

Director of Special Education/School Psychologist

Board Report

February 19, 2020

Dear Board Members,

On Wednesday, February 5, 2020, Governor Tony Evers signed Act 86 into law. Act 86 calls for the creation of a dyslexia guidebook for school districts, and an overall “push” to improve students’ reading abilities. First, let me put a definition to dyslexia. According to the *International Dyslexia Association (IDA)*:

- Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

Act 86 mandates the Department of Public Instruction to convene a task force, which would create a dyslexia guidebook. This guidebook would then be available to school districts, parents and teachers for answers about dyslexia. According to Governor Evers, Act 86 “adds one more tool in the toolbox for educators across our state to increase reading proficiency.” Currently we do not screen students for dyslexia but do do testing to identify students with specific learning disabilities.

I will be following Act 86 as more information becomes available and share it with you.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions or concerns, my door is always open!



Bonnie Barker

Director of Special Education/School Psychologist