

# 5TH Annual FIREFIGHTERS OF NORTHEAST WISCONSIN

Teacher's business to help a larger audience read more proficiently is off to a fluid start

A little more than one month into *New North B2B's* fifth annual Firefighters of Northeast Wisconsin endeavor, newly-minted business owner Kelly Steinke of Neenah-based READ Learning Services has learned quite a bit about launching a business and experienced many such lessons first hand.

The former teacher who left public education after 15 years to provide reading tutoring, product development and industry advocacy for students challenged by dyslexia has worked alongside Gary Vaughan of Guident Business Solutions in Appleton for the past two months. Under his guidance, Steinke has learned the basic aspects of trademark law, web development, search engine optimization, social media, the importance of networking, and QuickBooks accounting so that she can get her business off the ground. She also recognizes her limitations.

"I already knew that I can't do it all, and am the first to admit when I don't know something," Steinke told B2B for her first month update in this year's Firefighter series. "But I'm putting that knowledge into action by hiring out services that are above and beyond my capabilities and/or time I have to commit to learning something."

One such example is the outsourcing she did to develop her website which launched this past November. Steinke said Vaughan helped navigate conversations with the web developer so that she felt comfortable knowing what questions she needed to ask, the level of quality she required to promote her business online, and the expectations to which she should hold the web developer accountable.

Steinke said she also completed the draft of her instructional manual, which will be part of a new product she launches in 2016 providing her proprietary reading education methods to others wanting to read better, dyslexic or not. She's also found a freelance editor to smooth out the rough edges of her manual, and also hired a graphic artist to provide illustrations for the product.

Steinke said Vaughan has been a helpful resource working

through much of the softer side of entrepreneurship as well, such as facilitating business conversations among spouses.

"(Steinke's husband and herself) have conversations about the business from a business perspective – cutting out emotional responses like fear, or irrelevant distractions," she said.

In addition, Steinke said she's begun writing as a subject area expert for Homeschool Educators Resource Directory, an opportunity to position herself and READ Learning Services as leading authorities on reading education to a focused and attentive audience.

Looking ahead to B2B's next update on READ Learning Services in 2016, Steinke said she's continuing to develop her teaching product to fill gaps currently in many school district's mandated reading curriculums.

"I've created supplemental instructional materials that, in my opinion, include the missing ingredient in many spelling/reading programs," Steinke said. "I'm hopeful that my product will plug many of the holes that are currently holding struggling readers and spellers back." ■



Vaughan

## Methodology

*New North B2B* magazine began seeking entries for its 5th annual Firefighters of Northeast Wisconsin initiative earlier this year, with a goal of assisting those northeast Wisconsin small business owners who feel as if they're constantly burning the candle at both ends, putting out fires, spinning their wheels, but intent on finding a way to improve.

We put out a call for nominations this spring, and in the end agreed to help Neenah-based READ Learning Services LLC with its start up.

Through the generous help of Gary Vaughan of Guident Business Solutions in Appleton, READ Learning Services owner Kelly Steinke will receive five month's worth of consulting at no cost to help her work on the strategy of launching and growing her business.

B2B is providing a monthly update on the progress of Steinke's efforts in each issue leading up to a capstone article in the March 2016 issue of *New North B2B* magazine.

[www.guidentbusinesssolutions.com](http://www.guidentbusinesssolutions.com)

**NAME:** Kelly Steinke  
**COMPANY:** READ Learning Educational Services LLC  
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**FOUNDED:** Part time 2011; full time beginning in October 2015.  
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Steinke

