

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
AND  
PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

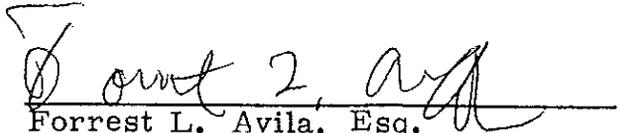
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

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JOHN DOE :  
 :  
vs. :  
 :  
JAMESTOWN :  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE :  
----- :

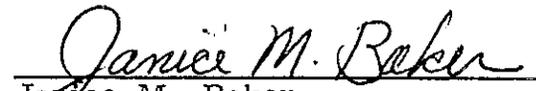
INTERIM ORDER  
DECISION

October 3, 1991

This matter was continued to allow the Special Visitor we appointed to examine the teaching which this student is to receive. Based upon the report of the Visitor (copy attached) we find that the student in this case will be receiving instruction from a teacher trained in the "Stephenson Method" of reading instruction. The petition for an Interim Order is denied. We are, however, prepared to reexamine this matter at the end of the semester to see what progress this student is making.

  
Forrest L. Avila, Esq.  
Hearing Officer

Approved:

  
Janice M. Baker  
Interim Commissioner

October 3, 1991

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
AND  
PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

JOHN DOE

vs.

THE JAMESTOWN SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

DECISION ON  
INTERIM ORDER

Through an unappealed decision of a local level hearing officer John Doe has been found to be learning disabled as a result of dyslexia. The local level hearing officer ordered that: "the school department will provide John Doe with a suitable program for his specific learning disability. The program will include tutoring by a person trained in one of the methods suitable for a dyslexic child. This trained person will also coordinate this suitable approach within other areas of his education." (Emphasis in local hearing officers decision.)

The petitioner in this case is asking us to issue an interim order finding that the teacher presently scheduled to tutor John Doe has not been trained in the "Stephenson Method" and is therefore not a "trained" person as specified in the original order. The school committee responds by arguing that the teacher has been sufficiently trained in the "Stephenson Method".

On the record before us we are not able to reach a conclusion that the teacher is not adequately trained. We therefore must deny an interim order at this time.

We are very concerned however, to assure that John Doe does receive instruction from a "trained" teacher. We will therefore appoint a special visitor to examine this situation during the first week of school. As soon as this examination is complete we will reconvene this hearing to take testimony from the special visitor or any other witnesses which the parties may present. At that time we will make a redetermination of whether the teacher concerned has received the required training.

Forrest J. Avila

Forrest Avila, Hearing Officer  
8/28/91

Approved by:

J. Troy Earhart

J. Troy Earhart, Commissioner



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND & PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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J. Troy Earhart  
Commissioner

September 7, 1991

TO: Forrest Avila  
Legal Counsel  
FROM: Romeo Romano *RR*  
Compliance Officer  
RE: Interim Order  
John Doe -vs- Jamestown School Department  
8/28/91

On Friday, September 6, 1991, the special visitor met with the assigned resource teacher, and the regular classroom teacher who will be instructing John Doe.

The following facts were ascertained:

- 1) The resource teacher has approximately 25 years of experience, 12 as a special educator of children with disabilities.
- 2) The resource teacher used the Stevenson Method during the past summer.
- 3) The resource teacher has viewed the tape, studied the appropriate manuals, and obtained the necessary materials for the Stevenson Method.
- 4) The classroom teacher, a 20 year teacher of the elementary grades, has also viewed the tape, materials and continues to work with the resource teacher on ways to integrate the Stevenson Method into the classroom.

Both teachers, holding advanced degrees, are highly trained and experienced professionals in the teaching of reading at the elementary level. The resource teacher is presently enrolled in a program to be certified as a "reading specialist". The resource teacher has taught children with reading disabilities throughout her career, using a multitude of methods and procedures.

It is the opinion of this "visitor" that the Jamestown School Department has assigned a person trained in methods suitable for a dyslexic child, including the Stevenson Method, and that the assigned teacher is coordinating a suitable approach within other areas of John Doe's education.

This particular method of instruction does not require a specific "course" or "training" program for its implementation. It has been developed to be utilized by teachers, parents, paraprofessionals and others with a minimum of specific training.