

-Memorandum-

To: Vermont Senate Education Committee
Fr: Stephen M. Carey, Burlington School Commissioner
Re: Bill S224
2/20/20

I write as a concerned educator (retired, 39 years teaching secondary English, CVU), as a current School Commissioner of the Burlington School District, and as a current co-Chair of BSD's Curriculum/Personnel Committee.

My fellow commissioner and co-Chair Kathy Olwell and I are in favor of Bill S.224 which requires that kindergarten–grade 3 students and students with dyslexia receive evidence-based structured literacy instruction and that teachers receive appropriate training in literacy instruction. We have been working on this in Burlington with our curriculum director and Board approval for several years because our analysis of student performance indicated a need for change.

This year, on a very tight budget, we have targeted some monies to continue teacher training in evidence-based reading pedagogies. New research and evidence from a variety of sources supports this strategy.

I am happy to note that the State Education Committee has focused on this topic. It's pretty clear that we know what works best...it is now our responsibility to see that students are provided with the means to become fluent readers through research-based pedagogies practiced by skilled and supported teachers in K-3 classrooms throughout Vermont.

Stephen Carey, Burlington School Commissioner, Ward 2