

Subject: RE: IDA website and policy statement from pediatricians
To: "Irlen Visual Learning Center of MD" <IrlenVLCMD@yahoo.com>
Date: Monday, October 26, 2009, 2:14 PM

October 26, 2009

Marty Sweeney
Head of School
The Odyssey School

Dear Ms. Sweeney:

I am aware that you raised questions about Irlen Syndrome and other visual disorders that may impact learning. You naturally have questions, given the joint policy statement of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

I write to you as a psychiatrist with over 25 years of experience treating children, teens, and adults. Moreover, I write as the father of a daughter whose life was given back to her by being diagnosed and treated for Irlen Syndrome. It is my impression that many professional organizations are conservative, slow to change, and are motivated more by political issues than by science. Not having been a part of the deliberations of the Academies of Pediatrics and Ophthalmology, I cannot personally attest to their motivations. What I can attest to is that Irlen Syndrome is a very real condition. I have seen its effects on my daughter and on scores of my own patients, who travel to see me from all parts of the United States and throughout the world. My clinic performs functional brain imaging using SPECT scan technology. We see on our SPECT scans the impact on the brain of Irlen Syndrome and the normalization of brain function when Irlen Syndrome is treated successfully.

Diagnosing Irlen Syndrome can make an enormous difference in the lives of those affected. Missing the diagnosis, as usually happens, can be tragic. I understand that your school serves students with special needs. I respectfully urge you to have each and every student in your school screened for Irlen Syndrome, as it is likely that a number of your current students have this condition.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Annibali, M.D.

Chief Psychiatrist, Amen Clinic DC

Certified, American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology

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