

Tim Lamkin

From: Tommy J. Baxter <tommy.baxter@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Friday, February 7, 2020 4:42 PM
To: Senate Education
Subject: Senate Bill 6

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I have worked in Alaska for the past 10 years as a first grade teacher. My primary function in the first grade is to ensure that students leave the first grade prepared for the rigors of second grade in the area of reading.

We once had a program entitled RTI (Response To Intervention) with 8 - 10 reading tutors on staff for the first 6 years of my teaching career.

Within the past four years, we have watched as funding has been cut and our reading tutors slowly diminished. Teachers coupled with reading tutors through that program (RTI) turned out a higher percentage of students with the reading skills necessary for the second grade. As a high-speed, low-drag, type-A personality type teacher, there is only so much one teacher can do in preparing students for the reading rigors of the second grade. I hope that you will consider allotting funding for the return of the RTI (Response To Intervention) program.

Sitting students in front of a t.v. (computer/lap-top) does not produce the same results as having a real person to interact with regarding the area of reading.

Again, I hope you will not just talk about it, but actually provide funding for the reading tutoring programs. If you need to find a source for the funding, then take the funding away from the office furniture budget for the district and school offices and direct it towards the reading tutoring programs.

Thank you for hearing my cry out for assistance in this area.

Jerome Baxter
1st Grade
Pearl Creek Elementary