



June 4, 2024

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

RE: Education Committee - Literacy (dyslexia) Package

Dear Representatives:

**We are reaching out to you today in support of SB 567 and SB 568**, part of what is known as the Literacy Package, but has also been referred to as the “Dyslexia Package” and the “Literacy for All” bills.

After passing nearly unanimously with **overwhelming support in the Senate**, these bills require the same consideration and endorsement in the House to ensure students across Michigan have the fundamental right to literacy.

The ***Michigan Parent, Advocate and Attorney Coalition (MiPAAC)*** was formed in 2020 for the purpose of giving voice to families of children with disabilities. Our work is centered around educating families on current special education issues and topics of interest, as well as to advocate for state policies that support their needs. We are unique in that we are an independent group of stakeholders that is solely focused on advocating for the education needs of students.

After spending millions of dollars, many Michigan students are still below grade level in reading and writing skills, **with the state ranking 43rd for fourth grade reading levels nationally. Proficiency scores are even lower for students with disabilities, students of color, and students in low income areas, ranking at least 12 percentage points below the statewide average.**<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://midwest.edtrust.org/resource/2023-state-of-michigan-education-report-beyond-the-pandemic/>

Although many things may contribute, **the primary factors impacting our State's low literacy performance are:**

- Inadequate early screening for reading difficulties.
- Inadequate and/or inconsistent access to teacher training.
- Inconsistent application of literacy instructional practices grounded in cognitive science research.

We believe that the passing of these bills will make a positive impact for those with the characteristics of dyslexia and those who struggle with decoding and word recognition. According to the International Dyslexia Association, 15-20% of the population have symptoms of dyslexia.<sup>2</sup>

Forty-two states currently have statutes, regulations or pilot programs in place specific to supporting students with reading difficulties and/or dyslexia. **Michigan is one of only eight states that currently have no policy** in statute or code that focuses on early identification of and support for students demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia.<sup>3</sup>

Passing legislation to address these issues is key to helping children across Michigan fulfill their potential.

This legislation would:

- Require screening students for decoding and word recognition difficulties in grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade. If students are showing evidence of reading difficulties in grades 4-12, professional learning for those that interface with students learning to read in structured literacy instruction grounded in the science of reading, characteristics of dyslexia, and supporting students in a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) (SB 587).
- Require teacher preparation programs to offer instruction on dyslexia, its characteristics, accommodations, and related evidence-based instruction and supports grounded in the science of reading (SB 568).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexia-basics-2/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/State\\_Inf\\_Request\\_State-Dyslexia\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/State_Inf_Request_State-Dyslexia_Policy.pdf)

**We ask that you support these bills**, because not only do teachers deserve to be highly trained so they may be effective, but our students should have access to instruction that will make them proficient readers. Only then, will ALL students reach their full potential academically and personally.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The Members of MiPAAC, Sponsor Organizations & Constituents





# MiPAAC

MICHIGAN PARENT, ADVOCATE  
& ATTORNEY COALITION

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OF MICHIGAN

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*MiPAAC aims to educate families of students with disabilities  
on topics relevant to their advocacy efforts.*

[www.mipaac.org](http://www.mipaac.org)



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