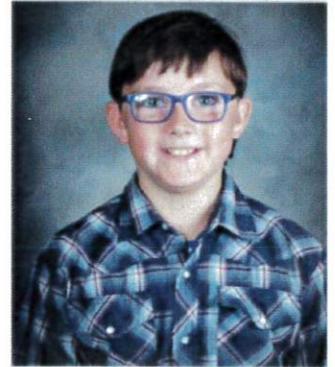


# Support HB 332: Scholarships for Special Needs Students

## Sponsor: Rep. Schultz

### Every Child Has a Story: From the Mouths of their Parents

**Hunter Gilbert** lives in in Orangeville, UT. He has an IEP for his reading and his math. "Hunter at the age 2 years old was straining his eyes to see. We took him to the eye doctor and he said Hunter was almost completely blind. He still does not have the 20/20 vision with the glasses on. I cannot work due to his IEP stating that I have to be there when he gets on the bus and off. My son just cannot see the letters on the page to learn the words or numbers.



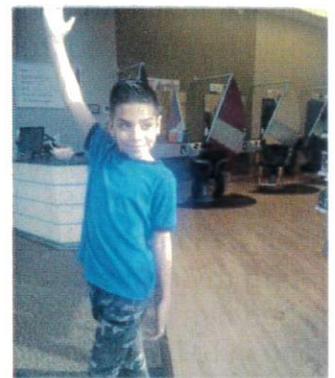
**"I really think this bill would help him and other families to get what they need for their children that are special needs. These children just need a little extra help to have a better life."**

**Lizzie Huff** was a very bright 5-year-old when "we discovered Lizzie had a brain tumor. The aftermath of this brain tumor has left Lizzie with strokes, epilepsy, pan-hypo pituitarism (a life threatening condition) as well as many learning difficulties. It has been very hard as parents to watch our precocious little learner struggle to even remain on grade level with her peers.



**"A scholarship to allow Lizzie to continue learning in her own way would be incredibly invaluable and would really help her in carving out a better future."**

**Viraj Sidi** is 7 years old and was born premature at 33 weeks. "He stayed in the NICU but showed to be a fighter, he started speech therapy at 15 months then after occupational therapy he was having problems with speech and communication delays. When he turned three, he was diagnosed with Autism by the school.



**"He didn't speak but maybe 4 words until the age of 5 and out of nowhere a language explosion happened at 6. This is since my son has had so much therapy and schooling from loving teachers. He has the potential to do amazing things in his life however more intense schooling is vital especially at his age. All he needs is the chance."**

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Every Child Has a Story: From the mouths of Carson Smith Scholarship Parents

**Abilla Family** - "The Carson Smith scholarship program has changed my life.

"I have 9 kids. My youngest 4 were adopted. A couple were exposed to drugs and alcohol in utero and 1 was diagnosed with RAD (reactive attachment disorder) ADD and sensory processing disorder at age 2.5. Another just has RAD and mood disorder. Both my daughters are emotionally several years behind their peers because of attachment issues and the control they feel like they need to survive.

"I found New Hope Academy and 2 of my 3 kids that go there qualify for a Carson Smith scholarship. **I'm so SO grateful. I'm thankful beyond words and without the scholarship I don't know what I would do. My kids wouldn't be able to go.**"

"Thank you for our Carson Smith scholarships. I have renewed hope in the future for my daughters and they are gaining the confidence and skills to be successful in having relationships with people."

**Anthony Young** - "When Anthony began school his special needs behaviors were overwhelming. It seemed like I was getting a phone call, emails, or meetings with his teachers every day, about his unmanageable behavior. Anthony had to re-do kindergarten, referred to a children's psychology clinic, on a "special note" program, and even suspended from kindergarten for 2 days. When we moved back to Utah, we had to sign a document, that if Anthony's behavior was not of good standing, he could be removed from school. The burden of stress is great for a parent with a child that has special needs.

"The Carson Smith Scholarship has given my son the gift of being able to attend St. John the Baptist Catholic Elementary School. **This school has been more than accommodating in meeting my son's challenges.** Every school year they have matched him up with the "perfect," teacher that has **effectively supported his special needs**, helping in behavior modification, and **closely working with me to address his educational areas of incompetency**, peer socialization, and providing continuous updates/feedback.

"**The Special Needs Opportunity Scholarship Program is essential and would be the perfect counterpart to the Carson Smith Special Needs Scholarship. It would help ensure more Utah families have a chance to meet the unique education needs of their children.**"

