
pronouns: she/hers/her