

**Testimony in support of House Bill of HB 2552**  
An Act Concerning Education;  
Kansas Reading Readiness Act amending SA 79-32, 117  
Given by: Tammi Hope  
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Good afternoon honorable members of the Kansas House of Representatives. Thank you for your faithful service to our state. It is my desire to express my support for HB2552. The catalyst for my interest in this piece of legislation is the educational journey of my own child. Let me briefly share the experience of my youngest son, Caleb. It was in grade 3 in District 259 that we first observed signs of reading failure. My once happy and confident son started to dislike school had grown withdrawn and quiet. With the help of his 4th-grade teacher, the BIST (Behavior Intervention Support System) process was initiated to begin to collect data and log intervention strategies and results. At the end of that year, an IEP was created to address his needs in reading. However, these interventions would not take place in earnest until the following school year. All classroom interventions to this point had been ineffective. Moreover, the intervention strategies employed as a result of his IEP did not include evidence based structured literacy instruction. By this time, his negative disposition toward education and low self-esteem had become deeply rooted. As a parent, I could not continue to watch as my son spiral downward both emotionally and academically. I, therefore, sought outside assistance for remediation in reading. I took training in literacy intervention since I could not afford to hire a tutor. I worked with him five days each week in a structured literacy program in addition to daily help with his homework. We worked tirelessly for several years. As a result, in Highschool, his IEP was changed to consult and accommodations only as instructional hours were no longer required for remediation in reading.

As chronicled by our experience, this bill would have greatly benefitted my son and family. The evidenced based structured literacy instruction he desperately needed could have been administered by professionals in the industry. Additionally, using 3rd-grade assessment scores would mean that intervention would have started a year early for Caleb. This would have saved him one full year of academic failure and embarrassment. Moreover, the financial cost of that instruction would not have burdened our family.

I am confident that my son's experience with reading failure is not unique. I also know that my ability to assist him with this struggle is unique as many families do not have the knowledge or the means to secure interventions outside of their public school. It will only be through the progressive and bold wisdom of legislation like HB2552 that other children can have positive outcomes in reading intervention. This funding is a start in the right direction and must move forward.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Tammi M Hope

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