

# SAMUEL L. BLUMENFELD

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October 21, 2003

The Honorable Mitt Romney  
Governor of Massachusetts  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Romney:

It was indeed a pleasure meeting you at the Republican conference on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. I was greatly impressed with your remarks on the need for fundamental reform in education in our state. Having spent over thirty years assessing and monitoring education in the U.S., your views lead me to believe that true substantial reform is indeed possible—provided the will is there.

As you know, reading is the fundamental skill that all students must master if they are to achieve success in education and life. For the last fifty years the schools have failed millions of children by using faulty teaching methods, with the result that an enormous amount of state money must be spent on expensive remediation. The cause of the problem is the whole-word method of teaching, which creates reading and learning disabilities, and dyslexia.

Back in 1982 I developed a teaching method that makes it easy for every child to become a good, fluent reader. It is called *Alpha-Phonics*, and it has been used most successfully by thousands of parents who teach their children at home. It has also been used for over ten years in Roxbury at the WAITT House, a school where Latinos, dropouts, and immigrants learn to read. It is also being used very successfully in Los Angeles to teach incarcerated delinquents to read.

*Alpha-Phonics* can also be used most effectively to insure the success of the state's new English Immersion program. Those who have a vested interest in Bilingual Education will do all in their power to sabotage English Immersion, and they can easily do so by using whole-word teaching methods to produce reading failure in the program.

The public schools in Massachusetts are using faulty teaching methods that handicap thousands of students and doom them to lifelong failure in the blind alley of the underclass. To help these students, I would be willing to conduct a pilot program, at no cost to the state except for inexpensive materials, in which I would teach the worst performing students to read, proving what can be done with less money.

As Governor, I assume that you can prevail upon the State Commissioner of Education to permit this pilot program to take place. It would demonstrate how easy it would be to save the state millions of dollars in remedial and special education costs. Also, it would give renewed hope to those thousands of students who have failed the MCAS test and, as a result, will not graduate.

If you would like me to bring in my materials and discuss this pilot program with you and/or members of your staff, I would be more than happy to do so. There is nothing more important in education than making sure that every student learns to read well. No child should become a victim of teaching methods which we know produce failure. This is not how the taxpayers want their money to be used.

Success in this program would surely accrue to your administration, which has promised reform and will have delivered it.

I am enclosing some items, which you may find of interest.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Samuel L. Blumenfeld". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

cc: Lieut. Governor Terry Healey



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education

350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-5023

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David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner of Education

October 24, 2005

Mr. Samuel Blumenfeld  
73 Bishops Forest Drive  
Waltham, MA 02452

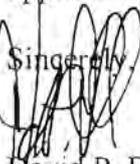
Dear Mr. Blumenfeld:

Governor Romney received your letter regarding your offer to set up a pilot program with students in Massachusetts to demonstrate the effectiveness of your teaching methods, and he asked me to respond.

On a statewide basis Massachusetts is the recipient of a Reading First federal grant. The grant enables the state to provide direct assistance to over eighty schools that are of highest need with respect to poverty and poor achievement in reading in grades K-3. Reading First emphasizes systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension. I am pleased to report that this funding is, indeed, helping many of our highest need students improve their reading achievement. If you would like additional information regarding Reading First or other reading initiatives in Massachusetts, please visit the Office of Reading's home page at the Department: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/reading/>.

If you are interested in presenting your methods the Department of Education offers a Summer Institute on a variety of subject areas. Proposals are requested and will be reviewed early next year. Perhaps this avenue will provide the opportunity you seek.

Sincerely,

  
David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner's Office

Copy: Governor's Office of External Relations