

For more information, contact:

Pat Garrett | WILL Communications Director

pat@will-law.org



Wisconsin School Denies Help to Dyslexic Student Based on Race *Black, Hispanic, & Native American Students Prioritized over other Races*

The News: The Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) is preparing legal action against the Green Bay Area Public School District on behalf of a mother whose dyslexic son was denied reading resources because of his race. Not only does the District admit through its "School Success Plan" that it prioritizes some racial groups over others, but this message was conveyed directly to the parent by a school principal during an in-person meeting.

The Quotes: WILL Client and Wisconsin parent, Colbey Decker, stated, "The school implied to me that my child would already be receiving one-on-one reading support if he were Black, Hispanic, or First Nation. I was speechless. I think we need to help every student in need, and using the guise of 'diversity' simply creates more division and hurts all students."

WILL Education Counsel, Cory Brewer, stated, "Early and individualized support for students with dyslexia is so important. Delays by the Green Bay Area Public School District—with resources being prioritized for students of certain races—have placed a child with a dyslexia diagnosis on an uneven playing field to simply *access* adequate literacy resources. Prioritizing students of certain races inherently excludes other students who are in need. We plan to exhaust every legal option against this school district to end this discriminatory practice."

Client's Repeated Efforts: Mrs. Decker's son was diagnosed with dyslexia in 2022, and they have sought support from the school ever since he enrolled in January 2024. Throughout 2024, Mrs. Decker repeatedly provided documentation and made formal requests for one-on-one reading interventions. In April 2024, Mrs. Decker's son was placed on a wait list for reading intervention, albeit for a less intensive program, even though his needs clearly required more support.

By the fall of 2024, after a classroom teacher stepped in to help, Mrs. Decker was finally informed that her son would be enrolled in a one-on-one (or "Tier 3") intervention program, though it was conducted in small groups rather than individualized sessions. This continued lack of adequate support has had a significant impact on her son. He struggles with reading across all subjects.

For more information, contact:

Pat Garrett | WILL Communications Director

pat@will-law.org

This impacts him in the classroom, where his teachers, despite their willingness to help, lack the expertise or time to provide effective interventions.

The District’s Own Materials and Words: In addition to her meetings with the District, we provide some of their own words and policies that articulate just how Mrs. Decker’s son is not considered a priority.

High Priority Strategies/Action Steps	
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Embrace literacy resources from HMH, Lexia Core 5, and LETRS to provide the highest quality literacy instruction.● Invest in co-service, using student learning information to identify how each student can benefit from universal and differentiated instruction.● Intentional work educating our focus students, prioritizing additional resources to First Nations, Black, and Hispanic students.
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use data to identify students in need and their areas for growth, then tailor support plans to ensure students are getting the right support, especially First Nations, Black, Hispanic, or students of two or more races.● Plan vertically, problem-solving with colleagues outside of each teachers' grade level.● Leverage small group and Workplaces opportunities to engage students in instruction that aligns with their needs.
Social Emotional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Engage staff and students in "Zones of Regulation" training with a focus of growing students' toolboxes around emotional regulation.● Implement school wide community opportunities that celebrate student SEL and explicitly teach emotional regulation strategies and vocabulary.● Monitor progress towards this goal through student interviews, teacher input, and anecdotes and observation, providing additional care for First Nations and Hispanic students.

Figure 1: King Elementary School Success Plan

For more information, contact:

Pat Garrett | WILL Communications Director

pat@will-law.org

I hope all is well. The boys are having a wonderful school year, thank you for all your hard work and dedication to King Elementary.

Last year when the boys were enrolled [REDACTED] was waitlisted for Tier 2 reading intervention for his dyslexia intervention and didn't receive reading resources for the remainder of that school year. We personally funded private tutoring to help keep him moving forward. This school year we requested he be placed into a Tier 3 reading intervention program immediately. He is in his first 12 weeks of that program and because of resource availability/demand for that level of service it isn't an individual/one-on-one program, it is a small group program.

I was doing some research and I stumbled across the King School Success Plan 2024-2025. I was hoping for some clarification about the *High Priority Strategies/Action Steps* section regarding *Literacy* stating "**prioritizing additional resources to First Nations, Black, and Hispanic students.**" Does [REDACTED] receive less services or less priority because he is white?

I appreciate any clarification on that document and how King Elementary fulfills that *High Priority Strategy/Action Step* for *Literacy*.

Sincerely,

Colbey

Figure 2: Email from Mrs. Decker to King Elementary Principal

Hi, Colbey -
Thanks for finding and reviewing our school success plan! I would be happy to explain the work we do in relation to priority groups. Let's connect via phone or in person sometime soon. I could meet at the start of school tomorrow if you wanted to stop in. Otherwise, I have a window of time from 1-2pm. I won't be in the office Friday, but you could call anytime by phone if you'd like. Let me know what works for you.
thanks again
- matt
[REDACTED]

Figure 3: The Principal's Email Back to the Parent

ABOUT WILL: We litigate, educate and participate in public discourse. Our case categories include Individual Liberties, Equality Under the Law, Constitutional Government and the Rule of Law, Economic Freedom, and Education Reform. We have prevailed in roughly 80% of the matters we have undertaken. Our record of

For more information, contact:

Pat Garrett | WILL Communications Director

pat@will-law.org

winning is indisputable. WILL's winning reputation has allowed us to settle other matters without ever filing a lawsuit. Find out more at: will-law.org.

Read More:

- Letter, Filed December 2024