

From:

Subject:

Sent:

Message Body:

This email does not have a message body.

From: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX (Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca)
To: Green, Jesse MCF:EX (Jesse.Green@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: FW: Following up: MRS mtg with Dyslexia BC - PPT?
Sent: 05/24/2023 20:53:06
Attachments: Hon Rachna Singh and Hon Mitzi Dean May, 2023.pptx.pdf
Message Body:

Today's presentation.

Tx!

Dulcy

Dulcy Anderson *she/her*

Ministerial Advisor to

The Honourable Rachna Singh

Minister of Education and Childcare

Cell: 250-818-3304

Room 346 | Parliament Buildings | Victoria, BC

Acknowledging that the land on which we live, work and play is within the traditional territories of the
Lək'wə??ən, Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke and WSÁNEĆ peoples.

From: Constable, Jane ECC:EX <Jane.Constable@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 1:51 PM
To: Kennedy, Karla 1 ECC:EX <Karla.1.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca>; ECC DL Minister's Office <EDUCMINO@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Tayag, Tricia ECC:EX <Tricia.Tayag@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Following up: MRS mtg with Dyslexia BC - PPT?

From: Kennedy, Karla 1 ECC:EX <Karla.1.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 1:45 PM
To: ECC DL Minister's Office <EDUCMINO@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca>

Cc: Tayag, Tricia ECC:EX <Tricia.Tayag@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Following up: MRS mtg with Dyslexia BC - PPT?

Hi all, following up from the mtg this afternoon with Dyslexia BC. We understand they provided a PPT in advance of the mtg. Can that be shared with me, please? Melanie will work on drafting a formal response to the PPT as the info contained is inaccurate. If you would like that response to come from MRS, we can draft as such, if not, we can have it come from ADM level.

Thank you,

K

Dyslexia

The logo for Dyslexia BC features the letters "BC" in a large, white, sans-serif font, positioned on the right side of a solid dark gray rectangular background.

BC

Dyslexia Advocacy Society of BC

**Meeting on May 24th, 2023 with Dyslexia BC and the
Honourable Rachna Singh Minister of Education and Child Care and the
Honourable Mitzi Dean Minister of Children and Family Development**

Dyslexia BC is a parent-led grassroots movement within British Columbia concerned with the limited access to educational interventions for dyslexia within the public and private education systems. Dyslexia BC became an organized movement in the spring of 2014. Our mission is to raise dyslexia awareness, empower families to support their children and inform policy-makers on best practices to identify, remediate and support students with dyslexia.

We are advocating for the following policy goals:

- A universal definition and understanding of “dyslexia” in the education code.
- Mandatory teacher training on dyslexia, its warning signs and appropriate intervention strategies.
- Mandatory early screening tests for dyslexia.
- Mandatory dyslexia remediation programs, which can be accessed by both general and special education populations.
- Access to appropriate “assistive technologies” in the public school setting for students with dyslexia

Dyslexia BC inspires local movement by networking with families and professionals to gain support for the Dyslexia BC’s mission. We recognize the power of the collective parent voice and work diligently to encourage individuals and organizations to partner and collaborate in the best interest of supporting families and advancing services for dyslexics.

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Why are we here today

1) Legislation that:

- defines dyslexia;
- out lines policy to use structured literacy in main-stream classrooms and special education;
- funding and policy for the use of evidence-based screeners starting in Kindergarten;
- funding and policy for tier 3 intervention centers in each district;
- policy and direct funding for a category for moderate to severe dyslexia/learning disability.

2) Reverse the decision of the 2019 Arbitration Agreement (need a defined funded category)

3) Include Dyslexia initiatives in Ministry of Children and Family Development along with other disabilities. Medical needs include screening, funding for intervention, funding for diagnosis and funding for supports. Literacy intervention programs as well for youth in detention and street youth.

BCSTA and BCCPAC Passed Motions this Spring Dealing with Dyslexia/Literacy

The British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) passed a motion titled *“Learning Disability (Dyslexia) and Policy/Guidelines for Screening in Kindergarten” in April* at their Spring Annual General Meeting.

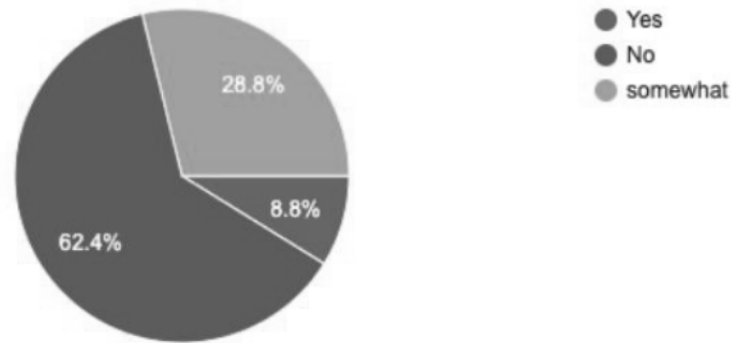
The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Committees (BCCPAC) at their Spring Annual General Meeting passed two Resolutions which were:

- 1. *“Replacing all Reading Programs to Align with the Science of Reading”; and***
- 2. *“Literacy Centers, Finding and Policy”.***

Dyslexia BC Survey 2021

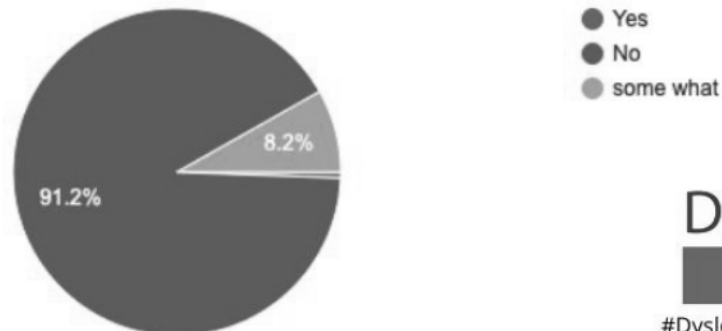
Has it been easy to get information about Learning Disabilities?

170 responses



Was it easy to get information from your school district about Learning Disabilities?

171 responses



Dyslexia
BC

#DyslexiaBCSurvey2021

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.22

From: Singh, Balkaran ECC:EX (Balkaran.Singh@gov.bc.ca)
To: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX (Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca); Bernard, Tabitha ECC:EX (Tabitha.Bernard@gov.bc.ca); Sather, Kelly ECC:EX (Kelly.Sather@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: FW: Follow up to the May 24th Meeting with Dyslexia BC and Honourable Mitzi Dean, Honourable Rachna Singh
Sent: 07/07/2023 16:55:05
Attachments: Proclamation 2023 Version submitted to the Ministry.pdf, May meeting with Hon Mitzi Dean and Hon Rachna Singh.pdf
Message Body:

FYI: documents from Dyslexia BC in complement to their May 24th meeting

Solidarity,

Balkaran Singh

Executive Staff to

Hon. Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care

Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC | V8W 9V1

604-831-8921

Grateful for the privilege to be living on the shared, unceded traditional territory of the Katzie, Semiahmoo, Kwantlen and other Coast Salish Peoples. I pledge to reflect this privilege in deed and word.

From: Cathy McMillan <dyslexiabc.cm@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 6, 2023 4:12 PM
To: Minister, ECC ECC:EX <ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>; Minister, MCF MCF:EX <MCF.Minister@gov.bc.ca>; Candace Koch^{s.22}; Vicki Nelson
<Vickin@ldafs.org>; Laila Potvin^{s.22}; Kirkpatrick.MLA, Karin LASS:EX <Karin.Kirkpatrick.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Sturko.MLA, Elenore LASS:EX <Elenore.Sturko.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Constable, Jane ECC:EX <Jane.Constable@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Follow up to the May 24th Meeting with Dyslexia BC and Honourable Mitzi Dean, Honourable Rachna Singh

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Thank you for meeting with Dyslexia BC on May the 24th. As discussed here is the documentation that you were not able to see during the meeting because of technical difficulties. I apologize that we did not have time for questions, so feel free to forward any that you have! We are hopeful for

change so that individuals with dyslexia can have better access to education, community and to the workforce.

As an aside 80 % of street youth have dyslexia or some type of undiagnosed learning disability. The Ministry of Families and Child Care should really think about providing better access to programs that have structured literacy and remediation to children and youth in care.

I also have attached a Proclamation that was scheduled for release on July 1, 2023.

Thanks for your help!

Cathy

Cathy McMillan,

Founding Member

Dyslexia BC

778-839-1540

DyslexiaBC.cm@gmail.com

Canada
Province of British Columbia
A Proclamation

CHARLES THE THIRD, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom,
Canada and His other Realms and Territories, King, Head of the
Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith
To all to whom these presents shall come - Greeting

WHEREAS Dyslexia is a neurobiological brain difference that consists of 80% of all learning disabilities (LD) or learning disorder (as referenced in the DSM-5) affecting 1 in 5 individuals with varying degrees and impedes the ability to use skills such as reading, spelling and speak and,

WHEREAS Dyslexia is a language based disability which means that individuals with LD will have difficulty acquiring and processing language, resulting in trouble processing or connecting letters to the sounds they make proficiently in order to learn to read, spell and write, and

WHEREAS Dyslexia presents differently in each individual who has it; is life long, effects boys and girls equally and is found throughout the world in families of all ethnic and social backgrounds, and

WHEREAS early screening for all children starting in kindergarten with targeted individualised interventions (including one on one support/intervention for 3-5% of individuals with severe dyslexia) using evidence based structured literacy practice and early diagnosis for dyslexia will result in better academic outcomes for all and lead to dyslexic individuals having more meaningful participation and access to education, community and the workforce, and

WHEREAS individuals with dyslexia and LD are over represented in street youth, incarceration centres, and are at risk for poor mental health, underemployment, unemployment, drug addiction and risky behaviours and

WHEREAS Dyslexia Awareness Month; Week and Day is an opportunity to help spread awareness about the 1 in 5 British Columbians by; but not limited to government institutions including schools, private institutions, and the public by providing information about dyslexia and other LD by encouraging activities and events that promote awareness to reduce stigma and to provide access to resources for dyslexic individuals of all ages that will result in more positive outcomes which will help dyslexic individuals gain full access to education, community and employment;

NOW KNOW YE THAT We do by these presents proclaim and declare that October 2023 shall be known as

"Dyslexia Awareness Month"

And the week of October 7th, 2023 to October 14th, 2023, shall be known as

"Dyslexia Awareness Week"

and October 8th, 2023, shall be known as

"Dyslexia Awareness Day"

in the Province of British Columbia.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Our Province of British Columbia to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS, The Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of Our Province of British Columbia, in Our City of Victoria, in

Our Province, this----- day of -----, two thousand twenty-three and in the first year of Our Reign.

July 6th, 2023

Honourable Rachna Singh,
Minister of Education and Child Care
Honourable Mitzi Dean,
Minister of Children and Family Development
Parliament Buildings Victoria,
BC V8V 1X4
ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca
MCF.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Re: Thank you for Meeting Dyslexia BC May 24th, 2023

Dear Honourable Rachna Singh and Honourable Mitzi Dean,

We appreciate the time you both took to meet with Dyslexia BC May! We were sorry that there wasn't any time for questions. There are many problems that our families face trying to access services for dyslexia! We are hopeful for change in BC for all individuals with dyslexia and other learning disabilities (LD); so that they can gain equitable access to education, community and the workforce.

As we mentioned in our presentation there are changes happening for individuals with dyslexia in the United States. Over the last 10 years parent advocates have been very busy. Legislation to change outcomes for students with dyslexia have been passed in almost every state ensuring early screening for dyslexia; the use of structured literacy; access to intervention and remediation; and teacher training. Here is a great interactive website where you can see all of the [legislation that has been passed to support dyslexia in the US.](#)

During our on-line meeting in we discussed the following:

- Dyslexia is thought of as a learning "issue" or "just an educational issue" rather than a lifelong disability. Dyslexia is not included in the proposed Hubs

at all and there are several places that MCFD should be considering accessibility for dyslexia.

- Reading is a life skill, we need to make as much effort as possible to ensure that everyone in BC can read to the best of their ability.
- Accommodations for dyslexia are seen as cheating, rather than leveling the playing field.
- There is a need for universal screening across the province with evidence-based screeners (not homemade district ones. This will promote early identification of dyslexia as well as early intervention and remediation.
- The need to provide “early remediation centers” throughout the province, not just in the lower mainland.
- We learned from the 2019 Arbitration Decision that the Ministry requires that a dyslexia/LD diagnosis can only occur between Grades 4 and 12.
- It takes 4x longer to remediate dyslexia after grade 4.
- Some districts in BC in the last couple of years are saying that they are using UDL and do not give IEP’s to students with LD anymore.
- Service providers like Fraser Academy are promoting instruction change only.
- Families under MCFD have no options ...because all help outside of k-12 is private, nothing is covered.
- We know that from the Moore vs British Columbia (Education), intense therapy was not designed to happen in a learning resource room or a mainstream classroom.
- We talked about families that have a child with a dual diagnosis of dyslexia and autism. These families have to use their autism funding to pay for dyslexia remediation.
- Some districts are encouraging parents to get autism diagnosis, because it comes with funding. Some districts also say they can not provide services to LD because it doesn’t come with funding.
- The instruction used currently in BC schools is “outdated”. Instruction needs to change to structured literacy in all classrooms. Science has proved through brain imaging that structured literacy is much more effective for all students.
- LD/dyslexia is lifelong and the problems getting accommodations are continuing into post secondary. Individuals with dyslexia have to prove over and over that their disability requires accommodation (\$3,000-\$4,000 to get a diagnosis which is only valid for 2 to 5 years).
- We are having a “Say Dyslexia at the Legislature” event on October 3rd, 2023 to kick off Dyslexia Awareness Month.

- We have submitted a proclamation to declare October to be the official “Dyslexia Awareness Month”. The Proclamation was submitted in February for a July 1, 2023 approval day. We do not have approval yet.

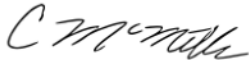
Here is a copy of the presentation that we were not able to show you that was prepared for our meeting in May.

■ Hon Rachna Singh and Hon Mitzi Dean May, 2023.pptx (1).pdf

We are hoping to get an update on our Proclamation that we submitted in February and were expecting to have an approval for July 1, 2023. In early June we were told by the Proclamations Office that the Ministry of Education and Child Care was reviewing the document and they would contact us with questions. Please let us know if you have any, we are hoping to hear back soon and are happy to make changes to the Proclamation to meet your approval.

The Proclamation for Dyslexia Awareness Month, Day and Week is attached for your perusal.

Sincerely,



Cathy McMillan
Founder Dyslexia BC

cc. MLA Elenore Sturko, MLA Karin Kirkpatrick, Candace Koch Dyslexia BC, Vicki Nelson Learning Disabilities Association Fraser South Chapter.

From: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX (Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca)
To: Kennedy, Karla 1 ECC:EX (Karla.1.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: FW: can you share the presentation for Dyslexia BC with me?
Sent: 05/24/2023 20:49:38
Attachments: Hon Rachna Singh and Hon Mitzi Dean May, 2023.pptx.pdf
Message Body:

From: Constable, Jane ECC:EX <Jane.Constable@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 1:49 PM
To: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX <Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: can you share the presentation for Dyslexia BC with me?

Please share with your MCFD colleagues.

From: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX <Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 1:13 PM
To: Constable, Jane ECC:EX <Jane.Constable@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: can you share the presentation for Dyslexia BC with me?

They said they sent to you.

Dulcy Anderson *she/her*

Ministerial Advisor to

The Honourable Rachna Singh

Minister of Education and Childcare

Cell: 250-818-3304

Room 346 | Parliament Buildings | Victoria, BC

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Lək'wə??ən, Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke and WSÁNEĆ peoples.

Dyslexia

The logo for Dyslexia BC features the letters 'BC' in a large, white, sans-serif font, positioned on the right side of a solid dark gray rectangular background.

BC

Dyslexia Advocacy Society of BC

**Meeting on May 24th, 2023 with Dyslexia BC and the
Honourable Rachna Singh Minister of Education and Child Care and the
Honourable Mitzi Dean Minister of Children and Family Development**

Page 22 of 43 to/à Page 29 of 43

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DUPLICATE

From: Tayag, Tricia ECC:EX (Tricia.Tayag@gov.bc.ca)
To: ECC DL Minister's Office (EDUCMINO@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca)
Cc: Kennedy, Karla 1 ECC:EX (Karla.1.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: For MO Info | Dyslexia BC Background Info for Future Meetings | EAPP 23924
Sent: 06/22/2023 16:41:05
Attachments: Dyslexia BC Claims and Responses.docx
Message Body:

Hi all,

Please find attached MO backpocket/background information re Dyslexia BC that was requested by Kelly following the MRS Meeting last May 24th.

Thank you and regards,

Tricia Tayag

Documents Coordinator

Deputy Minister's Office

Ministry of Education and Child Care

Dyslexia BC Claims

The claims outlined below were drawn from the Minister meeting with Dyslexia BC in May 2023, and the June 7th, 2023 ‘CBC On the Coast’ interview with Cathy McMillan, Founding Director at Dyslexia BC

Dyslexia BC Claims	Response
<p>Screening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There should be mandatory screening for 5-year-olds.• If you don’t catch dyslexia until grade four, it’s four times harder to remediate. There’s almost no chance of a student with severe dyslexia catching up to grade-level reading.• Ministry policy/funding should support evidence-based screeners that can be used for early assessment.• You can tell a student is dyslexic with 95% accuracy by the time they’re five years old.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School districts in B.C. provide early years screening on a variety of measures between Kindergarten to Grade 2, including literacy, speech, language, motor, and social development.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ These measures are used in collaboration with teachers and other educational and developmental experts, such as speech and language pathologists, to tailor interventions and instruction to meet the needs of students.○ Most students will be identified by the assessment of learning that takes place in the classroom setting, using instructional strategies by the classroom teacher, along with consultation with the parent and student.○ The student’s lack of response to instruction and interventions, not their age, is the information that should trigger decision-making around assessment.• Through the application of school-based interventions, appropriate literacy strategies and universal classroom supports, many students do catch up in grade-level literacy by Grade 3.• Screening policies and tools, the selection of educational programs, and resource procurement decisions in B.C. are made at the district and classroom level.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Most school districts in B.C. are using screeners.• Ministry staff have been unable to locate a specific, reputable source that supports the claim that students with dyslexia can be identified by age 5 with 95% accuracy.
<p>Structured Literacy/Science of Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Structured literacy¹, which is based on the Science of Reading approach, is needed for dyslexic children.• Balanced literacy² will only capture about 40% of students in the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There continues to be two competing schools of thought in the scholarly debate over which is the better approach, Structured literacy or Balanced literacy. The evidence base does not clearly point to one approach being superior to the other.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ministry staff have been unable to locate a specific, reputable source to support the claim that Balanced literacy only captures about 40% of students in the classroom.• Considering the diversity of students and their different levels of reading abilities, a one-size-fits-all approach will not be effective; teachers should be familiar with a variety of theories so that they can utilize multiple strategies to meet the diverse needs of their students.• Teachers are trained on a variety of tools and strategies and use their professional judgement to choose the appropriate approach and interventions that can meet the unique needs of each student in the classroom.• Teachers also commonly use Response to Intervention (see Appendix 1) to identify struggling students early on and to provide targeted teaching/interventions to support them to thrive in school.• The Ministry relies on the professional autonomy of teachers.

¹ Structured literacy is an explicit, systematic and sequential approach to teaching reading based on the Science of Reading. It is explicit (a teacher directly explains and models what’s being taught), systematic and sequential (skills are taught in a logical order — one skill building on the next), and diagnostic (it includes plenty of chances for student practice and teacher feedback).

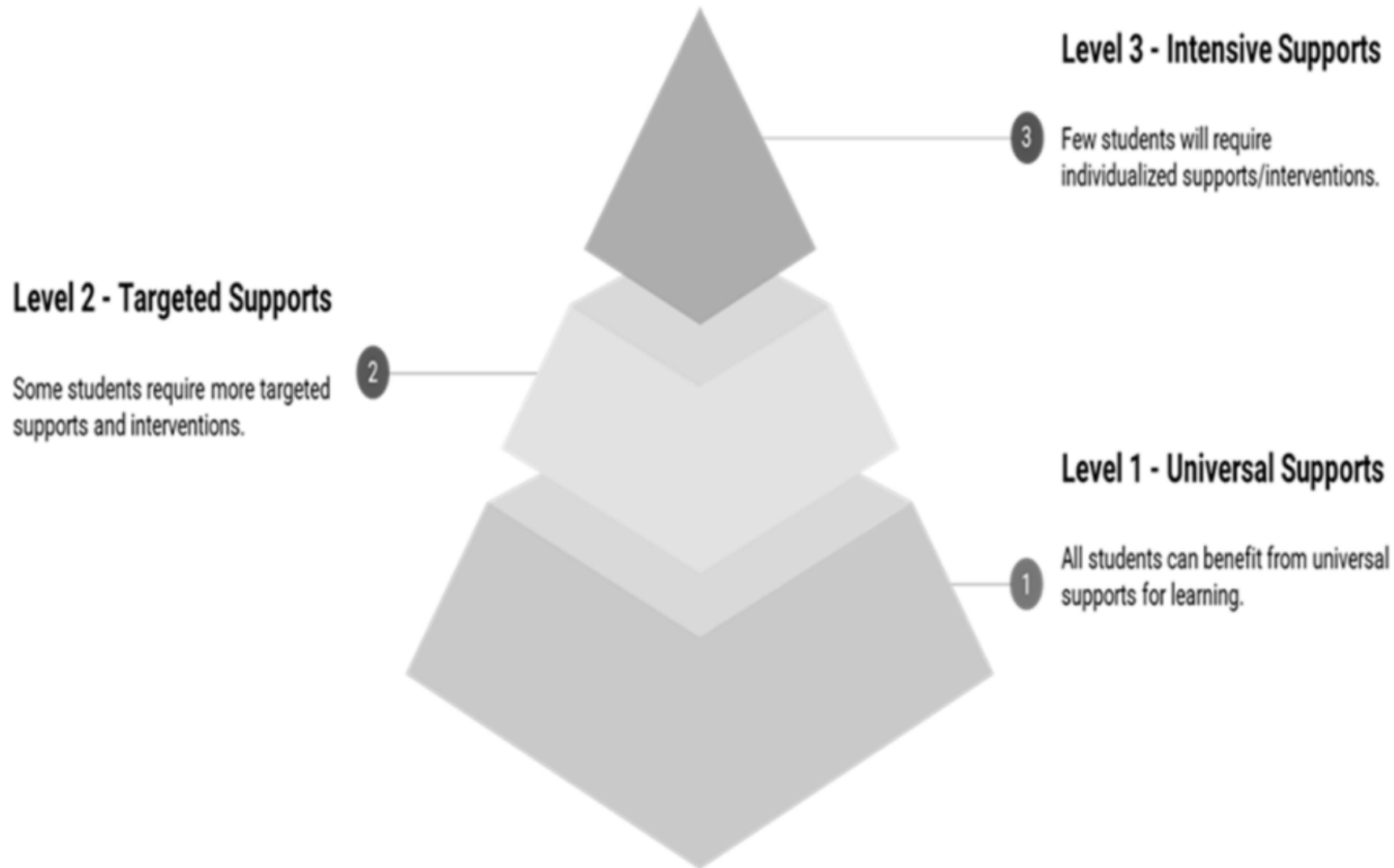
² Balanced literacy emerged in the 80s and 90s as a compromise between phonics-based instruction and the whole language approach. It uses a variety of teaching methods (such as read-alouds, independent reading and writing, and small group instruction) to address the five pillars of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students with dyslexia receive \$2000 in independent schools but nothing in public schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 1 and Group 2 independent schools receive only 50% or 35%, respectively, of the basic per-pupil allocation provided to public school districts (\$8,625 per student). Designated Special Education independent schools that enroll students with special needs exclusively and maintain a 6:1 student/teacher ratio are eligible for an additional Special Education grant of \$2,000 per FTE. Combined, these amounts do not exceed the basic allocation that is provided to public school districts.
Jackson Arbitration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Jackson Arbitration resulted in no funding for dyslexia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2019, Arbitrator Jackson determined that class composition (i.e., the number of students with disabilities in one class) would be based on the criteria that had been in place from 1995-2002, prior to the BCTF Collective Agreement language being removed. This ruling was not related to designation or access to supports and services for students, nor did it result in any change to funding to districts for students with disabilities or diverse abilities. The Jackson Arbitration also had no impact on Individual Education Plans (IEPs), as there have been no changes to the IEP Order.
Definition of Dyslexia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be a legislated definition of dyslexia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry includes a definition of dyslexia (as a component of Learning Disabilities) within the Special Education Policy Manual that is aligned with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. The Ministry would not independently define a term that falls under the purview of psychologists.
Remediation Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive remediation programs are needed for students with dyslexia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process that school districts follow to provide literacy supports to students who are not performing at grade level are determined at the local level. Specific supports and services, including remediation programs, should be selected based on the needs of the individual student, not based on the student's diagnosis. Inclusive education advocacy groups continue to raise concerns about a trend back to institutionalization/segregated programs - this could include pull-out intensive remediation programs that do not align with best practices for inclusive education.

Appendix 1 – Response to Intervention

- Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tiered educational approach to early identification and support of students with learning and behaviour needs.
- RTI begins with the provision of high-quality classroom instruction and assessment along with universally designed supports (to benefit all students).

- Students who require additional support are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to meet their learning needs.
 - Interventions may be provided by the classroom teacher, support teachers, school counsellors, education assistants and/or other specialist staff.
- The RTI framework and process is designed to involve collaboration between educators, parents and school staff to understand and address the needs of individual students.



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE
MEETING NOTE**

CLIFF: 23116
MEETING DATE: May 23, 2023
PREVIOUS MTG DATE(S): April 6, 2021

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care

SUBJECT: Students with dyslexia and other learning disabilities

PURPOSE: Background information to support a meeting with Cathy McMillan and Candace Koch from Dyslexia BC and Vicki Nelson from the Learning Disabilities Association, to discuss services and supports for students with learning disabilities such as dyslexia.

BACKGROUND:

- Dyslexia BC, founded in 2014, is a non-profit, parent-led advocacy group that promotes awareness of dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities.
- The Learning Disabilities Association is a not-for-profit organization consisting of parents and professionals who aim to advance the education, employment, social development, legal rights, and general well-being of people with learning disabilities.
- Dyslexia is an alternative term used to describe a specific learning disorder of reading, also referred to as a learning disability.
- Learning disabilities range in severity and may interfere with the acquisition and use of one or more of the following:
 - Reading - dyslexia (e.g., decoding, phonetic knowledge, word recognition, comprehension)
 - Written language - dysgraphia (e.g., spelling, and written expression)
 - Mathematics – dyscalculia (e.g., computation, problem solving)
 - Oral language (e.g., listening, speaking, understanding)
- The Ministry provides boards of education with basic funding, for every student, and supplemental funding, for students who meet criteria for designation in select “Special Needs” funding categories, to deliver educational programs to all students in the school district.
 - The basic per pupil allocation in 2023/24 is \$8,625, up from \$7,885 in 2022/23.
 - There are twelve Special Needs categories, comprised of eight low incidence categories that qualify for supplemental funding, and four high incidence categories where funding is incorporated into the basic allocation for all students.
 - Basic allocation and supplemental funding are generated by student enrolment and designations respectively however the funding is not targeted to individual students. Boards of education have the autonomy to allocate their funding within their districts according to local decisions and priorities, including services and supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities.
- The Learning Disability Category (Special Needs Funding Category Q), which includes dyslexia, is one of the high incidence categories where funding is included in the basic

allocation amount that the Ministry provides to boards of education for each student enrolled.

- This basic allocation amount includes funds to support general inclusive education (or non-categorical) services such as learning assistance, special language pathology services, occupational therapy, counselling and assessments, including for students with learning disabilities.
- Students in BC's public school system do not require a medical diagnosis or designation in one of the twelve Special Needs funding categories to access these non-categorical supports and services.
- 24,993 students from BC public and independent schools were designated in the Learning Disability category in 2022/23, up from 24,025 students in 2021/22.
- Supplemental funding for students with learning disabilities was provided up until the 2001/02 school year.
 - At the time, school districts were capped at a maximum of four percent of total enrolment being funded as learning disabilities or high incidence special needs. With nearly every school district exceeding the four percent threshold, the supplement was effectively provided based on total district enrolment.
 - The operating grant formula was changed in 2002/03: several separate funding categories were combined into a larger basic per pupil allocation, with nearly all targets and caps removed.
 - At that time, funding for special needs including high incidence categories such as learning disabilities totaled \$248.5M. With the Basic Allocation increasing by nearly 50 percent over the past 20 years, funding to support high incidence special needs would now represent close to \$370M of the operating grant block.
- Statistics Canada reports that 3.2% of Canadian children have a learning disability.

KEY ISSUES:

Dyslexia BC and the Learning Disabilities Association:

- Cathy McMillan is the Founding Director at Dyslexia BC as well as an advocate and parent of 2 children with dyslexia.
- Candace Koch is a member of Dyslexia BC^{s.22}
- Vicki Nelson is the Executive Director for the Learning Disabilities Association, Fraser South Chapter.
- In April 2021, Candace Koch met with the former Minister of Education and Child Care, the Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, to advocate for:
 - a universal definition of dyslexia;
 - early screening tests;
 - mandatory literacy remediation programs (based on Ontario's *Right to Read* report); and
 - teacher training.
- Dyslexia BC claims that 10-20% of the population has dyslexia.
 - In contrast, Statistics Canada reports that 3.2% of Canadian children have a learning disability, which would include but not be limited to dyslexia.

- In 2018, Dyslexia BC submitted a response to the government’s public education Funding Model Review recommendations, expressing concerns about the lack of supports and funding for students with Dyslexia (Attachment 1).
- In December 2022, Dyslexia BC requested a meeting with the Premier (Attachment 2) to discuss the progress that government has made since 2020 on “...important initiatives including...With teachers and required stakeholders, identify opportunities to expand services and interventions for kids with dyslexia and related learning differences” as mentioned in the Minister of Education and Child Care’s current mandate letter.
- During this year’s Estimates debate, the topic of dyslexia, the Jackson Arbitration decision, and the Learning Disability category (Q) was a key focus of the critic’s line of questioning.
- On May 30, 2023, Dyslexia BC is scheduled to present to the BC Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to requesting funding to support dyslexia initiatives.
- Key issues that Dyslexia BC and the Learning Disabilities Association are likely to raise include the 2019 Jackson Arbitration on Class Composition, Individual Education Plans, and the provision of supports and services to students with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. The representatives may also reference Ontario’s *Right to Read* report.

Jackson Arbitration and Individual Education Plans:

- The Jackson Arbitration followed the 2016 Supreme Court of Canada decision to restore class size and composition language in BC teachers’ collective agreements.
- In 2019, Arbitrator Jackson determined that class composition (i.e., the number of students with disabilities in one class) would be based on the criteria that had been in place from 1995-2002, prior to the BCTF Collective Agreement language being removed.
- The Jackson Arbitration ruling was not related to designation or access to supports and services for students, nor did it result in any change to funding to districts for students with disabilities or diverse abilities.
 - Students who meet criteria for Categories G (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and Q (Learning Disabilities) still qualify for designation in these special education funding categories and related funding and supports; service impacts for students with these designations should not occur as there has been no expansion in the scope/threshold of these categories.
- The Jackson Arbitration also had no impact on Individual Education Plans (IEPs)¹, as there have been no changes to the IEP Order.
 - Any student can be provided an IEP, regardless of whether they have a designation or not. However, a student designated in any one of the 12 funding categories (including Learning Disability) must have an IEP as part of the designation process, as per the IEP Order.
 - If a parent of a student with a Learning Disability (Category Q) designation is being told that that their child can no longer have an IEP as a result of the Jackson decision, that is incorrect, and they should contact their school principal or district office for assistance.

¹ An IEP is a documented plan developed for a student with disabilities/diverse abilities that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, the services to be provided, and measures for tracking achievement.

Provincial Supports and Services for Students with Learning Disabilities:

- Learning disabilities vary in terms of level of severity; each student with a learning disability falls onto a spectrum of needs. Supports and services should be tailored to the individual student's strengths and areas of need.
- Screening policies, the selection of educational programs, and resource procurement decisions in BC are made at the district and classroom level.
 - School districts provide early years screening on a variety of measures, including literacy, speech, language, motor, and social development. These measures are used in collaboration with teachers and other educational and developmental experts, such as speech and language pathologists, to tailor interventions and instruction to meet the needs of students.
 - The Ministry does not recommend or endorse specific learning resources, including for students with disabilities and diverse abilities.
- The Ministry supports many programs and initiatives that support literacy in the early years:
 - The Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years (POPEY), provides supports and professional development to K-3 educators to build their capacity to support all primary English literacy learners, particularly diverse and struggling students in the classroom.
 - In 2012, the Ministry launched Changing Results for Young Readers (CR4YR), a provincewide initiative to increase the number of BC children who are engaged, successful readers.
- In the beginning of grade 4, students complete the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) as a provincial, system-wide measure of literacy and numeracy skills. However, classroom assessments conducted by teachers in earlier grades are the initial step in identifying where literacy learning interventions and additional supports for students are needed.
- As part of government's commitment to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and diverse abilities, the Ministries of Education and Child Care and Children and Family Development are investing in new provincial School Outreach Teams.
- The School Outreach Teams will provide school districts across BC with access to multi-disciplinary teams of specialists who can work with school staff to address the specific needs of students with disabilities and diverse abilities, including learning disabilities.
- The new outreach teams will provide both in-person and virtual supports to school districts, including case consultations, professional development sessions for staff, and connections to regional and provincial resources and services.
- In doing so, these teams will help to build the capacity of school districts to meet the needs of students with disabilities and diverse abilities, while at the same time reducing the pressures on families to navigate multiple systems and services.
- The host district for the new School Outreach Teams will be confirmed before the end of this school year, and the first outreach team is expected to be operational by fall 2023.

Right to Read Report

- In February 2022, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released a *Right to Read* report with recommendations to the Ontario Ministry of Education, school boards and faculties of education on how to address systemic issues that affect the right to learn to read.

- The report calls for critical changes to Ontario’s approach to early reading, in areas such as curriculum and instruction, screening, reading interventions, accommodations and professional assessments, and recommends providing “direct and systematic instruction in foundational reading skills” for all students and “clear and consistent standards”.
- A Ministry review of the report and its recommendations in relation to BC found that:
 - BC’s redesigned curriculum addresses many of the report recommendations. The BC curriculum includes specific focus on the development of early literacy and reading skills in the kindergarten-grade 3 English Language Arts curriculum.
 - The primary years English Language Arts curriculum focuses on reading strategies, oral language strategies, and metacognitive strategies along with writing processes to help learners develop an understanding of language features, structures, and conventions. Concepts of print, letter knowledge and formation, as well as phonemic and phonological awareness, provide the foundation for developing early literacy skills.
 - In alignment with the curriculum, BC educators use a variety of approaches such as universal design and differentiated instruction to address the learning needs of all students in the classroom.
 - The Ministry is currently updating the B.C. Performance Standards to clearly define and provide examples of what proficiency in literacy looks like in kindergarten to grade 12.
 - In BC, there are several province-wide reporting strategies to communicate a student’s development of literacy such as the Foundation Skills Assessment in grades 4 and 7, and the Graduation Literacy Assessments in grades 10 and 12. These assessments are co-constructed with teachers and focus on literacy and numeracy foundations important for an educated citizen.
 - The Ministry is in the early stages for planned discussions with Indigenous rightsholders and education partners surrounding a review and potential revision process for the provincial curriculum, to ensure continuous improvement. Discussions about literacy strategies will be a continued part of curriculum renewal to ensure all students achieve proficiency in literacy and numeracy.
- James Cummins Ph.D., Professor Emeritus at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, refuted claims made in the *Right to Read* report in his article, *Ontario Human Rights Commission Right to Read Report: Sincere, Passionate, Flawed*, that was published in the *Journal of Teaching and Learning* Vol. 16, No. 1 (2022).
 - Specifically, Dr. Cummins critiqued the *Right to Read* report’s over-reliance on systematic phonics instruction as a singular solution, noting that it is only one possible method for teaching reading and that it may not be the best possible option.

Key Messages:

- The Ministry is committed to ensuring all students have equitable access to quality education and learning opportunities.
- The Ministry continuously collaborates with education partners and stakeholders to identify and address gaps in services and supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities and to further build system capacity for inclusive education.

Attachment(s)

1. Dyslexia BC Response to Funding Model Review

2. Dyslexia BC Letter to Premier – December 2022

Program ADM/Branch: Melanie Stewart/Learning and Education Programs Division

Program Contact (for content): Jennifer Halbert, Director Inclusive Education

Drafter: Tia Wedge

Date: May 16, 2023

April 30, 2018

To the Independent Review Panel:

Response to the Document “K-12 Public Education Funding in British Columbia, Funding Model Review Discussion Paper, March 2018”.

As one of the founding Members of Dyslexia BC, I am continually hearing from parents of dyslexic students about how frustrating and difficult it can be to access services within the public and private systems for their children with reading and writing issues. It is disappointing to see that this review was only for “public” schools when private schools do get special needs funding on the same basis as public schools and in some cases even more for certain designated special needs.

Dyslexia is included within the twelve Ministry of Education’s designated categories for special education, falling within the category of Specific Learning Disability. Conservatively, 10 percent of the population has dyslexia and according to Dr. Sally Shaywitz, of the Yale center for Dyslexia, 20 percent of the population has dyslexia.

Yet, in British Columbia **only about 3 percent of the students get reported to the Ministry of Education as having a learning disability** on an annual basis. BC Ministry of Education special education policies apply to the delivery of services and programs for students with “dyslexia.” However, supplemental special education funding is not allocated to this group of students in BC.

Dyslexia is invisible; and has to be diagnosed (particularly in severe cases); or at least identified in order for a proper remedial plan to be implemented. Early identification of struggling readers, and remediation as early as kindergarten, is imperative to reach these learners. In the United States the majority of the individual States are making legislation to screen for dyslexia as early as kindergarten, and train teachers yearly so that they can use systematic evidence based reading methods in the classroom. (Washington just passed this legislation in March 2018).

Screening for dyslexia can occur as early as 5 ½ years old and the need to do full blown psycho educational assessments for these students will decrease if the students with mild to moderate learning disabilities are remediated early and in the classroom. North Vancouver (under the guidance of Dr. Linda Siegel, UBC) has already proved this with a long-term study. As well, the Coquitlam school district

has recently performed a pilot study screening in 6 schools and will continue through out the district because of positive results starting with students at the kindergarten age.

In 2002 a category specific to Severe Learning Disabilities (of which 80 to 90 percent is dyslexia) called the J category, was taken away completely in the Province of BC. Mild, Moderate and Severe learning disabilities are treated equally (when they are not equal at all), within the current funding model and are all *considered to be taken care of with the base funding allotment* along with all other designated high incidence special needs. This action by the BC Ministry has made the dyslexic community even more invisible within our schools. The priority for special needs students that do not generate extra funding is non-existent, no matter how severe the learning disability is. It is almost expected that parents will pay for tutoring or private schools out of pocket if they want their children to improve with their reading. With some districts routinely telling parents that they should go to private schools to get services.

I learned earlier this year in a Student Services advisory committee meeting for the Coquitlam School District that when the Ministry Audited the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in the District they only looked at the IEP's that were in "funded categories". **Not one IEP for a child with dyslexia** or any other learning disability was looked at by the Ministry during their review in Coquitlam in 2017, and I would suspect this is common practice by the Ministry in other Districts as well.

I do agree with the statement on Page 7; "There are vulnerable student populations which are not specifically included within the funding formula, and the data being used to calculate existing allocations may not be comprehensive enough to capture the true landscape of vulnerable student populations in school districts." This is a very good description of what is happening to the dyslexic community.

However, I don't agree with the statement on Page 7; "The current funding directs a disproportionate amount of time and resources towards administration, assessments, and paperwork, rather than direct services to students," particularly for the dyslexic/learning disabled community. The level of time, resources and administration needs to be sustained to ensure that there is some sort of accountability to these students. If anything, there needs to be more administration and resources for the dyslexic students. There is a disproportionate amount of time and resources put towards categories that produce extra funding.

On page 8, the statement of "The current funding model incentivizes school districts to devote a great deal of time and resources towards assessing students in order to secure additional funding". This is absolutely true in both private and public

schools. Which means that the dyslexic students and other learning disabilities fall to the very bottom of the priority list.

I do hope that a more comprehensive investigative review/audit is completed before any changes are made to the funding system. Quantitative data should be collected to eliminate any bias as well as consulting with the "K-12 sector stakeholders."

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cathy McMillan', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Cathy McMillan,
Founding Member
Dyslexia BC



Honourable David Eby,
Premier of British Columbia
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

December 31, 2022

Dear Honourable David Eby;

Congratulations on your appointment as Premier of British Columbia! Dyslexia BC looks forward to working with you to build a more inclusive province.

We were very excited to see that in the Education Mandate Letter to the Honourable Rachna Singh on December 7th, 2022; BC has made considerable progress since 2020 on important initiatives in the province and that you included dyslexia as one of them. Specifically, your Education Mandate Letter says; "With teachers and required stakeholders, identify opportunities to expand services and interventions for kids with dyslexia and related learning differences."

Dyslexia BC is interested in learning more about the initiatives that have been started since 2020 that will benefit learning disabilities like dyslexia. If you could provide details of these initiatives that you highlighted in your mandate letter so that we can make our members aware of them.

One point we would like bring up is that dyslexia and other learning disabilities like dyscalculia and dysgraphia should be referenced as learning disabilities not differences as they can be diagnosed by using the *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition* (DSM-5). Language is important when dealing with disability and for some particularly with individuals with severe learning disabilities; the effects are life long and do not present only in an educational setting.

Dyslexia BC would like to request a meeting in the new year to discuss the initiatives for dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "C McMillan", written in a cursive style.

Cathy McMillan, Founding Director
Dyslexia BC

cc. Honourable Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care
Elenore Sturko, MLA, Education Critic