



Kids As Self Advocates

A Great School for Me

By [Nate Rennie](#)

When I was 3 years old my mother knew that something was amiss and she sent me to a special pre-K school. The school said I was fine and there was not a problem. I went through kindergarten and the first half of first grade with no problem. But the second half of first grade was a little bumpy and my mom had me tested at the beginning of second grade.

The test confirmed that I was dyslexic. Dyslexia is a special learning disability. It effects reading, spelling, writing and organization. After the test I went to "Special Ed". There were two teachers there who were not really qualified for teaching dyslexics. I was taken out for reading and any other class that the teacher did not think I could learn. I was in "Special Ed" from 2nd to 5th grades.

I came to the Rawson Saunders School half way threw my fifth grade year. I, for the first time had a one to one reading class with a real academic language therapist (or ALT)). The teacher student ratio was 1 to 3 (as it still is). The size of the school is 42 students. That year was a change. I didn't learn too much that year. The next year I was assigned a new ALT who got me straight to work. That was also the first year that the Engles were co-directors. They decreased the size of the math class and incorporated a writing class. The next year they bought Alpha Smarts (small computers) so we can learn how to type. This year they are starting the village program.

In Rawson Saunders I am not afraid of making a reading mistake and everyone laughing. I can also ask questions due to the small class size. Another thing is the smaller children are not afraid of the bigger children.

I am in a class with three other students. Both Engles are teaching us. All of the students in their class are going to graduate this year. The Engles are preparing us for high school. They are constantly giving us tests. They also give us a lot of homework.

There have been a lot of successful people with dyslexia, in a lot of ways. The reason for this is they work on their talents instead of reading or organizing. Here are some examples (you might recognize some of these names) in the field of inventors and science; Thomas Edison, and Alexander Bell; for art Leonardo de Vinci and Walt Disney, for military and political strategists General George Patton, Winston Churchill, and Woodrow Wilson with entertainers Cher, Whoopi Goldberg, and Danny Glover athletes, Greg Louganis, Bruce Jenner. Even "Time's Man of the Century" Albert Einstein was dyslexic.

You can go to www.rawson-saunders.org.

Submitted by Nate Rennie, 12/10/00. Nate lives in Texas and serves on the KASA National Advisory Board. My information is from a book called "The gift of dyslexia" and "Time" magazine.

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