

Woodbridge Board of Education

40 Beecher Road South, Woodbridge, CT 06525



Lynn Piascyk, Chair

Steven Lawrence, Vice Chair

Dear Distinguished Members of the Education Committee:

As a bi-partisan Board of Education of Woodbridge, Connecticut, we are writing to request that during this short session, a bill be brought forth exempting high performing school districts from the *Right to Read* legislation that passed in 2021.

We understand and commend the legislature on this well intended legislative effort to ensure that all children in Connecticut can achieve success in reading. However, as implemented, school districts already achieving this goal are now being forced to spend valuable time and financial resources purchasing a reading program to solve a problem that we do not have.

Woodbridge is proud of our consistent pattern of student growth, achievement, and exemplary student assessment data. For the 2022-2023 school year, Beecher Road School ranked Number 1 in DRG B for both areas of ELA and Mathematics in the Smarter Balanced Assessment. An incredible 81.7% of our students scored in the meets/exceeds range in ELA and an equally impressive 80.7% of students scored in the meets/ exceeds range in Mathematics. These consistently high levels of achievement, year after year, help us understand that our current instruction and resources are effective with our learners. What we are doing works, and other districts frequently reach out to learn from us.

Despite our high scores, Woodbridge staff are committed to implementing all aspects of effective literacy instruction that focus on the Science of Reading. While many of these practices are not new to our staff, we re-committed ambitious efforts to immerse all administrators and staff in deep learning around the tenets of the Science of Reading, as we recognize that despite outstanding data points, we are not done yet. We still have struggling students to reach, and we still have talented learners to grow even further. In the summer of 2023 we involved over 30 teachers in literacy curriculum development to ensure alignment with SoR strategies, and continue to foster current professional learning throughout this year around the Science of Reading through a whole-school book study. Additionally, BRS campaigned diligently to become part of the third cohort of the CSDE/CAPSS Master Class Science of Reading, and also involved additional administrators and staff in separate and aligned professional learning sessions this year around the Right to Read. As a district we are systematically and explicitly ensuring that we are reaching all learners and striving to learn new ways to facilitate growth in literacy for all children.

If the goal of this legislation is to ensure that all children in Connecticut can achieve success in reading, then Woodbridge and other high performing districts should be commended for the fact that we are already meeting this goal, not required to purchase a costly program.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this important matter and would be more than happy to speak with you further about this important issue.

Sincerely,

Lynn Piascyk, Steven Lawrence, Sarah Beth Del Prete, Dr. Jay Dahya, Lauren Francese, Brooke Hopkins, Jeff Hughes, Dr. Michael Strambler and Erin Williamson