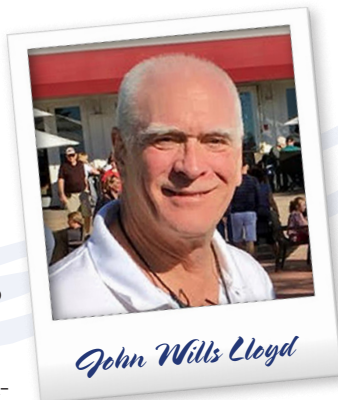


FEATURE ARTICLE

By John Wills Lloyd, University of Virginia
Margaret P. Weiss, George Mason University

Throughout its history, the Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD) has been dedicated to enhancing practice, policies, and research related to learning disabilities. At its founding in 1983, in fact, eminent leaders such as Carrie Brody, Sam Kirk, William Cruickshank, and others wrote these purposes into the organization's constitution to ensure DLD remained dedicated to these principles.

Ever since, through its members and the people on its board, DLD has chipped in on behalf of children and youth with disabilities and their teachers. Across the decades since the early 1980s, DLD has employed many different means of communication to support its members, even though those methods of communication have changed dramatically. One obvious illustration of change is this newsletter: The *DLD Times* (that was its original name) was once a paper document that was mailed to physical addresses, but it is now provided in this electronic format. In addition to the (renamed) newsletter, there used to be two journals; *Learning Disabilities Research* and *Learning Disabilities Practice* were published separately. The two were combined into *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice* or *LDR&P* in 1991. DLD has also communicated via booklets, books,



Illustrations of DLD's Contributions to Practice, Policy, and Research in Learning Disabilities

electronic mailings, conferences, the Website, Webinars, and a recently launched App.

During those years, DLD has been active in other ways, too. It has been a long-time member of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities and of the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, the latter being the original-and-still-highly respected lobbying collaborative on behalf of learning disabilities. In the late 1990s, predating the What Works Clearinghouse, DLD joined with the Division for Research to become one of the first organizations to produce straight-ahead translations of research evaluations of common practices—the *Current Practice Alerts*—that provided and continues to provide practitioners with accessible and trustworthy information about whether to embrace or resist clinical and classroom methods such as learning styles, strategy instruction, self-monitoring, and so forth. DLD launched TeachingLD.org in 2002; it was dedicated to delivering immediately useful content about teaching practices (see the Teaching Tutorials for examples) as well as many other features. DLD's student members originated

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newsletter@TeachingLD.org

Illustrations of DLD’s Contributions to Practice, Policy, and Research in LD

a student-planned, -juried, and -managed poster session at CEC’s annual conference; those sessions have permitted students to present their original research about LD to an audience of hundreds of interested-and-engaged (and famous) guests at DLD’s regular reception.

In addition to those accomplishments, in this brief note, we provide a few illustrations of contributions over its history. Our stories are a little bit more “behind the scenes” and focus on historical events. We shall skip over some little-known events such as the time that DLD questioned the Director of the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs for having said that she “almost wished special education would go away.” And, this is not a comprehensive list, to be sure!

A Few Examples of DLD’s Contributions

Instead, in the next few sections, we give quick accounts of just a few exemplars of DLD activities: an early-1990’s retreat about inclusion that led to two publications; a special seminar on IDEA 1997 and accompanying regulations that, in collaboration with public television, resulted in a videotape capturing the engaging interaction; an effort to provide members with a cautious, research-based perspective on response to intervention; and, in the ‘teens, collaborations with CEC on multiple Webinars to advance evidence-based practices. If you think that these or other similar projects are good ones for DLD to pursue, please let a board member know!



Figure 1: Participants at the 1994 DLD retreat about classroom ecologies and inclusion (from left): Barbara Keogh, Deborah Speece, and Addison Stone.

Discussing Inclusion

As the concept of inclusion was gaining momentum in 1994, DLD helped to convene a symposium in Bandera, Texas, to examine the topic. Thoughtful leaders including Barbara Keogh and Deborah Speece gathered an all-star cast of researchers and practitioners to discuss classroom ecologies. At that time, students with LD were taught in many different

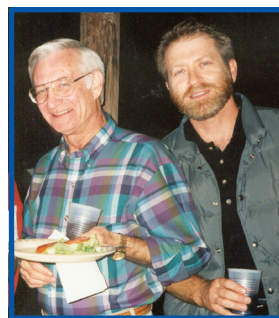


Figure 2: James “Don” McKinney (left) and Charles Greenwood at the retreat.

classroom situations, and those ecologies differed substantially—as they do today. The ecology of a classroom with a few, homogeneously grouped students who are taught by a teacher and an aide differs from the ecology of a classroom of a heterogeneous group where co-teachers are balancing different models of collaboration.

The DLD-sponsored meeting in the early 1990s attracted many eminent scholars of the time representing disciplines as diverse as developmental psychology, school psychology, reading psychology, and many other areas—to say nothing of LD, itself. A few of them are shown in the accompanying photos (*Figures 1 and 2, below, left*).

The discussion also anticipated many of the issues faced by contemporary education. Thanks in large part to efforts by long-time member Kate Garnett, DLD published a widely distributed booklet, *Thinking about Inclusion and Learning Disabilities: A Teacher’s Guide* (see *Figure 3*) summarizing the meeting. In addition, Speece and Keogh (1996) edited a professional book about the topic, *Research on Classroom Ecologies: Implications for Inclusion of Children with Learning Disabilities*. Members of DLD received copies of the *Teacher’s Guide* booklet and a 20% discount on the academic book.

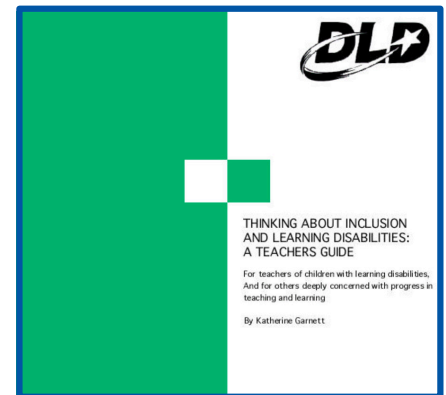


Figure 3: Cover of the inclusion booklet cover.

A Video about IEPs

As most who have read her books know, Barbara Bateman believes that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) is “the heart of IDEA” (Bateman & Linden, 2012, p. 12). With the significant changes in legislative language in the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA and regulatory rules of 1999, DLD saw a need to provide solid, practical information to practitioners about these changes and how they would affect teachers’ and schools’ development of IEPs. Members of the DLD executive board approached Bateman, eminent scholar, legal consultant, and author in special education, for help. DLD wanted to provide access to a discussion that was free of jargon and would be a practical resource for teachers.

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Bateman, who regularly traveled the country talking to administrators and teachers, agreed to donate two days of her time to work with DLD representatives to create a closed-captioned video, *Understanding IDEA 1997 and the 1999 Regulations* (see Figure 4). DLD arranged to have Bateman present a session to a live audience of teachers, parents, and administrators. For two days, in a workshop format, the audience listened, raised questions, completed exercises, and solved problems as they learned how to incorporate the changes into their everyday school lives. The event was recorded live by expert videographers from WETA, the Washington, DC, public television station.

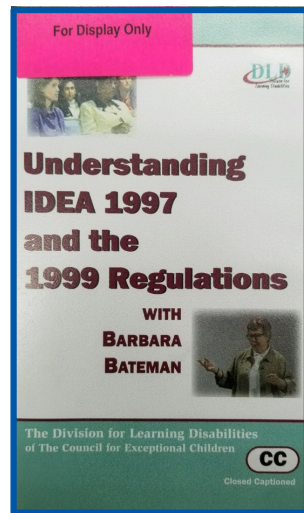


Figure 4: The cover of the Bateman videotape.

Ever the teacher, Bateman brought the audience along with her as she described how the IEP process should be, not as it often was. As the video description states, “Speaking to a group of teachers and parents, she [Bateman] describes the ‘who,’ the ‘what,’ and the ‘where’ of the IEP process, stressing the need for professional judgment and common sense.” Many of her big ideas about IEPs are still relevant today, 20 years later. The video was edited and packaged for sale through DLD and many copies were distributed for free to schools in need.

The RTI Book

A few years later, after another reauthorization of IDEA, the concept of response to intervention (or instruction) became a hot top among many educators. People affiliated with DLD at the time were among those who had studied students who did not respond to reading instructional practices generally expected to be effective. A consensus began to develop that identifying and helping these students would require coordinated, increasingly intensive levels of screening, powerful instruction, and skillful monitoring of progress.

In the early 2000s, as discussions about response to intervention became more common, DLD’s executive board was concerned that there was confusion and misinformation about RTI running rampant. Worried that the concept of RTI was being extended beyond the limits of its evidence, DLD

leadership [sought to inform members about what was and was not reliably known about the topic. Led by members of the board, especially Karen Rooney and Rollanda O’Connor, a writing group quickly outlined and drafted a pamphlet that described basic concepts about RTI with careful consideration given to staying true to the available evidence. The authors of “the RTI book,” as it came to be known, did not resort to hyperbole and exaggeration. In addition, thanks to members of the board such as Elizabeth Parrett and outside reviewers, the RTI book was written so that it presented the content in a readily accessible way; it was not written for researchers, but for

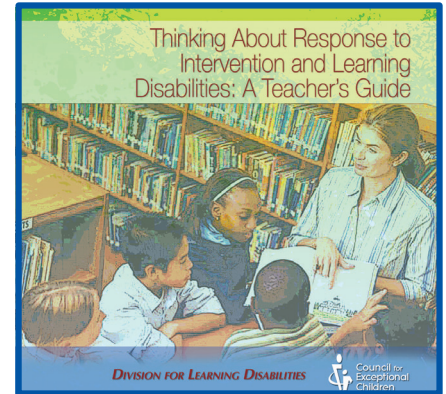


Figure 5: Cover of the RTI book.

people who have full-time day jobs and can do just fine without lots of technical jargon, thank you very much. It was conceived, drafted, edited, reviewed, revised, designed, re-reviewed, proofed, and sent to the printer in about six months.

Published in 2007, *Thinking About Response to Intervention and Learning Disabilities: A Teacher’s Guide* (the cover is shown in Figure 5, above) turned out to be a substantial hit. Not only did every member of DLD receive a copy, but 1000s of additional copies were distributed to policy makers, individual teachers, participants in professional development workshops, students in classes, and others.

Webinars

As communication approaches advanced, DLD seized the opportunity to employ Webinars to disseminate evidence-based practices not only to members but also to other teachers who were concerned about teaching students with or at risk of disabilities. Board members and others strongly committed to DLD—Laurie deBettencourt, Lynn Fuchs, Karen Harris, Erica Lembke, Kristen McMaster, Natalie Olinghouse, Sarah Powell, Gary Troia, Paul Riccomini, Brad Witzel, and even one of us (MPW), to name a few—volunteered their time to deliver stunningly well-received presentations about diverse topics related to effective instruction and assessment and the relationship between measurement and teaching. Scores of hundreds of people participated in these Webinars, and the products are still available to CEC members via CEC’s archive of Webinars.

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Summary

Elsewhere in this issue of *New Times for DLD*, readers will find other illustrations of how members of DLD have contributed to both the organization of DLD and the greater good of LD, itself. There are many additional opportunities to do so. Speaking just for ourselves, we have had the good fortune to work with many wonderful people who have been supporters of DLD—and we have only mentioned a few of them in this brief recap.

Participating in DLD—meaning, not just being a member, but also attending meetings, volunteering to help with committees, sending board members your personal opinions, responding to DLD social media posts, and engaging in other ways—provides members with opportunities to affect important concerns such as inclusion, RTI, evidence-based practices, and whatever the next horse is over the fence.

DLD has been and, we hope, will be a vibrant and potent force for the teachers of individuals who have LD and, therefore, for the individuals themselves, their families, and others who are concerned with learning disabilities. So, follow *TeachingLD* on Twitter or Facebook or Instagram or Snapchat or...and keep an eye out for the next thing coming from DLD. 🌟

Bateman, B., & Linden, M. A. (2012). *Better IEPs: How to develop legally correct and educationally useful programs*. Verona, WI: Attainment.

Speece, D. L., & Keogh, B. K. (1996). *Research on classroom ecologies: Implications for inclusion of children with learning disabilities*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Save the Date!



The **CEC 2018 Convention & Expo** is the largest special education professional development event for all educators! It's also a great opportunity for you to access high-quality, evidence-based professional development all in one place. See you in Tampa!

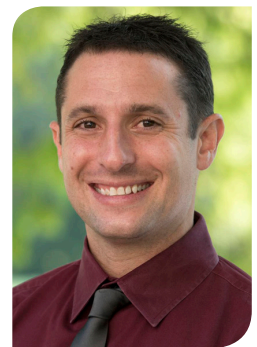
For details go to: <http://www.cecconvention.org>

DLD ELECTION RESULTS



Michael Faggella-Luby

Congratulations to our new Vice President, **Michael Faggella-Luby**, and DLD's new Secretary, **Steve Ciullo**. Michael is an Associate Professor of Special Education and Director of the Alice Neeley Special Education Research and Service (ANSERS) institute at Texas Christian University. Steve is an Assistant Professor of Special Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Texas State. Join us in congratulating them as they prepare to begin their new roles in July 2018.



Steve Ciullo

Publications and Communications Committee Chair Report

I am pleased to report some updates in regards to DLD's publication and my committee over the past year.

The Samuel A. Kirk award for excellence in journal articles published in *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice (LDRP)* was given to two author teams in April 2017. Robin Coddling, Amanda VanDerHeyden, Ryan Martin, Sheila Desai, Noelle Allard, & Leigh Perrault won the award for best research article for their article entitled, "*Manipulating Treatment Dose: Evaluating the Frequency of a Small Group Intervention Targeting Whole Number Operations.*" Bryan Cook and Lysandra Cook won the award for best practitioner article for their piece entitled, "*Research Designs and Special Education Research: Different Designs Address Different Questions.*" **Congrats to all!**

LDRP continues to maintain its high visibility in special education and the field of learning disabilities. During 2016, our articles were downloaded close to one hundred thousand times. Interestingly almost half of those downloads were from outside of the United States with Europe and Australia being the regions outside of the U.S. with the most downloads.

Thanks to the great work of our Editor, Linda Mason, and her team, LDRP's impact factor continues to rise and was at 1.25 (2-year impact) for 2016. We also have over 4,000 institutions that have purchase access to LDRP with almost a thousand of these licenses being new in 2016! Based on these key markers, it is more than apparent that LDRP is a top tier journal that is making a significant impact in the U.S. and abroad.

There was, however, one disappointing note for me in the latest LDRP publishing report. Only 76 of our downloads were made via our app. Did you know LDRP has its own app? It is a great way to stay on top of the latest research and practitioner articles published in LDRP. Check it out, download it free from Apple's iTunes store, and have LDRP articles available to you wherever you go. LDRP has also added 'early view' so you can read articles before they hit the print edition of the journal. See the journal's website to access the articles:

[http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1540-5826](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1540-5826).

In other news, there are several new *Current Practice Alerts* available for you to download on teachingld.org. An alert on self-monitoring authored by Pena Bedesem, Brian Barber and Tonya Santangelo was published this past summer and an alert on collaborative strategic reading authored by Wendy Cavendish and Kristen Hodnett was released last winter. Both these practices were given the 'Go for it' designation.

Please email me at Pubs@TeachingLD.org with questions, comments or ideas you have about publications provided by DLD.

Bill Therrien



Be sure to download DLD's **Learning Disabilities Research and Practice App** and have the latest research right at your fingertips! Available on the App Store for iOS devices.

The Impact of DLD and CEC on my Teaching: The Reflections of Preservice DLD Members

SYDNEY STEVENS

Current Role:

7th Grade Support Teacher
Granger Middle School
Indian Prairies School District 204 (Aurora, IL)

Attending the national CEC conference for two consecutive years as an undergraduate student was invaluable in preparing for my first year of teaching. Learning educational theory, evidence-based practice, and how to write lesson plans in our required courses is necessary and important. However having the opportunity to learn from current special educators and discuss real situations that arise in today’s teaching climate is something that is unique to the CEC conference. Moving from learning about being a teacher to tackling your first year of teaching is a huge jump. The transition was made a little more comfortable when I was able to rely on resources and relationships from the CEC conference. Now entering my 5th week of teaching, I have looked back on notes from the conference, reached out to friends I attended sessions with and posted on the CEC discussion board numerous times. Another benefit of attending the CEC conference as an undergraduate student is understanding the importance of professional development and having a framework to enter the profession with. For many special educators, this is another new concept in the overwhelming “to do” list that hits you once you accept a job. I felt fortunate to be comfortable talking about my past experiences at CEC, at a time when almost everything is feeling awkward and new.



Sydney at CEC 2017 in Boston with her undergraduate cohort of special education majors.

KIMBERLY JOHNSON

Current Role:

High School Special Education Teacher
Miner High School
Northwest Suburban School District

Attending the Council for Exceptional Children conference during my undergraduate career gave me great insight into the world of education. I attended and presented at the Division of Learning Disabilities Student Poster Session in 2015. Presenting allowed me the opportunity to share my research of the Math Reasoning Inventory. Throughout the presentation, I conversed with many other professionals and shared ideas on educational topics. The DLD presentations and social events motivated me to become a lifelong learner, eager to better myself as a professional educator. I look forward to attending many more Council for Exceptional Children conferences and Division of Learning Disabilities events in my professional career.



Kimberly at the DLD Reception and Poster Session in San Diego 2015.

DLD Meetings & Showcases in Tampa 2018 (Wednesday 2/7 – Saturday 2/10)

Day	Meeting Name	Room	Time
Wednesday	Executive Board Meeting	MWH: Meeting Room 3	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Wednesday	Program Chair Featured: Intensive Interventions and the Future of Learning Disabilities	TCC: Ballroom B	2:15 PM – 3:15 PM
Thursday	Cultural & Linguistic Diversity Committee	MWH: Meeting Room 4	11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Thursday	Professional Development & Standards	MWH: Meeting Room 5	11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Thursday	Membership Committee Meeting	MWH: Meeting Room 4	12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Thursday	DLD SHOWCASE: Something I Can Use Tomorrow: A Classroom Practice, a Resource, and Identification of Students with SLD	TCC: Ballroom C	1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Thursday	Tips for Publishing in LDRP	TCC: Ballroom C	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM
Thursday	Business Meeting	MWH: Grand Salon G	5:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Thursday	Reception AND Student Poster Session	MWH: Florida Salons V/VI	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (Room available at 5:00 for poster setup)
Friday	DLD Executive Board Meeting	MWH: Meeting Room 3	9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Friday	DLD-DR Alerts & Knowledge Utilization Groups	MWH: Meeting Room 5	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Friday	Publications Committee	MWH: Meeting Room 5	1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Saturday	2017 DLD John Wills Lloyd Outstanding Doctoral Research Award Presentation: How Much Is Enough? Short Observations to Improve Intervention Instruction	TCC: Room 17	8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

TCC = Tampa Convention Center
MWH: Marriott Waterside Hotel, 700 South Florida Ave.

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