To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to express my concern about specific language in the 14 Del.C. Section 122(d) 1581 School Reading Specialist. I am a speech language pathologist, who has been specializing in assessing and treating students with dyslexia and other reading disabilities as well as other language-based learning disabilities for more than fifteen years and I am currently pursuing an Advanced Certificate in Language and Literacy from Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions. I am also a proud graduate of the Brandywine School District in the 1980's and 90's, and the structured, phonics-based instruction I received allowed me to flourish as a reader.

In general, the legislation is a positive step for literacy instruction and remediation for the State of Delaware. However, I am concerned that tying all teacher standards to the International Literacy Association (ILA) does not properly address the information needed to understand, identify or provide the proper instruction for students with dyslexia. All children deserve a "free and appropriate public education" as per IDEA and the ILA standards do not provide this for students with dyslexia.

The quickest and easiest fix would be to change the language to add the teaching standards of the International Dyslexia Association (IDA)

There is also a petition letter from Decoding Dyslexia with more specific details about harm ILA standards inflicts of students with a decoding-based reading disability (which is essentially what dyslexia is) as well are key ways to rectify this in the legislation, which I have signed.

I hope you will take this seriously and reach out to education and language professionals who have committed their careers to understanding the science of reading and incorporating it into our instruction. This legislation is an opportunity to be sure that teachers are trained most effectively, which ensures improved reading skills for all students.

Kind regards,
--
Leah Wasserman, MA, CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist