



Remarks of Lynne Munson
Founder and CEO of Great Minds
International Dyslexia Association 70th Anniversary Soiree
Saturday, November 9, 2019

I am Lynne Munson, founder and CEO of Great Minds. We create high quality core curriculum materials for all students. I'm also the mother of a daughter with dyslexia. Sophia is 13 years old, and she's here tonight.

Sophia attends a school in Richmond where she is thriving; it is designed to support her needs. It's the New Community School. Our family sought out that school for her. We were living in a school district in Northern Virginia that is considered among the very best in the country but where they refused to use the D-word. The vast majority of families with a child with dyslexia do not have the mobility to pack up and move to a location where their child is in the right school. And that's, of course, where the International Dyslexia Association comes in.

For 70 years, you have fought for the needs of those who struggle with dyslexia. You have educated an unaware public of what dyslexia is and what it is not. You've provided the research. You've clarified the very language of the discussion. You've helped families find the tutors and programs that they need. And you've extended a hand through your chapters across the United States and the world. Thanks to your work, our society has a better understanding of dyslexia now than it has ever before.

Great Minds is trying to do its part by supporting students with dyslexia during the part of the school day that is not normally designed for them: English class, math class and science. Our core curriculum materials are intentionally designed to support struggling readers. And our English curriculum students take their time reading and rereading high quality texts, often listening to them, also using visual art as text, all of that, to build the background knowledge they need to propel their reading and writing instruction. Our math curriculum uses concrete hands-on experiences and pictorial models that clarify abstract mathematical concepts. And when we write a word problem, we make sure it is successful.

Every child deserves high-quality curriculum. When we give teachers a curriculum that is both exceptional and accessible, we bring down barriers for all students, including students with dyslexia. Our motto at Great Minds is every child is capable of greatness. And we are proud to support IDA, which is teeming with colleagues who we know clearly agree. And now I have the great honor of welcoming to this stage IDA Branch Board Chair Jennifer Topple and IDA CEO Sonja Banks.