

The
International
DYSLEXIA
Association® **Florida Branch**
Dyslexia Research, Education & Advocacy

www.IDAFLA.org

"We serve children and adults with dyslexia and all who struggle to read . . . because reading changes lives" - IDA

The Dyslexia Dispatch

Celebrating the Talents of Young People with Dyslexia



Original Artwork by Abigail, age 9.

From the President's Desk:

**Susan Sentell,
M.Ed.**



OK, 'fess up. Who bought Powerball tickets last month? And if you did so, what did you dream about doing with the winnings?

I certainly thought it couldn't hurt to join the frenzy. My husband expressed his dream of buying a small jet complete with a restroom. I told him I would purchase a different, bigger home for us. I pressed him more about what he would do with the hundreds of millions of dollars left over after the jet. He added world travel to his dream list, but I had an even larger vision. What would I do? I would:

- Create a Foundation to educate, train, and support educators in evidence-based reading programs and teaching strategies to better reach and teach struggling readers of all ages;
- Promote the proper identification of students with dyslexia;
- Provide outreach to parents to inform and support their quest for dyslexia evaluations and proper classroom placement for expeditious intervention and remediation of their child's written language issues before the student's self-esteem suffered from school failure; and . . .

Yes, these are ambitious dreams, but upon reflection I realized these are the *same* goals that The International Dyslexia Association has! Our work in Florida has just begun in making identification and remediation of dyslexia of public school aged students a reality. I hope you will join me in contacting our state legislators with your personal stories of how dyslexia has personally affected you. We need you now to pass a Florida State Dyslexia Law!

My passion for this population is the reason I agreed to become the President of the Florida Branch of The International Dyslexia Association [FLIDA]. To realize this larger vision, I have surrounded myself with like-minded board members and volunteers who share this passion of helping individuals with dyslexia. Like you, our board members are passionate and some are motivated because of a child who has experienced heartbreaking experiences at the hands of well-intentioned, but uninformed, educators.

What's better than having a passion to help children succeed in school and ultimately in society? Who can argue against ensuring every child receives an appropriate education by highly informed teachers? I hope you will join me in learning about and promoting the FLIDA mission. An easy step is attending the one day FLIDA state conference on April 2nd in Fort Lauderdale, with a stellar speaker line-up. **Ken Pugh, Ph.D.**, from Haskins Lab & Yale University, is a highly recognized reading researcher who will speak on how effective reading instruction can make positive and permanent brain changes; **Barbara Wilson**, President of Wilson Reading Systems, will present on how diverse reading profiles require different remediation approaches; **Eric Tridas, MD**, Developmental Pediatrician, past President of The International Dyslexia Association, and medical director of the Tridas Center for Child Development, will be joined by **Sister Gilchrist**, Director of the Ave Maria Preparatory School, to inform participants about what executive functioning is and how these essential brain functions impact classroom instruction as well as everyday life; and, a panel discussion led by **Liz Woody** from Indian River County will explain their successful five-year project to improve primary grade readers called "Moonshot."

If you are reading this newsletter on the www.flaida.org website, chances are you are already a member of The International Dyslexia Association. If you are not already a member of this dynamic organization, please consider joining, which automatically provides you with a FLIDA membership and discounts to all their conferences.

Please consider attending The International Dyslexia Association's annual conference in Orlando, October 26-29, if April 2nd is not convenient. We are fortunate to have this highly informative conference in our state this year. This is your opportunity to network and hear other top researchers and educators who share our passion for appropriate education of students with dyslexia and the parents who love these unique learners.

Won't you join me in my passionate quest for reaching and teaching all learners, particularly those with dyslexia? I look forward to meeting you April 2nd in Ft. Lauderdale!

Sincerely,
Susan



"Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings" - Oliver Wendell Holmes



On the Cover:

Abigail is a nine-year-old student with dyslexia who attends a public elementary school in the Treasure Coast area of Florida. She loves creating artwork during her Related Arts classes at her school. One of her pieces won first place in a recent county-wide competition. She is thrilled that her art has been selected to be displayed by FLIDA as we all strive together towards literacy for every one.

Original Artwork by Abigail, age 9.

Upcoming Conferences and Events

Saturday, April 2: FLIDA 2016 State Conference.

"Dyslexia: Read All About It!"

Register Now

Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale. Speakers: Ken Pugh, Barbara Wilson, Eric Tridas, Sister Gilchrist, Liz Woody, Barbara Hammond and Fran Adams, Rep Gayle Harrell. Space is limited! **Register Now!**

October 26-29: IDA Annual Reading, Literacy and Learning National Conference, Orlando. Hear experts present the latest dyslexia research and policy for parents, educators, administrators, and researchers. See www.eida.org for details!



IDA Annual Reading, Literacy & Learning Conference

67th Annual Conference
for Professionals

5th Annual Conference
for Families

Marriott Orlando World Center • October 26-29, 2016

TeamQuest
Until everyone can read.

Are you a runner or do you know someone who is? Join Florida IDA in supporting TeamQuest! TeamQuest is a world-wide fund raising campaign, in partnership with the Rock 'n' Roll Charity Partner Program, to support children and adults with dyslexia. Registered TeamQuest runners will gain entry into the prestigious San Diego or Liverpool Marathons to raise money in support of dyslexia! Not a runner? Be a virtual participant or support someone who is! Learn more at <http://teamquestdyslexia.org/>.

All Roads Lead to Teacher Professional Development



The Professional's Perspective

Liz Woody
The Learning Alliance,
**Co-founder and
Director of Professional
Development**

January 2016

Public education is entering a new era. The changing economy has had a profound impact on the classroom. Entrenched poverty and increased student diversity, along with budget cutbacks and higher standards, have significant implications for the preparation of teachers.

The new Common Core and Florida State Standards explicitly call for elementary teachers to employ reading instruction techniques based on the science of reading. The standards substantially raise the bar of expectations for both what our students need to know to succeed in a global economy and what our teachers are required to know to support this process.

Next to a child's primary caregiver, a teacher is perhaps the most influential person that comes in contact with a child. Ensuring that teachers have access to expert professional development opportunities on both the art and science of teaching reading is essential to ensure that the children they instruct will be successful.

As Annie E. Casey notes, literacy is the number one indicator of individual success and community prosperity, and third grade literacy is the key to success for our children. Indian River County, in collaboration with the schools, community organizations, and The Learning Alliance (TLA), has created a Moonshot Moment goal to have 90% of our counties' children reading on grade level by 2018. Our 90% goal requires that we imagine a new ending and then plan, create, improve, and polish a professional development process to get there.

In-service professional development, as it exists now, is often a diluted and lifeless version of some training. It is delivered in short bits with the assumption that the training is both relevant to their classroom practice and with the expectation that the teachers will know instantly how to apply their new knowledge in the classroom. This "drive-by" training is to the detriment of the students in the classroom and the teachers who are charged with meeting their needs. It is a fate that neither they nor society can afford.

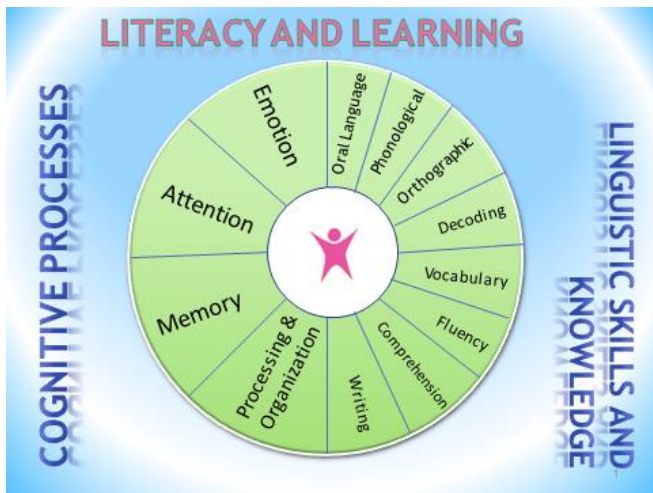
A radical restructuring of the time allowed and content delivered for professional development is required to achieve success. Teachers require highly structured and ongoing opportunities to learn new programs, skills, and knowledge. They require supported opportunities to practice implementation of this new knowledge in the classroom. They require meaningful opportunities to own their learning and discuss and share their craft with their colleagues.



Research supports the relation between teacher quality and rate of student learning. Saunders and Rivers (1996) demonstrated that a student who started 2nd grade at the 50th percentile of achievement would end up at the 90th percentile after three years, if assigned to a high-performing teacher. Assigned to a low-performing teacher, the same student would end up in the 37th percentile. Additional studies have demonstrated that a student taught by an effective teacher will learn in 6 months what it would take a less effective teacher to teach in a year (Rockoff, 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). Effective teaching can generate learning at 4 times the rate of ineffective teaching.

The Moonshot Moment: Teacher Journey to Excellence

TLA professional development training aspires to create a fully professional teacher who understands and employs the linguistic skills and cognitive approach to learning as represented in our “Literacy and Learning” wheel:



© Liz Woody

Each topic on the wheel requires skillful training, and synthesizing all of them into classroom practice is an even more complex process. As reading expert Louisa Moats notes, “Teaching reading *is* rocket science.”

TLA workshops aim to inspire. The power of our workshop design is that teachers co-author the experience with us, which ensures that we are meeting them where they are in their learning journey and that the resulting experience is relevant and meaningful to them. The monthly Moonshot Institutes (<http://www.moonshotinstitute.info>) are open to all educators. The current training theme is *Bringing the Standards to Life*. Our focus has been on using

multisensory methods around big ideas and meaningful texts to ensure all students have engaging and rigorous learning experiences. Teachers apply what they have learned with students in a learning lab experience at 5 Moonshot Academy after-school programs. These school-based academies offer extended learning time for students and embedded professional development for teachers, aiming to provide multiple and diverse learning opportunities for all. Last year’s program students showed impressive growth: MSA students saw 65% gains on reading compared to the district average of 12%. A cohort of TLA teachers are working together in a Collaborative Classroom experience, giving them access to consultants and additional opportunities to come together to examine student work, share unit plans, and celebrate learning as a group. This summer we will launch our first annual weeklong summit for educators. TLA also funds and supports the multisensory phonics program (Foundations) in elementary schools.

Our success is rooted in the collective hands that are coming together, building relationships in a way that moves action forward around the Moonshot Moment goal. Teachers do not begin their careers discouraged. They become discouraged and lose hope of fulfilling their ideals as the result of politics and bureaucracy that takes their attention away from the student and that measures their achievement inappropriately. TLA revives their enthusiasm and offers them the respect and professional discussion and development that they had always hoped to find in their careers. Working both outside and alongside the school system, TLA enables everyone to improve. To sustain this progress requires that we value, support, and celebrate this process and all those involved. Together we are weaving a tapestry of transformation.

Book Review

Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, OWL LD, and Dyscalculia: Lessons from Science and Teaching, 2nd Edition, by V. Berninger & B. Wolf, published 2016 by Brookes Publishing Company.

Berninger & Wolf begin by discussing various learning disabilities from a historical perspective, and then the authors proceed to evidence-based assessments and interventions for each of the disabilities. This second edition of a truly insightful text contains more information and updated research from their first edition, applicable to any educator and parent who wants to better understand a learning different child. Complicated terms are explained so that they are understandable, and this highly readable text provides insight for effective and engaging instruction for *all* students, not just those with written language disabilities. Many critical insights from a variety of professionals are shared from actual teaching experiences, which makes this an excellent book study selection or a "top shelf" reference book. Happy reading!

Legislative Update

On Wednesday, February 24, SB1068 was read in the Senate. The bill included requirements for teacher professional development training and certification, reading interventions, and accountability. Among many other essential improvements for children with dyslexia, this bill would have required public schools to allocate resources for the remediation of children with reading challenges as early as kindergarten. Unfortunately, the bill was amended, and this critical language was removed. Please contact your legislators and let them know about the importance of early identification for dyslexia! We will continue to fight until everyone can read!

Tech Talk

Technology can help level the playing field for learners with dyslexia and other learning differences. Do you want to learn more? Check out these resources for more information about Assistive Technology:

This blog from The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity discusses the use of: Livescribe smartpen, Dragon NaturallySpeaking for PC, DragonSpeak for Mac, Tablets

Source: <http://dyslexia.yale.edu/Technology.html>

Are you searching for technology to accommodate a learner with dyslexia? Check out the excellent charts entitled: "Recommended Mobile Apps" and "Recommended Software and Services" charts found at the Lawrence School located in Ohio.

Source: www.lawrenceschool.org/technology

Did You Know?

- Researchers estimate that the incidence of reading failure can be reduced to as little as 2-6% of the population following early and targeted instruction in reading (Torgesen, 2002).
- Florida IDA maintains a Resource List for parents looking for professionals who provide assessment and tutoring services in the state of Florida, as well as schools that provide instruction for children who learn differently. Email us for details at: info@idafla.org

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Are you a member of Florida IDA? Join us!

<https://eida.org/membership-account/membership-levels/>

Like us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/FLIDASocialmedia>

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Contact Us: info@idafla.org