

## President's Letter: July 2006

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**Karen J. Rooney, Ph.D.**  
President, Division for Learning Disabilities



[www.TeachingLD.org](http://www.TeachingLD.org)

Dear DLD friends:

When I first agreed to run for Vice-president of DLD, the two years before I would be President seemed far in the future; however, July 1, 2006 came faster than I could ever imagine. I have learned a great deal in the past few years by representing DLD on various committees such as the Children and Youth Action Network, the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities and the LD Roundtable writing group. Serving on these committees has helped me think seriously about the responsibility of being your President and about how I can represent you to the best of my ability. I am excited and very enthusiastic about helping DLD grow by taking advantage of the opportunities in the upcoming year.

This particular time is very critical for the field of learning disabilities. Schools are struggling with implementing the requirements of No Child Left Behind as well as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the role of the LD teacher is changing. In response to these changes, DLD's goals will focus on three major initiatives this year.

The major focus will be providing support for teachers of students with learning disabilities (LD) as the demands for high levels of expertise, collaboration and problem solving increase. Please help us meet this goal by sharing your thoughts, comments and needs through the DLD Web site ([www.TeachingLD.org](http://www.TeachingLD.org)). The Web site is the easiest way for you to communicate with the Board.

Second, it is very important for all of us to defend the construct of learning disabilities. With the initiation of the use of response to intervention as a means to identify LD, it is critical that DLD be vigilant about the need for rigorous research that guides teacher preparation, instruction and identification procedures. We will continue to seek partnerships with other organizations that have similar goals, but DLD must stay true to its mission of facilitating research-to-practice and supporting teachers working in the field.

DLD has an enormous amount of expertise in the areas of instruction, behavior management and research, which puts us in the unique position of being able to provide leadership when working with other organizations, when talking with legislators and when disseminating information about LD to the public. Consequently, a third goal is to have DLD move forward to a position of leadership in a way that supports teachers, and also benefits individuals with LD and their families.

To accomplish these goals, we need to have good communication within DLD. The Board needs to hear from the membership, the membership needs to know what the Board is doing and, most importantly, the membership needs to be involved to make the organization stronger. Please let us know what the Board can do for you as a member and what you can do to help DLD move forward.

We are all happy about being in San Francisco on November 3-4, 2006 and we hope many of you will be able to join us for the conference sessions and social events. The list of speakers is very impressive and the planned socials are always a good time to meet the speakers, network

with colleagues and make new friends. The Palace is a beautiful hotel right in downtown San Francisco and is convenient to all the sights. Spaces are limited so register on the Web site as soon as you can. Please help us publicize the conference by telling your colleagues about the DLD conference and share the website address so they can obtain more information.

I look forward to a busy, productive year and can't wait to start! Please let me hear from you so we can work together to achieve our goals.

Best wishes!

Karen Rooney  
President,  
Division for Learning Disabilities  
Council for Exceptional Children

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**The Division for Learning Disabilities** (DLD) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) works to secure access to appropriate education for students with Learning Disabilities and to promote evidence-based practice by professionals serving those students. Learn more about DLD by visiting the organization's Web site at <http://TeachingLD.org>.

**About the author**

Karen J. Rooney, Ph.D. serves as President of DLD. Previously, she served as DLD's representative to CEC's Children's Action Network. In addition to teaching at the elementary, secondary, and community college levels, she established The Learning Resource Center and the Attention Disorders Clinic in Richmond, Virginia.

