

Dear Sisters and Brothers –

Let me ask a question – how many of you have a child or grandchild who has a difficult time reading? With your older students, how many spend more than 3 or 4 hours doing homework each night? How many students can read a sentence perfectly – but can't answer a simple question about the text immediately afterwards?

You may be one of the families that are directly impacted by Dyslexia.

- The low estimate is that 1 in 5 students in school today suffer from some form of dyslexia.
- Over 85% of prison inmates are functionally illiterate, and of these inmates, over 50% are dyslexic.

Dyslexia is a learning disorder that involves difficulty reading due to problems identifying speech sounds and learning how they relate to letters and words (decoding). Also called a reading disability, dyslexia is a result of individual differences in areas of the brain that process language. Like many neurological disorders, the brain can be trained to adjust and address the differences in processing abilities through different teaching methods.

Intervention for dyslexia directly, explicitly, and systematically teaches an awareness of the sounds of language, letter-sound associations, vocabulary, and strategies for understanding written language. Guided, repeated practice enables the child to apply what they have learned efficiently. The Luke Waites Center for Dyslexia and Learning Disabilities, founded by the Scottish Rite of Texas, has developed multiple teaching curriculum for classrooms to assist in re-training the brain to allow dyslexic students to improve their processing and comprehension ability.

Their 2-year program *BRIDGES* requires a full-time certified teacher who will follow a script for 3/4 of the lesson while the other 1/4 of the lesson will be co-taught by Ms. Hallie, a virtual human avatar. The curriculum maintains high-quality, research-based, and highly effective dyslexia instruction while reducing teacher preparation time – allowing more intense student interaction and progress.

- The digital avatar teacher delivers the more specialized dyslexia intervention.
- Certified teachers are provided with two weeks of instruction (1 preliminary week and the other days via coaching and training throughout the 2 years).
- The program provides scripted manuals, that when combined with the training and avatar, equips certified teachers the tools needed to provide a research-based dyslexia intervention and improve student outcomes.

For \$6,700 we can provide one classroom kit to equip one instructor and focused student group with training and materials for a two-year program. My goal is to equip at least 3 classrooms across the state to make a broad impact in our children's future .

Let's **Turn the Page** in some child's life – help them learn to read!

Star Love,